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Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 4:22 PM
To: SR 520 Bridge SDEIS
Subject: SR520 Replacement

To whom it may concern:

I-036-001

My wife, Gillian, and I are writing to express our concern about the SR 520 solution. We strongly support design Plan M and oppose Option A+ because:

- 1) Plan M "aligns with that of the Seattle City Council's resolution to balance the new design for the Westside portal of SR 520 with reasonable balance for the neighborhoods that will bear the brunt of its expansion" (Laurelhurst Letter, Dec. 20, 2009).
- 2) A tunnel under the Montlake Cut will offer continuous access to SR520 and will not require a drawbridge. Plan M "aligns with that of the Seattle City Council's resolution to balance the new design for the Westside portal of SR 520 with reasonable balance for the neighborhoods that will bear the brunt of its expansion".(Laurelhurst Letter, Dec. 20, 2009)
- 3) Plan M offers a narrower footprint than Option A+.
- 4) Option A+'s plan for bridge 30 feet above Lake Washington affords a significantly ugly solution which sacrifices the beauty of the area without relieving congestion along Montlake Boulevard.

I-036-002

In addition, we strongly support a light rail for the bridge with an easy connection to the planned University light rail station. Hopefully, a narrow footprint and light rail are not mutually exclusive! The fact is making more lanes for vehicles is the answer of the past.

I-036-003

I-036-004

As homeowners in the Laurelhurst neighborhood, we are well aware of the need to improve traffic flow on the 520 floating bridge and along Montlake Boulevard. However we also believe that it is well worth the investment that Plan M requires to preserve the magnificence of this part of the City. The charm and beauty of Seattle--the San Francisco of the Northwest--is not just its downtown center with its wonderful architecture, but also its special geographical setting, its neighborhoods, its parks, and the waters of Puget Sound and the lakes that give the City its character. These are tremendous assets of irreplaceable value. We strongly support design Plan M because it has the least impact on the neighborhoods of Madison Park, Laurelhurst, Montlake, Portage Bay, and North Capital Hill. It also has the least impact on use of the Arboretum by pedestrians, and it preserves the Montlake Bridge, which is an architectural gem. Seattle deserves preservation and Washington deserves a Seattle that is not degraded.

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I-036-001

Comment noted. WSDOT received a number of comments in support of and in opposition to Options A, K, and L and the associated suboptions. These opinions are summarized in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement Summary of Comments (WSDOT, April 2010), available at <http://www.wstc.wa.gov/HighwayTolling/SR520Bridge.htm>.

Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has identified a Preferred Alternative, which is similar to Option A but with a number of design refinements that would improve mobility and safety while reducing negative effects. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS describes the Preferred Alternative and Chapters 5 and 6 describe its environmental effects.

I-036-002

Comment noted.

I-036-003

Section 2.4 in the Final EIS explains why initial implementation of light rail transit on SR 520 is not planned. The decision to locate Sound Transit's initial east-west light rail transit corridor on I-90 rather than SR 520 has been made through extensive regional deliberation (see Table 2-2 of the Final EIS). However, while WSDOT believed that the design of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project already accommodated potential future light rail, the agency worked with the City of Seattle and Sound Transit to identify changes that would enhance the corridor's rail compatibility. The Preferred Alternative reflects these design changes and allows for two potential future rail options:

- Option 1: Convert the HOV/transit lanes to light rail. This approach would accommodate light rail by converting the HOV lanes to exclusive rail use. Trains would use the direct-access ramps at Montlake Boulevard to exit, or could utilize a 40-foot gap between

the eastbound and westbound lanes of the west approach to make a more direct connection to the University Link station at Husky Stadium.

- Option 2: Add light-rail only lanes. This approach would allow several connections—via a high bridge, a drawbridge, or a tunnel—to the University Link station.

Both approaches would require the addition of supplemental floating bridge pontoons to support the additional weight of light rail, should the regional decision to do so be made and funded. Such a decision would need to be planned and programmed by regional land use and transit agencies, funded by a public vote, and evaluated in its own environmental analysis.

The SR 520, I-5 to Medina project would complete the HOV lane system in the corridor, improving reliability and efficiency for transit and carpools, but would not add general purpose lanes. Thus the project is aligned with improving the overall efficiency of the transportation system by creating incentives for people to choose an alternative to driving alone.

I-036-004

Comment noted.