

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program

I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project



SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Supplemental Draft EIS Comment Form

Welcome to the environmental hearing for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Please use this form to share your comments on the content provided in the Supplemental Draft EIS document. WSDOT will consider all comments received between Jan. 22 and April 15, 2010 in making its final decision in the environmental review process. Thank you for your comments.

Please enter your contact information below. (Last name and zip code are required to save comment.) If you would like to be added to the project mailing list, please fill out the rest of the contact information and check the box below.

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Do you have any comments on the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

I-138-001

Make the new bridge 6 lanes wide (100 feet) and no higher than 190.

I-138-002

I ideally transit will be on two of the lanes. Or 4+ person HOV until light rail is built.

This will reduce costs, especially in the pontoon area since they can be much smaller.

These comments will become part of the public record for the SR 520, Medina to SR 202: Eastside Transit and HOV Project Environmental Assessment. Personal information is voluntary and will become part of the public record if provided. The Washington State Department of Transportation is a public agency and is subject to the State of Washington's Public Records Act (RCW 42.56). Therefore, meeting comments may be made available to anyone requesting them for non-commercial purposes.

I-138-001

The Preferred Alternative has been designed to minimize SR 520's footprint as much as possible while allowing room for HOV lanes and the shoulders required to satisfy current safety standards regulated by FHWA and the Association of American State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The height of the floating bridge with the Preferred Alternative would be approximately 10 feet higher than the existing bridge, and approximately 5 to 10 feet lower than previous designs considered in the DEIS and the SDEIS. It would be about 10 feet higher than the existing bridge deck. The height is needed to allow for bridge maintenance.

I-138-002

ESHB 6392 specifies that the HOV lane will be available only for vehicles with 3 or more passengers. This assumption was evaluated in the Draft EIS, SDEIS, and Final EIS, and has been shown to result in free flow operations in the HOV lane with bus service levels near 600 vehicles per day.

The State's HOV lane operations policy would be used to identify when the HOV lanes' operational thresholds were met and when an adjustment to the occupancy requirement would be recommended. Because ESSB 6392 specifies the HOV lane vehicle occupancy of 3 or more people, the State would need to request legislative approval to make any modifications.

The Preferred Alternative allows for two future rail options:

- Option 1: Convert the HOV/transit lanes to light rail. This approach would accommodate light rail by converting the HOV lanes to exclusive rail use. Trains would use the direct-access ramps at Montlake Boulevard to exit, or could utilize a 40-foot gap between the northbound and southbound lanes of the west approach to make a more direct connection to the University Link station at Husky Stadium.
- Option 2: Add light-rail only lanes. This approach would allow

several connections—via a high bridge, a drawbridge, or a tunnel, as suggested in the Nelson/Nygaard report—to the University Link station.

Without a specific light rail transit alignment and service plan for the SR 520 corridor, the design options accommodate a number of potential configurations. However, full build out of light rail transit in the corridor would require modifications provided as a future project, including the addition of supplemental floating bridge pontoons to support the additional weight of light rail under either option. Since rail transit in the SR 520 corridor is not programmed in current regional transit plans, any future project to add rail in the corridor would need to undergo an extensive planning and environmental review process by the responsible transit agency prior to implementation. It is clear that there would be a need for construction and additional costs to add light rail to the SR 520 corridor, but the costs and risks associated with such an addition have been minimized by the design elements included in the Preferred Alternative.