

North East Seattle Community Organizations

MARCH 2010

Paula Hammond  
Secretary of Transportation  
Attention: Jenifer Young  
Environmental Manager  
SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project  
SR 520 Project Office  
600 Stewart Street, Suite 520  
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
SR 520, I-5 to Medina Bridge Replacement and HOV Project

Dear Secretary Hammond and Environmental Manager Young:

C-010-001

After considering the alternatives presented, we favor Alternative A+ without any ramps connecting SR 520 and Lake Washington Boulevard East.

Alternative A+ can move the project forward. It is the only design within the statutory budget of \$ 4.65 Billion Dollars; it does the least damage to the Arboretum and Seattle parks, the Union Bay wetlands, the University Campus and the surrounding neighborhoods; it is friendly to transit; and it mitigates its impact to the Montlake and Roanoke Park neighborhoods by adding lids at strategic locations.

The Arboretum is a priceless heritage and internationally recognized. Removing SR 520 ramps from the Arboretum entirely allows the entire area to revert to Arboretum use as the Olmsted plan had envisioned. The return of all the area now occupied by ramps would provide WSDOT with replacement in kind for wetlands taken for the mainline bridge on the north of the Arboretum and would redirect SR 520 traffic out of the Arboretum to other City arterials. This would assist getting the needed permits for the project.

WSDOT recommended the auxiliary lane on Portage Bay as smoothing the entry and exit of vehicles on to the Portage Bay bridge and assisting the flow of traffic on Montlake Boulevard East. The traffic analysis bears out this recommendation.

Yours truly

  
Nicolette Bromberg  
Belvedere Terrace Community Council

### C-010-001

After the SDEIS was issued for public and agency review and comments were received on the design options and suboptions, FHWA and WSDOT developed a Preferred Alternative that is similar to Option A but includes design refinements responsive to community and stakeholder recommendations. The Preferred Alternative substantively addresses the North East Seattle Community Organizations' comments. It would reduce effects on the Arboretum by removing the existing Lake Washington Boulevard eastbound on-ramp and westbound off-ramp and the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps. It also replaces the auxiliary lane on the new Portage Bay Bridge with a managed shoulder, allowing for a slightly narrower bridge as requested by stakeholders while still providing necessary traffic management.

The Preferred Alternative would improve mobility and safety while reducing negative effects. Please see Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for a description of the Preferred Alternative design and Chapters 5 and 6 for discussions of its environmental effects.



Ryan Rockwell  
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Council



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