

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.

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CommentDate: 4/12/2010 5:46
Comment Source: Online Comment Form

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-239-001

I am extremely concerned about the lack of detailed information that describes where the large(r) amount of traffic that will pour off the expanded 520 Bridge is supposed to go on the city streets. Montlake Blvd is not intended to be widened, except at the entrance to the second Bascule Bridge, and since it is already heavily backed up, this is only likely to get worse.

The traffic currently is bumper-to-bumper on Pacific Street and all the way to University Village in the afternoons starting at 3 p.m. till 6:30 or 7 p.m. and many times on weekends when the bridge goes up. The back-ups will only get worse with a second bridge since it will cause a longer time for the bridges together to go up and down from what has been reported.

Besides the back-ups onto city streets, when the Montlake Bridge goes up now, there are back-ups all the way onto 520 in both directions. Coming from the east, there is an off-ramp that provides some safety for cars to wait, but on eastbound 520, it is very dangerous since the waiting cars are taking up the right lane all the way back to the ramp from I-5. This is only bound to get worse. How will this be addressed or resolved?

I-239-002

One last, but also very important, issue that needs to be addressed, is to coordinate the transportation modes. The bus transit MUST connect to the light rail at Husky Station. No one is going to want to get off a bus near 520 and walk 8-10 min including over a drawbridge, where they might have to wait an extra 6 min, to the light rail station. It only makes sense to DO WHAT IT TAKES NOW to provide a safe and dry and convenient connection for those who want to take public transportation in our city. This should be a very high priority for reducing our carbon footprint as decisions made on this project now have huge impacts for our children's future and for the environment! We can't afford not to make these improvements now while it's still possible to integrate into the plans!

I-239-001

The SDEIS transportation analysis showed that, while person-trip demand would grow between now and 2030, vehicle-trip demand across the 520 floating bridge in 2030 would be lower with Option A than with the No Build Alternative. This is because the proportion of person-trips using HOVs would increase compared to the No Build Alternative, because of tolling on SR 520, and because completion of the HOV lane system in the corridor would improve HOV speed and reliability, providing an incentive for people to choose alternatives to driving alone. These changes in demand are described in Section 5.1 of the SDEIS and Chapter 6 of the Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS).

Congestion in the Montlake area is affected by, and affects, operation on SR 520. Part of the congestion problem on Montlake is the constrained corridor between SR 520 and Pacific Street, especially the existing Montlake bridge. Adding new capacity across the Montlake Cut would help traffic in the area to flow better. Openings of the existing and new bascule bridges would be synchronized, and the new bascule bridge 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. Most notably, overall delay related to bridge openings would decrease for all vehicles because the additional capacity would allow congestion to clear more quickly. Chapter 6 of Transportation Discipline Report describes the changes in traffic volumes and operations on the local streets in the Montlake interchange area. As illustrated in Chapter 8 of the Transportation Discipline Report, all of the SDEIS 6-Lane Alternative design options would provide a travel time benefit during the off-peak periods when the Montlake drawbridge opens as compared to the No Build Alternative.

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1. Name Michelle Brot CommentDate: 4/12/2010 5:46
2. E-mail Brot.Michelle@gmail.com Comment Source: Online Comment Form

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-239-002

The transit stop provided at the Montlake lid is not the last stop for people destined to the University of Washington or areas north of SR 520. If people stay on their bus, as they do today, they will be able to transfer to the University Link light rail station from the Pacific Street bus stop. People will be able to walk over a newly constructed pedestrian bridge that will take them directly to the light rail station.

Further, the Montlake Multimodal Center (in the area currently known as the Montlake Triangle), which was collaboratively planned as part of the 2008 High Capacity Transit Plan under ESSB 609, will serve as a major transfer point between the University Link rail station, the proposed SR 520 bus rapid transit lines, and local bus service. The Preferred Alternative also responds to the concern expressed in the comment regarding transit connections in the Montlake area. In accordance with the requirements of Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6392, WSDOT has worked collaboratively with Sound Transit, King County Metro Transit, the City of Seattle, The University of Washington, and other stakeholders to develop design refinements for transit connections in the Montlake area. The workgroup considered bus stop locations and pedestrian access among other things. Its recommendations are described in the ESSB 6392: Design Refinements and Transit Connections Workgroup Recommendations Report (Attachment 16 to the Final EIS). Chapter 8 of the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) provides updated information regarding the Montlake Multimodal Center and the effects of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project on transit connections in the Montlake area.