

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

Please use this form to share your comments on the content provided in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement 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.

You can provide comments using one of the following methods:

- Complete this form.
- Mail your comments to Jenifer Young, SDEIS Environmental Manager, Washington State Department of Transportation, 600 Stewart Street, Suite 520, Seattle, WA 98101.
- E-mail your comments to SR520Bridge\_SDEIS@wsdot.wa.gov.
- Speak to a court reporter at an environmental hearing scheduled for 5 – 7 p.m., Feb. 23, at Lake Union Park Naval Reserve Building, 860 Terry Ave. N., Seattle.

1. **Name** Samantha Metcalf

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3. **Address:**

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

I-152-001

Basically the only real difference I see is adding an HOV lane in both directions across the bridge. I think we already outgrew that years ago. I realize there are a lot of factors at work including the environmental impact, the Medina residents opposition to taking away residential land, etc. However, if you're going to do something, do it right the first time instead of wasting billions of dollars for something that has absolutely no impact on the traffic problem across SR 520. These plans just won't do much, if anything unfortunately. I think it looks like a big waste of money as it stands. Making the bridge 8 lanes (4 in each direction if you must add the HOV) or just making the 3rd lane in each direction a general purpose lane would be a bit more helpful. Or possibly making an additional express lane like the ones on I-90? Maybe a "double decker" bridge like the ship canal to save space?

These comments will become part of the public record for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement. 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, comments may be made available to anyone requesting them for non-commercial purposes.

**I-152-001**

The addition of HOV lanes to the corridor, with no increase in the existing number of general-purpose lanes, is expressly intended to improve the speed and reliability of transit service, providing an incentive to use transit. As noted discussion of project need on page 1-6 of the SDEIS, the prospect of substantially increased travel times in 2030 "makes it imperative that commuters be provided with travel choices that allow them to avoid driving alone, and that the proposed project be built to support increased use of transit and HOVs." As discussed in section 5.1 of the SDEIS, and section 5.1 of the Final EIS, HOV and transit commuters would experience substantial travel time benefits in 2030 with the addition of the HOV lane.

WSDOT evaluated an 8-lane alternative in 2002, 2003 and 2005 during the planning and development phases of the Draft EIS. The results of the analyses showed that significant capacity improvements on I-5 between downtown Seattle and the University District would be needed to accommodate 8-lanes on the SR 520 corridor. The analyses concluded that the number of additional cars able to be served by an 8-lane alternative would not equal the "demand" created by the additional lanes, and that the lanes on the Evergreen Point Bridge would end up functioning as "queue storage" for I-5, until capacity improvements on that freeway were completed. In addition, an 8-lane alternative would have required greater displacement of residences, businesses and more acquisition of park land and wetlands in sensitive areas along the corridor, including the Arboretum. The results of the 8-lane alternative evaluations are summarized on pages 3-4 and 3-5 of the Draft EIS. The transportation analysis for the 8-lane alternative identifying its interdependence with the improvements on I-5 is contained in the 8-Lane Alternative Report (Appendix U to the Draft EIS). Also see Chapter 1 of the SDEIS and in the Range of Alternatives and Options Evaluated Report (Attachment 8 to the SDEIS) for more information.

WSDOT has considered double-decked designs in an effort to minimize the overall width and maximize the efficiency of the floating bridge. However, WSDOT found that as the pontoons became narrower, they needed to have much more depth with significant ballast to make them stable. WSDOT also found that the taller double-deck structure raised the center of gravity of the bridge and presented a larger area for the wind to catch, increasing the load on the bridge and decreasing stability. The double-deck roadway also created problems at the ends of the floating bridge, where the ramps from the lower roadway would have to weave through the columns of the upper roadway, creating a taller structure with larger girders and foundations. Therefore, double decking was eliminated from consideration as a design option for the NEPA review of the project.