

Online Comment by User: Jeffounet

Submitted on: 10/17/2006 9:03:00 AM

Comment Category: Comments on Construction Effects

Comment Location: Chapter-6, Page-16

Address: , , 98008

Comment:

I-0568-001

I am very surprised you consider closing the westbound HOV lane on 520 for any length of time. It carries more people than the two general purpose lanes next to it. Closing the lane make create more congestion over two years than the completed project will ever "gain" over the no build alternative over its lifetime (and any "gain" may only be for five years, by which time latent demand will max out whatever is built).

Please study closing one general purpose lane instead. It's not any more extreme that closing the highly productive HOV lane. And if you've already studied and rejected this, please mention it in the EIS.

Comment Category: Other Environmental Effects

Comment Location: Chapter-6, Page-18

Comment:

I-0568-002

Isn't CO2 classified as an air pollutant?

The text doesn't make mention of it (only of carbon monoxide) yet it's obvious carrying more vehicles will increase releases of carbox dioxide, especially in the 6-lane option, for years. Seattle and Redmond have already signed Mayor Nickel's Climate Agreement, and Bellevue is likely to follow suit in the years ahead. I expect these cities will want the EIS to contain CO2 emissions since they'll have to counter any increase on 520 with decreases elsewhere, or lobby to cap CO2 emissions on the project by perhaps rejecting the 6-lane option.

Comment Category: Transportation and Traffic

Comment Location: Chapter-6, Page-5

Comment:

I-0568-003

I question one metric used (which may be questioning EIS requirements more than your work in addressing these requirements).

A lot of importance is attached to how many minutes the SOV driver saves. I ride transit and find transit trips to be usually longer, but they're worth it because those minutes are not wasted: I can read or use my laptop on these trips, which I can't do while driving. I definitely agree that SOV minutes are generally lost time and drivers want to reduce them, but I question how much money it is worth. A couple of billion dollars on increasing access to services and mobility (via Commute Trip Reduction, mixed-use zoning, and of course transit) is to me much more worthwhile than the same couple of billion dollars spent adding a few miles of a highway lane.

You provide a detailed table of time gained / lost for SOV riders and I would like to see the same for the main transit routes crossing 520 (for example, Sound Transit 540, 545. Metro 271, and some rush hours routes like the 242). Both these tables should also have numbers for during construction, and after project completion.

I-0568-001

Comment Summary:

Traffic Management (Construction)

Response:

See Section 4.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0568-002

Comment Summary:

Energy and Greenhouse Gases

Response:

See Section 14.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0568-003

Comment Summary:

Freeway Operations (I-5 Area)

Response:

See Section 5.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.