



CITY COUNCIL
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October 2, 2006

VIA E-MAIL AND MAIL

Paul Krueger
 Environmental Manager
 SR 520 Project Office
 414 Olive Way, Suite 400
 Seattle, WA 98101

Re: SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project

Dear Mr. Krueger:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement dated August 18, 2006 (Draft EIS) for the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project (Project). On behalf of its citizens, the Mercer Island City Council makes the following comments based upon information presented in the EIS:

L-003-001

1. **Preferred Alternative.**

The City of Mercer Island encourages the selection of the "6-Lane Alternative" resulting in adding one HOV lane in each direction across the bridge as the preferred alternative. The 6-Lane Alternative would complete the regional HOV connection across SR 520 and allow for two general-purpose lanes in each direction. The City supports the 6-lane Alternative for the Project.

2. **Mitigate Adverse Environmental Impacts from 6 Lane Alternative**

L-003-002

It is our understanding that the increase expansion of the SR 520 Bridge, and associated increases in impervious surfaces and loss of environmentally-sensitive areas, within the Lake Washington watershed will require mitigation under NEPA and SEPA. As you may be aware, Mercer Island owns and manages an 84 acre waterfront park known as Luther Burbank Park. This park is located along the northern and eastern shore of Mercer Island and has 4,280 feet of shoreline. Puget Sound (PS) Chinook salmon protected under the Endangered Species Act use this shoreline habitat for juvenile rearing and migration. This park shoreline may provide an excellent opportunity for habitat restoration that could assist the 520 Project meet their NEPA and SEPA mitigation requirements.

L-003-003

To further emphasize the need for habitat mitigation, it is our understanding that the Pacific Interchange Option will place four large columns in the path of all migrating fish, as well as

L-003-001

Comment Summary:

6-Lane Alternative

Response:

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

L-003-002

Comment Summary:

Wetland Mitigation

Response:

See Section 16.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

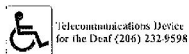
L-003-003

Comment Summary:

Pacific Street Interchange Option

Response:

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



L-003-003 increase the impervious surfaces and storm water runoff into Lake Washington. This option could increase the predation effects to PS Chinook as well as further degrade the water quality in Lake Washington.

We recommend the EIS be amended to provide detailed environmental impacts for all the alternatives, including the indirect and cumulative effects under NEPA and SEPA. In addition, a detailed mitigation should be developed for the EIS so we may better understand the associated environmental impacts of all of the alternatives.

L-003-004 3. **Tolling.**

The Draft EIS lists the following adverse effect as one that cannot be mitigated:

The need to pay tolls to cross the Evergreen Point Bridge. If the SR 520 project is built, drivers would have to pay to use the Evergreen Point Bridge-a crossing that is free today.

The decision to toll the Evergreen Point Bridge must also be evaluated as an indirect and cumulative effect on the I-90 corridor. The Draft EIS should be amended to include this indirect and cumulative effect. The City of Mercer Island requests that all tolling decisions be thoroughly studied by WSDOT to insure there is no adverse environmental impact on the City of Mercer Island by increasing traffic within the I-90 corridor or adversely impacting Mercer Island residents ingress to or egress from Mercer Island.

4. **I-405 Expansion**

The City supports expansion of the I-405 corridor from SR 520 south to I-5 (e.g. southern section of corridor).

Thank you for considering Mercer Island's comments on the Draft EIS and please do not hesitate to contact City Manager Rich Conrad if you require further clarification of these comments. The City reserves the right to comment further in the event further studies, analysis or new information becomes available.

Sincerely,



Bryan Cairns,
Mayor

Copied: Mercer Island City Councilmembers
Doug MacDonald, WSDOT Director
Joni Earl, Sound Transit CEO
Paul Tanaka, Sound Transit Engineer
Rich Conrad, City Manager
Deb Symmonds, Deputy City Manager
Londi Lindell, City Attorney

L-003-004

Comment Summary:

Tolling Scenarios, Pricing, and Revenue

Response:

See Section 3.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.