

From : Hilton, James M. (Perkins Coie) [mailto:JHilton@PerkinsCoie.com]
Sent : Wednesday, March 31, 2010 3:04 PM
To : SR 520 Bridge SDEIS
Subject: Comments on the EIS For Replacement SR 520 Bridge

Dear Environmental Manager:

I-215-001 | It is evident that both options A and L will constitute substantial derogation to the environment in the Montlake vicinity. In fact Option K will also constitute a substantial, but less pervasive, derogation.

There are two critical affects that must be addressed more thoroughly:
Noise and appearance.

I-215-002 | Noise: Option L with the route to the north being above the 520 road bed will generate great and unacceptable noise in very large areas of residences, parks and public areas. It would be totally unacceptable and would constitute a constructive taking of private property.. Option K, by placing the tunnel to the north under 520 is the only acceptable way to mediate this critical concern. Further, the lids proposed for Option K must be completely covered from the east end of the Montlake area to at least beyond the present bridge over to the MOIAH. Finally, it is critical that road beds in this entire area (both 520 and adjacent streets and ramps) be surfaced with the noise reducing surfacing material like that which was tested recently on the east end of the bridge - or some material that is at least as effective in reducing noise.

I-215-003 | Appearance: 520 as it was originally constructed was an insult to the community and to the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. This is finally a chance to improve that environmental disaster. First, the area from the present access to the Montlake bridge and east to East Montlake Park should be completely covered with a landscaped lid, with access for pedestrian and bikes (like I-90 on Mercer Island). Second, all walls that are to be installed should be minimized and benched and stepped, and artfully decorated - and with vegetation covering to the extent possible. The EIS is deficient in lacking details for such construction.

I-215-004 | There is only one option that even begins to meet the needs of our community - Option K. And it needs substantial additional refinement to constitute anything less than and outright constructive taking of the Montlake community and the residential properties in the area.

Sincerely,
Jim Hilton {2425 East Lake Washington Blvd.}

I-215-001

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.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/SDEIS.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-215-002

A noise analysis was conducted for Options A, K, and L; the results of the analysis are included in Section 5.7 of the SDEIS and the Noise Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS). Noise under Option L would not "constitute a constructive taking of private property" as suggested in the comment. In many locations, noise would decrease compared to the No Build Alternative, even without noise mitigation. Noise walls were recommended for the SDEIS design options to mitigate noise where warranted; however, whether or not they are constructed in areas where they are recommended would be determined by the community. However, the Preferred Alternative evaluated in the Final EIS includes a number of noise reduction strategies, such as 4-foot concrete traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating, lower speed limit through the Portage Bay area, encapsulating expansion joints, and using noise-absorptive materials around the Montlake lid portals.

Quieter concrete pavement is included as a design feature for Option A, Option K, and the Preferred Alternative; however, because it is not an FHWA-approved mitigation measure and because future pavement

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surface conditions cannot be determined with certainty, it is not included in the noise model for the project.

Information on noise modeling results for the Preferred Alternative can be found in Section 5.7 of the Final EIS and the Noise Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

I-215-003

The Preferred Alternative includes a full lid between Montlake Blvd and East Montlake Park with cyclist and pedestrian connections to primary bicycle routes and activity centers such as the UW and the Arboretum. Aesthetic goals for the lid and its surroundings do include the points noted in the comment: avoid towering walls and use landscaping to screen new structures wherever possible.

I-215-004

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>.