

Online Comment by User: zbarsness

Submitted on: 10/31/2006 4:46:00 PM

Comment Category: 6-Lane Alternative

Comment Location: Chapter-5, Page-15

Address: , , 98112

Comment:

I strongly support the 6-lanes alternative for 520 (page 3-15)

Current and future traffic projections on this vital Seattle-Eastside link are such that simply replacing the current 4 lane bridge makes no sense. If we are to address our current and future transportation needs as a community successfully, we must be willing to make the infrastructure investments that will support our current and future transportations needs, NOT past transportation needs. First and foremost, we must focus on identifying a solution that enhances transit speed and reliability, both of which have diminished significantly in recent years as the volume of east-west traffic in this corridor has increased. Of the alternatives under consideration, the 6-lane alternative for 520 performs best in meeting our community's needs going forward.

Comment Category: General Comments

Comment Location: Chapter-5, Page-24

Comment:

I strongly support the bike connection to Madison Park (page 3-24)

Anything we can do to enhance the safety and ease of bike transportation between Seattle and the Eastside is critical. I currently live in Madison Park, on McGilvra Blvd. I am also a recreational cyclist. While, I would not use the bike connection for commuting purposes on a regular basis, I believe it critical that we adopt a solution which facilitates this use of the bridge. Anything we can do to encourage people to get out of their cars and into alternative modes of transport is worthwhile. In addition, cyclists who currently commute to the eastside (or recreate) ride through the arboretum on Lake Washington Blvd going either north to connect with the 520 express bus (or Burke-Gilman trail), or south to access the bike path over the I-90 bridge. Their presence on a heavily trafficked artery that has no real shoulder already poses a serious safety risk. The amount of bicycle traffic on Lake Washington Blvd will only increase once a bike lane over 520 is available. By providing access through Madison Park, the safety hazard in the arboretum would be significantly reduced.

As a residence of Madison Park, I would certainly enjoy having access to eastside rides over a Madison Park connection for my recreational rides. As a resident on McGilvra Blvd, which is likely to experience increased bicycle traffic as a result of a Madison Park connection, I see no problem. Many cyclists currently use this road. McGilvra has far less vehicular traffic than Lake Washington Blvd, is wider and has an adequate shoulder, all these characteristics would reduce the safety hazards associated with increased bicycle traffic, whether commuter or recreational, using any new bike path over the new 520 bridge. Bikes aren't isn't noisy either, so increased bicycle traffic on my street would not reduce the quality of life in my own home.

I-0967-001

Comment Summary:

6-Lane Alternative

Response:

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

I-0967-002

Comment Summary:

Madison Park Bicycle/Pedestrian Connection

Response:

See Section 24.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0967-003

Comment Category: Pacific Street Interchange

Comment Location: Chapter-5, Page-24

Comment:

I strongly support the Pacific Interchange Option (page 2-34)

Of the alternatives under consideration, I strongly believe that this option does the best job of addressing a myriad of community needs. Our overall community transportation and livability needs would be best addressed by this solution. I've lived in Chicago, Boston, and New York, all three of which are great cities. They are wonderful places to live because (1) public transportation is widely available, extensive in its geographic coverage (thus convenient), consistent and reliable, and (2) these cities offer residents extensive parks and greenspaces in which to recreate. Of the alternatives under consideration for the 520 bridge replacement, only the Pacific Interchange option maximizes our community needs on these two critical dimensions. A Pacific Interchange does the best job of enhancing the quality, speed, and reliability of our public transportation needs. The current connections provided on public transport between the eastside and Seattle systems are weak, not only in this corridor, but others. As commuting patterns continue to become more diffuse, enhancing east-west/north-south connectivity in our regional public transportation systems should be our highest priority. Only by addressing these needs will we reduce the number of cars on the road. The Pacific interchange solution does the best job of creating a viable and commuter friendly east-west/north-south public transportation hub that not only leverages regional bus transportation but also enhances connectivity across different modes of public transportation (light rail-bus). Second, this solution is the only solution that adequately addresses the current congestion nightmare in the Montlake/UW area. The Pacific Interchange option would enhance the quality of life in surrounding residential neighborhoods by reducing traffic on local surface streets, while also enhancing access to 520 for commuters coming from the north, thus reducing travel times and pollution generated by idling cars. Finally, the proposed greenbelt associated with this plan would provide for continuous greenspace between the Montlake Playfields and the arboretum. Such a greenbelt would enhance opportunities for a wide variety of people in our community to recreate.

I-0967-003

Comment Summary:

Pacific Street Interchange Option

Response:

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