

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.

Name Beverly Corwin
Organization/Membership Affiliation: Citizen who lives on North Capitol Hill

E-mail
bcorwin

Address:

City: Seattle **State:** WA **Zip Code:** 98102

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

Yes, I have comments.

I-111-001 Overview: If this project had been conceived today, rather than 15 years ago, the results of the planning would be very different from what I see today. The emphasis would be on moving people and not so much emphasis on vehicles. Air pollution, by pollution going into the water would be much less, if at all. As it is, we are planning on building a huge project of a by-gone era. We are not applying much foresight for the future. Global warming mitigation? It is not here. And, that is embarrassing for this state which likes to see itself as forward thinking.

I-111-002 The above overview would have led to an EIS for 4 lanes, as well as for the ones done for this project. There would have been a very compelling reason (s) to rebuild the existing 4-lane bridge, with some widening of lanes, access lanes and bikes and pedestrians.

As it is, the only plan anywhere acceptable is A. And that needs major improvements, ie-

-lower the bridge as much as physically possible. It is 20 feet or more too high.

-the effect on wetlands is too severe. One cannot just "rebuild" wetlands. It takes a long time for them to do the job for little fish, birds, food for all the creatures. In the interim, the delicate balance we have now could be permanently undone due to the time it takes to complete this project.

I-111-003 It appears that Foster Island will be demolished, also. A takes 5.5 acres. -that is a lot in the citty have; less is not acceptable.

-The "supplemental stability pontoons" make the A project too wide, too much concrete covering up the lake. It looks like those pontoons are really put there because someone has not given up on an 8-lane bridge.

-This option A is supposed to be 6 lanes wide. But, with bike and pedestrian lane and off and on ramps, it is really more than 8 lanes. Much too wide.

In sum, I am disappointed with the "replacement bridge". The design/plain is outdated and from another, previous era. It is a shame Washington State cannot do better.

-

-

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-111-001

Options A, K, and L, and the Preferred Alternative identified in the Final EIS would all reduce pollutant emissions to air and would improve water quality compared to the No Build Alternative. Reduced pollutant emissions would result from the addition of HOV lanes on the floating bridge and the Portage Bay Bridge, as well as other HOV facilities, and improved operations as a result of these and other features (see Section 5.8 of the Final EIS and the Air Quality Discipline Report and Addendum [Attachment 7 to the Final EIS]). The project would improve water quality by collecting and treating stormwater.

The existing bridge does not allow for water quality treatment of stormwater (see Sections 4.10 and 5.10 of the Final EIS and the Water Resources Discipline Report and Addendum [Attachment 7 to the Final EIS]). The Energy Discipline Report and Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) provide analysis of the project's effects on greenhouse gas emissions. The project would result in lower greenhouse gas emissions than the No Build Alternative in the project study area. The project study area includes the following freeway segments and associated ramps and interchanges: SR 520 between I-5 in Seattle and SR 202 in Redmond; I-5 in Seattle between NE 45th Street and south of the I-90 collector-distributor north connection to the mainline; and I-405 between NE 70th Street in Kirkland and NE 4th Street in Bellevue. WSDOT continues to work with our partners to reduce transportation sector emissions and vehicle miles traveled on the entire road network, including SR 520. See Section 5.9 of the Final EIS and the Energy Discipline Report and Addendum for further discussion of how the project would avoid or minimize negative effects on greenhouse gas emissions, and how climate change is considered in the design of the project.

I-111-002

Comment noted.

I-111-003

The Preferred Alternative has been designed to minimize SR 520's footprint across Foster Island to the maximum extent possible while accommodating potential future light rail through the corridor. The Preferred Alternative includes a narrow footprint across Foster Island, with reduced right-of-way acquisition in the Arboretum compared to the SDEIS options. In addition, a constant-slope profile improves the clearance of the crossing above the Arboretum Waterfront Trail from its existing 8 feet to between 14 and 20 feet. The higher clearance also improves conditions for wetland vegetation east and west of the island. These aquatic bed wetlands would experience a slightly greater overall area of shading than under Option A--as a result of the gap between northbound and southbound lanes to accommodate future light rail--but would benefit from greater light penetration beneath the higher structures. See the Ecosystems Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for further discussion of effects on wetlands.

The pontoons described in the SDEIS are needed to support the 6-lane alternative. The width of the new 6-lane SR 520 corridor and the width of the new floating bridge would not allow conversion to eight lanes without physical widening of the roadway. This would result in a new project that would need to undergo separate environmental review.

The Washington State Legislature, through passage of Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6099 in spring 2007, called for a design to be developed for the corridor that would provide six total lanes, with four general-purpose lanes and two HOV lanes (see page 1-17 of the SDEIS). The bicycle/pedestrian lane is in addition to these lanes, and would provide considerable mobility benefits for nonmotorized travelers and commuters (see Chapter 7 of the Transportation Discipline Report and Final Transportation Discipline Report in Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).