



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

Please use this form to share your comments on the content provided in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement 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.

You can provide comments using one of the following methods:

- Complete this form.
- Mail your comments to Jenifer Young, SDEIS Environmental Manager, Washington State Department of Transportation, 600 Stewart Street, Suite 520, Seattle, WA 98101.
- E-mail your comments to [SR520Bridge\\_SDEIS@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:SR520Bridge_SDEIS@wsdot.wa.gov).
- Speak to a court reporter at an environmental hearing scheduled for 5 – 7 p.m., Feb. 23, at Lake Union Park Naval Reserve Building, 860 Terry Ave. N., Seattle.

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CommentDate: 4/14/2010 23:39  
Comment Source: Online Comment Form

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

I-328-001

As a citizen of Seattle who lives on Portage Bay in the shadow of the west ramp of 520, I am more than frustrated with the plan that has been chosen for the replacement of the 520 bridge. It is bigger than needed, dumping even more car traffic onto I-5, which cannot handle the current load. It does not include any of the suggestions that many citizens representing the surrounding and affected neighborhoods made including keeping the bridge low and adding sound deadening features. The design does not include an option for light rail. It rather bases its traffic configurations on traffic patterns from 50 years ago instead of planning for a bridge that we will use and be proud of 50 years from now. We must build something that will discourage the use of single-occupancy vehicles and will move more people safely and quickly. The current system glorifies the automobile and pays little attention to pedestrians and those riding bicycles. It destroys irreplaceable green spaces and if light rail is added to the A+ plan later, will destroy even more.

We have one chance to get this replacement RIGHT. The current plan gets it all WRONG. We can do better!

These comments will become part of the public record for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement. 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, comments may be made available to anyone requesting them for non-commercial purposes.

#### I-328-001

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, but would not add general-purpose lanes. The project would also add a bicycle/pedestrian lane to the corridor. Thus, the project is aligned with improving the overall efficiency of the transportation system by creating incentives for people to choose an alternative to driving alone. The Preferred Alternative evaluated in the Final EIS minimizes the footprint of project wherever possible while complying with safety and operational standards.

Since the SDEIS was published, FHWA and WSDOT have identified a Preferred Alternative with 6 lanes and a managed shoulder across Portage Bay. Section 5.1 of the Final EIS describes the freeway operation and travel time benefits that would result from these improvements. A 4-lane Portage Bay Bridge would not allow for HOV lanes, which provide express lane connectivity, or for a managed shoulder in the westbound direction, which is needed to address congestion. The Preferred Alternative also includes a number of noise reduction strategies, including a reduced speed limit on the Portage Bay Bridge, and 4-foot traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating (see Chapter 2 and Section 5.7 of the Final EIS).

The transportation analysis conducted for the SDEIS was consistent with industry standards, NEPA requirements, regional planning process, and FHWA traffic analysis guidelines for evaluating and comparing existing and future transportation project alternatives. The SR 520, I-5 to Medina project would result in immediate benefits for transit speed and reliability in the corridor by providing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes across the floating bridge and better HOV connections at the Montlake and I-5 interchanges. The HOV lanes would allow for the near-term implementation of bus rapid transit, as called for in the SR 520 High-Capacity Transit Plan.

Section 2.4 in the Final EIS explains why initial implementation of light rail transit on SR 520 is not planned. Section 2.4 also explains how the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project can accommodate future high capacity transit, such as proposed bus rapid transit or potential future light rail. Light rail could be accommodated either by converting the HOV lanes for rail use or by adding light-rail only lanes. 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.