

I-175-001

MS. VAYDA: I'm Genevieve Vayda. Thank you very much for listening to me. Can you hear me properly?

I wonder sometimes: How did we get here? It seems that we have a bridge design that's neither esthetically inspired nor does it solve well the challenges for people-moving and not effecting negatively the environment that's so very sensitive in the area at the west end of the bridge.

One reason I believe that we've had such trouble getting a beautiful bridge that solves only the problems that we have is that there's been a lack of public process. We're brought to sort of divide-and-conquer sessions, such as tonight, where we can't learn from one another by being presented all of the information, cohesively, before us and listen to questions and answers of our various citizen groups such that we know how to forward our ideas together to a more ideal solution than I see today.

I-175-002

I'm a future environmentalist who rides my bike almost everywhere, and I see -- and I also swim in Lake Washington almost every day of the summer. I can't see how we could design the greatest bridge across a beautiful lake -- the lowest possible profile needs to be utilized. I agree with former discussions, that width should not be any more than the prescribed roadways require, and that, certainly, bus and future rail capacity should be provided for.

I-175-003

I-175-004

Thus, it seems that, if I had to vote on one of the really poor designs available to me today, the closest would be a highly modified and optimized, environmentally sensitive Plan A.

I-175-001

Since the SDEIS was published, FHWA and WSDOT have identified a Preferred Alternative with input from stakeholders throughout the region including members of the general public, jurisdictions, transit agencies, the Governor, Legislature, tribes and state and federal regulators. The decision-making process for this project has lasted over 10 years and has incorporated extensive participation from stakeholder groups, communities, and the public. See the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Discipline Report and Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for further information.

I-175-002

The Preferred Alternative modifies the profile of the bridge in the west approach, compared to Option A. The bridge deck has also been lowered across the floating bridge in comparison to Option A. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for a description of the Preferred Alternative.

I-175-003

The SR 520, I-5 to Medina project would complete the HOV lane system in the corridor, improving reliability and efficiency for transit and carpools. The project can accommodate future high capacity transit in the SR 520 corridor, which may include bus rapid transit or light rail transit. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS provides further discussion.

I-175-004

Comment noted. WSDOT received a number of comments in support of and in opposition to Options A, K, and L and the associated suboptions. These opinions are summarized in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement Summary of Comments (WSDOT, April 2010), available at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/SDEIS.htm>.

I-175-005

I would just like to -- I just -- I can't say enough as to how I feel that we should start again, now that we clearly know our goals as to the environment and the impacts of such a roadway on our precious Lake Washington environs.

And I would encourage that it be a public and democratic process where all of us are brought together and that more than 50 percent of the people in the room are not WSDOT people, and that all of us can listen to one another's brilliant ideas, as you have a lot of intelligence people in this community.

Thank you very much.

(End of comment.)

Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has identified a Preferred Alternative, which is similar to Option A but with a number of design refinements that would improve mobility and safety while reducing negative effects. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS describes the Preferred Alternative and Chapters 5 and 6 describe its environmental effects.

I-175-005

The comment suggests a focus on giving people an opportunity to share their ideas for the project. Public involvement is an integral part of the SR 520 project, and a substantial number of meetings and presentations have occurred since its beginning. They include meetings with groups, individuals, elected officials, and the media. Although public meetings were held at venues within the communities adjacent to the project, public participation was not limited to only people living in those communities. The project has been widely discussed in the media and all project information has been posted at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/default.htm>. All members of the public are encouraged to participate and weigh in on the project. WSDOT will continue to provide public involvement opportunities throughout project development. Our website also provides the opportunity to request a Community briefing, or to be added to the mail/email list with a project hotline and contact information. Pages 27-36 and 52-56 of the SDEIS Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Discipline Report (provide detail on outreach and methods used by the project team to communicate with the public, including but not limited to informational kiosks, translated materials, community briefings, booths at a wide range of community events, email announcements, announcements through local media, and the Project Dialog Center.