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Comment Category: Pacific Street Interchange

Comment Location: Chapter-1, Page-1

Address: 1931 East Calhoun Street, Seattle, Washington 98112-2644

Comment:

I-0917-001

A month ago, I wrote in favor of the Pacific Street Interchange option for a new 520 bridge. However, I rescind that support because I do not think the Arboretum should be further invaded and this alternative appears to do that..

All the cross-lake proposals take it for granted that a bridge is needed, but not all the possibilities have been considered, e.g., a tunnel, and in-depth environmental studies been not been done to PRECISELY gauge the impact of any of the alternatives on the environment (including noise, pollution runoff, wild life, and people in the surrounding areas.

I am adamant that I do NOT want the 9-lane route through Portage Bay that was originally suggested. But until an alternative is found that will leave the Arboretum as it is (in fact, tear down the freeway that is already wrecking it), I remain undecided, and withdraw my support for the Pacific Street Interchange.

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Comment Location: Chapter-6, Page-1

Comment:

Pacific Street Interchange

Thus far (August 23, 2006), the PACIFIC STREET INTERCHANGE is the only SR520 plan that makes sense to me in terms of traffic flow improvement for cars and transit through Montlake in all directions; preservation of the Arboretum, the environment, and wild life; accessibility (at last!) for bicycles and pedestrians; and overall aesthetics.

As a 34-year resident of the Montlake neighborhood, I've had to endure the major increase in backups at rush hours, during Husky games, and because of traffic jams/accidents on the current 520 bridge. It is literally impossible to get to and from University Village much of the time, which has kept me from convenient shopping options and forced me to drive to farther south of the Montlake Bridge to shop (which costs more gas and takes more time).

Except for the Pacific Street Interchange, no options for bridge replacement do anything but dramatically worsen traffic, adversely affect the environment, and offer no real alternatives to the current situation. In addition, they are phenomenally ugly expanses of concrete.

The beauty of the Pacific Street Interchange solves all the basic needs I outlined above and contributes to the area's beautiful views of lakes, mountains, and natural habitat.

I-0917-001

Comment Summary:

Pacific Street Interchange Option

Response:

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

In discussion with other Montlake residents, I agree that a master plan is needed for the UW transit hub that will incorporate access to the hospital and all the UW's sports facilities, as well as a rational plan for the interaction of transportation (e.g., buses, Sound transit, pedestrians, bicycles).

The under-bridge environment for wildlife and recreation must be a major factor in the design of all elevated parts of the bridge access. The Pacific Street Interchange seeks to address this.

The Arboretum is a jewel that must NOT be adversely affected by more pavement and poor planning. It is a miracle that the Arboretum survived the last egregious example of the "pave it over" mentality; removal of the hideous go-nowhere ramps is essential. The Pacific Street Interchange will create a new park as a continuous green belt between the Arboretum and Union Bay.

Finally, it is about time that a means was found for connecting the Burke-Gilman Trail to the Eastside, and for providing a way to get to Madison Park WITHOUT having to go miles out of the way as well as polluting the Arboretum with car emissions!

There has been discussion of using a toll to fund the Arboretum master plan and better manage traffic on the Lake Washington Boulevard, and I heartily endorse this even though I'd have to pay this toll.

Since there is a way to solve the immense traffic problems in Montlake, provide increased access for all parties, build something with quality and beauty, protect the environment and natural setting of the Arboretum and surrounding wetlands, I enthusiastically and strongly favor the Pacific Street Interchange option for replacing SR520's bridge.