

SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Supplemental Draft EIS Comment Form

Welcome to the environmental hearing for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Please use this form to share your comments on the content provided in the Supplemental Draft EIS document. WSDOT will consider all comments received between Jan. 22 and April 15, 2010 in making its final decision in the environmental review process. Thank you for your comments.

Please enter your contact information below. (Last name and zip code are required to save comment.) If you would like to be added to the project mailing list, please fill out the rest of the contact information and check the box below.

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Do you have any comments on the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

- I-095-001 | NO ON A+!!!!
- I-095-002 | There needs to be a discussing about addressing the long term transit issues in our city and state. There needs to be light rail or a light rail like option for 520.
- I-095-003 | The bridge should not be any higher than the current height the width should be no more that 100 ft and should be only 6 lanes. That is 4 plus 2 for transit.
The second Montlake bridge does nothing for transit and defaces a great historical monument of our city.
The bidge becomes 7 lanes at Portage Bay which goes against the Governors mandate of 6.
- I-095-004 | The Lake Washington BLvd ramps are discusting. Putting large amounts of traffic thru our neighborhoods and the Arboretum (a state treasure)!!!
PEORLE, this is an opportunity to do something great for our city, region, neighborhoods and parks. Take advantage of it!
Ps. In the public comment there was not 1 person who supported the current A+ plan. At best some supported the A+ minus the lake Washington BLvd ramps. But, those ramps are what makes A+ ..A+.

These comments will become part of the public record for the SR 520, Medina to SR 202: Eastside Transit and HOV Project Environmental Assessment. Personal information is voluntary and will become part of the public record if provided. The Washington State Department of Transportation is a public agency and is subject to the State of Washington's Public Records Act (RCW 42.56). Therefore, meeting comments may be made available to anyone requesting them for non-commercial purposes.

I-095-001

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

I-095-002

The project can accommodate future high capacity transit in the SR 520 corridor, which may include proposed bus rapid transit or potential future light rail transit. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS provides further discussion. 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 Section 2.4 and Table 2-2 of the Final EIS). The SR 520 High-Capacity Transit Plan, which was endorsed in 2008 by the state, King County Metro Transit, and Sound Transit, found that until at least 2030, demand for transit in the 520 corridor could be satisfied by bus rapid transit that runs in HOV/transit lanes—complementing Sound Transit's East Link on I-90. Through coordination with Sound Transit, WSDOT has designed the Preferred Alternative to have enhanced compatibility with potential future light rail compared to the SDEIS design options (see Chapter 2 of the Final EIS). Under the SR 520 High Capacity Transit Plan, Sound Transit would study the demand and necessity of light rail later in this decade. For more information, please see the SR 520 High Capacity Transit Plan at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/Library/technical.htm>.

I-095-003

Since the SDEIS was published, FHWA and WSDOT have identified a Preferred Alternative that is most similar to Option A, but includes a number of design refinements that minimize the effects presented in the SDEIS. These refinements respond to comments made on the SDEIS

and to WSDOT's work with many project stakeholders. The Preferred Alternative has been designed to minimize SR 520's footprint as much as possible while allowing room for HOV lanes and the shoulders required to satisfy current safety standards regulated by FHWA and the Association of American State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The height of the floating bridge with the Preferred Alternative would be approximately 10 feet higher than the existing bridge, and approximately 5 to 10 feet lower than previous designs considered in the DEIS and the SDEIS. It would be about 10 feet higher than the existing bridge.

Regarding the new bascule bridge, the Preferred Alternative would improve transit reliability in the 23rd/24th/Montlake corridor by providing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on Montlake Boulevard between SR 520 and the Montlake Triangle, which could not occur without additional capacity over the Montlake Cut. WSDOT included the HOV lanes along Montlake in the Preferred Alternative as a result of discussions with King County Metro, Sound Transit, and the Seattle Department of Transportation following the SDEIS. The Final Transportation Discipline Report demonstrates improved transportation operations with the Preferred Alternative in the Montlake area, compared to No Build. The second bascule bridge would allow for lane continuity between the Montlake Cut and the SR 520 Montlake interchange, which would improve traffic operations compared to the No Build Alternative. The bridge would provide additional capacity for transit/HOV, bicycles, and pedestrians across the Montlake Cut. Most notably, overall delay related to bridge openings would decrease for all vehicles because the additional capacity would allow congestion to clear more quickly.

WSDOT has acknowledged that the new bascule bridge could have a visual quality effect on the historic Montlake Bridge that would diminish its integrity, an effect on historic properties with a view of the new bridge that would diminish their integrity, and would require removal of

two residential properties that contribute to the Montlake Historic District. However, the new bascule bridge would not obscure the view of the original Montlake Bridge, and the context-sensitive design would help to minimize the effects on the historic bridge by decreasing the visual impact of the new bridge. The Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) stipulates that the new bridge design must be in keeping with National Parks Service guidelines to minimize effects to the historic bridge and includes other stipulations to ensure mitigation of effects resulting from the new bascule bridge and its proximity to the existing Montlake Bridge. See the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report and Addendum, and the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report, both in Attachment 7 to the Final EIS, for further information.

The Portage Bay bridge as evaluated under Option A included six lanes plus a westbound auxiliary lane. Modifications for the Preferred Alternative include six lanes Portage Bay Bridge with a westbound managed shoulder instead of an auxiliary lane. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for more information.

I-095-004

The Preferred Alternative would not include construction of any new ramps in the Arboretum. The Preferred Alternative would reduce effects on the Arboretum, compared to No Build Alternative, by physically removing the existing Lake Washington Boulevard eastbound on-ramp and westbound off-ramp and the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps. Access to Lake Washington Boulevard by westbound SR 520 traffic would be moved to a new intersection located on the Montlake Boulevard lid at 24th Avenue East. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for additional information. The result of this and other features of the Preferred Alternative is a reduction in trip volumes on Lake Washington Boulevard in the Arboretum compared the No Build Alternative. Under the Preferred Alternative in 2030, a.m. peak hour volumes on Lake Washington Boulevard through the Arboretum would be 1,330 vehicles

per hour with the Preferred Alternative, compared to 1,950 vehicles per hour with the No Build Alternative. P.m. peak hour volumes would be 1,410 vehicles per hour compared to 1,730 with the No Build Alternative. See the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for further discussion of trip volumes.