

Online Comment by User: Daniel Krashin

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Comment Category: Comment on all alternatives

Comment Location: Chapter-7, Page-1

Address: 3825 42nd Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98105

Comment:

I'm a stakeholder in this issue, since I live in the Laurelhurst area with a magnificent view of Union Bay (and 520) from my balcony (if I lean a little) and I use the waterfront areas, parks, and arboretum quite a bit.

I'm very concerned about several issues:

1) Both the construction and the final six-lane bridge will put severe stress on a fragile ecosystem that is already frayed and challenged by pollution, climate change, recreational activity, etc. Seattle has a unique position as an urban landscape that is coexistent with living bodies of water on every side, and we have a special responsibility to take care of that.

2) Specific areas near the 520 bridge are absolutely unique -- the UBNA wetlands are a (restored) piece of lakeside ecology and a spectacular spot for birds in particular. The close proximity of UBNA and other parklands on both sides of Union Bay make this area much more important, diverse, and viable as an ecological preserve than a few scattered bits of open water would be.

In addition, the Washington Arboretum is a city treasure as well as a scientific institution. Any impact to it should be considered an impact on Seattle as a whole, particularly because trees can be very sensitive to traffic impact.

3) The report does not, and probably cannot, address long-term affects on traffic flow because there are so many unanswered questions about things like the future of mass transit in the area. However, it seems very likely to me that an expanded 520 will simply have a "vacuum effect" on traffic between Eastside and Seattle, which will after a brief transition lead to the same congestion in SIX lanes as we now have in four, and a commensurate increase in pollution and congestion at both ends of the bridge, particularly a horrible mess on I-5 as three lanes' worth of rush hour traffic enters and leaves the highway. We do know that people are going to keep moving to this area, so aren't we just planting up a crop of trouble for the next generation of traffic planners with this plan?

I-0123-001

I-0123-002

I-0123-001

Comment Summary:

Context Sensitive Solutions

Response:

See Section 10.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0123-002

Comment Summary:

Regional Land Use and Transportation Planning

Response:

See Section 6.4 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.