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From: Hans and Patti [mailto:hans-pat@comcast.net]

Sent: Tuesday, April 06, 2010 9:20 PM

To: SR 520 Bridge SDEIS

Cc: Rodney Tom; Ross Hunter; Deb Eddy; hammondp@wsdot.wa.gov

Subject: Comment of SR-520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project

I-227-001

Over the past couple of years I have attended numerous public meeting and watched the SR520 bridge replacement project - in spite of all the good work done by WSDOT staff - evolve from a future oriented, regional needs based analysis to a retro looking mitigation project with an accidental bridge attached. Due to lack of political will and leadership, adjacent community groups have been permitted to dictate terms and design solutions incompatible with efficient traffic flow. A simple project tolling finance option has been high jacked by interest groups that are more interested in what is technically possible with a large associated overhead for development, maintenance, operation, administration and enforcement - as opposed to operationally simple, financially efficient and implementation of good public policy.

As it now appears, the region will be saddled with a solution that

\* Offers minimal improvement of the horrible SR520 - I-5 interchange

\* Offers no recognition of HOV traffic flow going both North and South from/to SR520 to/from I-5

\* Offers an SR520 corridor capacity already under pressure with proposed design and certainly insufficient for planned decades of future use

I-227-002

\* Neglects of incorporate both light rail, HOV lane and general traffic lanes as part of a regional transportation system infrastructure

I-227-003

\*Basically locks in for the next century all the current inadequate interchanges [decoupled] designed for an obsolete traffic pattern - possibly with exception of Montlake

I-227-004

\* Neglects to protect the Arboretum from excessive traffic volume, which is choking the park

I-227-005

\* Designs new HOV lane-only access ramps that reflect an obsolete commuting pattern [South Kirkland Park&Ride direction Seattle only]

I-227-006

\* Neglects to draw any significant learning from tolling experience from Tacoma Narrows Bridge and SR167 Hot-Lane tolling experiences

I-227-007

\* To mention but a few items - again and again

### I-227-001

Comment noted.

### I-227-002

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. Thus, the project is aligned with improving the overall efficiency of the transportation system by creating incentives for people to choose an alternative to driving alone. Section 2.4 in the Final EIS explains why initial implementation of light rail transit on SR 520 is not planned.

While WSDOT believed that the design of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project already accommodated potential future light rail, the agency worked with the City of Seattle and Sound Transit to identify changes that would enhance the corridor's rail compatibility. The Preferred Alternative reflects these design changes. Light rail could be accommodated either by converting the HOV lanes for rail use or by adding light-rail only lanes. Both approaches would require the addition of supplemental floating bridge pontoons to support the additional weight of light rail, should the regional decision to add light rail be made and funded. Such a decision would need to be planned and programmed by regional land use and transit agencies, funded by a public vote, and evaluated in its own environmental analysis. See Section 2.4 of the Final EIS for further discussion.

### I-227-003

Comment noted.

### I-227-004

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

I-227-007

I find it disappointing - if not surprising - that the public will not only have to live with this failure for years to come, they will likely also have to pay an even greater amount within a decade of the planned new bridge opening to get it right. If we are hard pressed to find adequate funding now, why do we think it will be easier next time?

By then, most elected officials currently in office will likely have moved on. There are leaders and there are followers. It is a problem when followers present themselves as leaders only at election time.

Regards

Hans Gundersen

cc: Gov. Gregoire

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 the trip volumes on Lake Washington Boulevard in the Arboretum compared to 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, 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.

#### **I-227-005**

This comment seems to be addressing the Medina to SR 202 project design that includes a direct access ramp at 108th to serve transit vehicles between the South Kirkland P&R and SR 520 to/from the west. Analysis for that direct access ramp was included in the SR 520, Medina to SR 202 Environmental Assessment, available at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/MedinaTo202/>.

#### **I-227-006**

WSDOT is monitoring and evaluating the SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project, and continues to work to reduce expenditures by adjusting enforcement, transaction processing, and operational costs. By adaptively managing the HOT Lanes Pilot Project, WSDOT expects revenues for that project to exceed operating expenses by Spring 2011. WSDOT and the Washington State Transportation Commission continue to review the successes and lessons learned from the Tacoma Narrows

Bridge Tolling and SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project to advance tolling technology and strategies in the SR 520 corridor.

**I-227-007**

Comment noted.