

Online Comment by User: Sarah Reichard

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Comment:

I-0849-001

I am one of the many people who use the Washington Park Arboretum to teach students. In my case it is University of Washington students, but teachers from every community college in the area, as well as other educational institutions use it. We teach plant identification, horticulture, soils, recreation, and many other subjects.

One of the difficulties in teaching in this wonderful resource is the amount of traffic through on Lake Washington Blvd. This road was designed by the famous Olmsted Brothers firm for carriages. It is a beautiful road, but cars drive much faster than carriages and there are few safe places to cross it. Adding traffic to it, as the Pacific Interchange alternative would do, increases the danger. Furthermore, it is extremely difficult to teach when one has to compete with the noise from traffic.

On behalf of all of us who use this regional public garden for education, please do not add traffic to Lake Washington Blvd. You would be serving this state to find ways to get traffic OFF of it! Education is a top priority in this state and is linked to increased state revenue, selection of the region by companies, individual health, and a quality standard of life. Facilitate that, don't hinder it!

Finally, I have been involved with the American Public Garden Association for many years. In that capacity I have had the good fortune to visit public gardens (botanic gardens and arboreta) all over the world. I can say that in all honesty, the Washington Park Arboretum is one of the most beautiful in the world, with a very fine collection of many groups of species. For several groups of plants it has the best collection in North America; these collections are important for teaching, research, and conservation. The structures that have been projected will decrease the aesthetics of this beautiful garden and the increased pollution will be harmful to many of the plants. I believe WSDOT is aware of the affects of automobile pollution on plants because that is a criteria in roadside plant selection.

I-0849-002

I strongly encourage you to not recommend the 6 lane bridge with the Pacific Interchange. This will be a disaster for the Washington Park Arboretum and an embarrassment to the state and to WSDOT. Already I have had conversations with people from all over the country who have heard about it and are incredulous that something so unbelievably short-sighted could even be considered. Is this what you want future generations to believe of this state?

I-0849-001

Comment Summary:

Arboretum (Concerns)

Response:

See Section 9.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0849-002

Comment Summary:

Pacific Street Interchange Option

Response:

See Section 1.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.