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March 26, 2010

Jenifer Young, SR 520, I-5 to Medina Environmental Manager
Washington State Department of Transportation
600 Stewart Street, Suite 520
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: Public Comment on 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program

- I-234-001** | Thank you for more public disclosure. For the following reasons support Alternative A+ Key Elements for Design-Transit Affordable Option and a 2nd Montlake Bridge for UW traffic, thereby managing costs within the Legislature's SR 520 maximum \$3.9 Budget.
- Since I first submitted written testimony, June 24, 2008, I am encouraged by: stronger community support for full environmental review; Seattle Community Council Federation opposition to the Montlake Tunnel Parkway Plan; as well as the following helpful findings:
- I-234-002** | (1) This year more information has become available on the WSDOT building materials and design. Now the project design amendments must produce mitigating effects: to preserve both the designated Olmsted Parks and the UW campus historic natural areas. It is imperative to preserve our natural heritage because it can never be regained. We have a special responsibility to protect the environment.
- I-234-003** | (2) 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program design options must now protect the Foster Island and McCurdy Park wetlands and adjoining salmon habitat from the previous WSDOT proposal of an underground tunnel.
- I-234-004** | (3) Final EIS Review now rejects the tunnel solution and focuses WSDOT's responsibility for more updated information, for evaluating workable alternatives to the previous Arboretum on-and-off ramps. Along with the Sierra Club, as a representative of the Seattle Community Council Federation, I oppose all and/or any Arboretum on-and-off ramps.
- I-234-005** | (4) In the ongoing public EIS Review process, I participated each scheduled time at the Seattle South Lake Union Naval Reserve Building, in order to generate more analysis for electronic tolling and funding support for possible Metro-HOV lanes. Now commuter fast-rail received input as a possibility for better serving growth density.
- (5) Therefore, the A+ option has finally developed a higher capacity transit plan for less costs to the public. WSDOT can better address both the 520 Bridge traffic impacts to local neighborhoods, as well as provide access to the UW Campus north of the Montlake Cut.

Sincerely, Marietta S. Foubert



I-234-001

Comment noted.

I-234-002

The National Environmental Policy Act states that the federal government must use all practicable means to preserve important cultural and historic aspects of our heritage. Other environmental laws, such as the National Historic Preservation Act, require that effects on significant cultural resources be considered during the public environmental review process. Additionally, Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act declares that "[i]t is the policy of the United States Government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites."

In accordance with all applicable regulations, WSDOT has included mitigation as an integral element of project development and the NEPA process. Specific mitigation measures have been developed through a number of venues, including, but not limited to the Regulatory Agency Coordination process, technical working groups, community construction management planning, and the Section 106 consulting party process. Please see the mitigation sections of the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation (Chapter 9 of the Final EIS), the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report, and the Final Recreation Discipline Report Addendum (both in Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for more information pertaining to WSDOT's mitigation for the use of public parks and significant historic sites.

I-234-003

Comment noted.

I-234-004

Since the SDEIS was published, FHWA and WSDOT have identified a Preferred Alternative that is most similar to Option A, but includes a number of design refinements that minimize the effects presented in the SDEIS. These refinements respond to comments made on the SDEIS and to WSDOT's work with many project stakeholders under Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6392, which was passed by the Washington State Legislature in 2010. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for a description of the planning process and the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative would not include construction of any new ramps in the Arboretum, and would remove both the existing Lake Washington Boulevard ramps and the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps. Access to Lake Washington Boulevard by westbound SR 520 traffic would be moved to a new intersection located on the Montlake Boulevard lid at 24th Avenue East.

I-234-005

Comment noted.