

I-0793-001

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Comment Category: Comments on Alternatives

Comment Location: Chapter-1, Page-1

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**Comment:**

All of the plans currently proposed by the WSDOT are bad. We must scrap the idea of rebuilding the SR 520 bridge until the Seattle approach utilizes a shallow tunnel design from the western high-rise to the junction with I-5.

When the original 520 bridge was built in the 1960's, two beautiful city neighborhoods (Montlake and North Broadway), two irreplaceable urban lakes (Portage Bay and Union Bay), and one of the most beautiful urban parks and wetlands in the United States (the Arboretum, Foster Island, and surrounding channels and streams) were destroyed. God gave Seattle some of the most spectacular scenery in the world on which to build a city. It is time we stop ruining what we have been given and in which we are so fortunate to live. We must stop the short-sighted urban "planning" that plagues our region and, instead, build an urban infrastructure that we can be proud of a hundred or more years from now.

Both of the designs proposed by the WSDOT are obscenities that need to be rejected NOW! Instead of improving the local areas, they will further destroy them. Of the two, the so-called Pacific interchange approach is especially odious - not only does it perpetuate the rape of the existing Montlake/Arboretum areas but now it also destroys the priceless waterfront parklands of the University of Washington on the north shore of the Ship Canal. This design MUST be declared DEAD ON ARRIVAL NOW!

A shallow tunnel for the western end of the 520 bridge is by far the best solution for joining the bridge to Seattle and I-5. There are no engineering reasons why such an approach cannot work and we must insist that the WSDOT take this approach.

Like the tunnel proposed by Mayor Nickels to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct, which also should be supported, a tunnel for the west end of the 520 bridge would produce incalculable benefits for our city. Properly conceived, a tunnel would permit the easy and free flow of regional traffic through the affected neighborhoods to the link with I-5. Foster Island, Portage Bay, and Union Bay can be restored to their pre-1960's beauty, the Montlake and North Broadway neighborhoods will no longer have to deal with traffic noise and vehicle pollution, and new urban parks and lakeshores will be created. We will leave a priceless and timeless gift for our children and their children, indeed for all future generations lucky enough to live in our beautiful city.

A tunnel will be more expensive than the hideous viaducts now proposed for the Seattle piece of a new 520 bridge. But the added cost is easily justified by the improvement in the quality of life of our city, especially when that added cost is amortized over the probable life of a tunnel. Unlike viaducts and bridges that are exposed to the elements and require constant and costly maintenance and, even then, seem to rarely be able to last more than 50 years without being replaced, well-designed and properly constructed tunnels essentially

**I-0793-001**

**Comment Summary:**

Tube/Tunnel Concepts

**Response:**

See Section 1.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

**I-0793-001**

have indefinite lives, with normal maintenance typically limited to servicing ventilation equipment and renewing road surfaces.

We understand that there are other regional transportation needs that might be more urgent than a new 520 bridge and we feel that those needs should be first addressed. For this reason, we suggest postponing any re-build of the 520 bridge until such time that the Seattle end can utilize a modern shallow tunnel design. Also, no new 520 bridge can be seriously considered that does not, at a minimum, include two rail lines as well as dedicated carpool and bus lanes.