

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** Rainer Metzger
2. **E-mail** rmetro@gmail.com
3. **Address:**
4. **City:**
5. **State:**
- * 6. **Zip Code:** 98112

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-154-001

I-154-002

Every effort should be made to MINIMIZE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS of this freeway. Since reducing carbon emissions is a stated goal of Governor Gregoire and the State of Washington, we should not be adding single-occupancy car capacity to the new bridge. The 5th and 6th lanes should be dedicated to MASS TRANSIT use only and the highway should have OPTIMAL connections to other forms of transit, especially light rail stations.

Option A is far too wide and would be destructive to the surrounding parks, neighborhoods, and waterways. A second Montlake Bridge should only be built if it is dedicated to bikes, pedestrians, buses, or light rail trains connecting to the Husky Stadium station.

Building freeways to move cars is a 1950s solution. Building freeways to move mass transit is a 2010 solution.

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-154-001

The Energy Discipline Report and Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) provide analysis of the project's effects on greenhouse gas emissions. The analysis of traffic on SR 520 shows that the project would result in lower greenhouse gas emissions in the project area than the No Build Alternative. 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.

I-154-002

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. The HOV lane would be for vehicles with 3 or more passengers, as specified by ESHB 6392. This assumption was evaluated in the Draft EIS, SDEIS, and Final EIS, and has been shown to result in free flow operations in the HOV lane with bus service levels near 600 vehicles per day. The State's HOV lane operations policy would be used to identify when the HOV lanes' operational thresholds were met and when an adjustment to the occupancy requirement would be recommended; however, the State would need to request legislative approval to make any modifications. The project would result in immediate benefits for transit speed and reliability in the corridor by providing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes across the floating bridge and better HOV connections at the Montlake and I-5 interchanges (see Section 5.1 of both the SDEIS and Final EIS). The HOV lanes would allow for the near-term implementation of bus rapid transit, as called for in the SR 520 High-Capacity Transit Plan.

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). It has also been design to minimize effects on and respond to public and agency comments about parks and neighborhoods (see Table 2-3 of the Final EIS). The project would not be destructive to waterways as characterized by the comment, and would not result in permanent negative effects on navigation (see Section 5.14 of the SDEIS and Final EIS).

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. Light rail could be accommodated either by converting the HOV lanes for rail use or by adding light-rail-only lanes. While the design allows potential future light rail to connect to the University Link light rail station at Husky Stadium, it would not do so via the Montlake Bridge. See Section 2.4 of the Final EIS for further information on how light rail could be accommodated. Since rail transit in the SR 520 corridor is not programmed in current regional transit plans, any future project to add rail in the corridor would need to undergo an extensive planning and environmental review process by the responsible transit agency prior to implementation.

The second bascule bridge across the Montlake Cut 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. Chapter 8 of the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) provides updated information regarding the effects of the Preferred Alternative on transit facilities and rider connections.