

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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2. E-mail: joe.wsdot@bedafamily.com
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5. State: WA
* 6. Zip Code: 98112

CommentDate: 4/13/2010 23:47
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-256-001

I live in Montlake at 2437 E. Lake Washington Blvd. The current A+ plan has a very large impact on our home. In fact, my house is called out specifically in the SDEIS.

My specific concern is for the new offramp westbound from the bridge on to Lake Washington Blvd. This addition on Option A is not covered in detail in most of the SDEIS.

Specifically:

- 1) The SDEIS does not fully address the cultural impacts of this ramp. It would adversely affect the setting, feeling and association of many of the historic homes along an Olmsted Jewel of a road.
- 2) The examination of these ramps does claim that these ramps would improve the Arboretum. There are two problems with this statement. First, this is relative to the current position of these ramps and not relative to having no ramps whatsoever. Second, my understanding is that the land that the ramps currently occupy is "open space" and not part of the Arboretum.
- 3) The SDEIS does not examine any reasonable alternatives for this ramp. The Seattle City Council, for example, has suggested having these ramps terminate to 24th Ave. This would remove the issue of a new offramp terminating directly in front of historic homes and onto a historic avenue.
- 4) The Option A+ plan will remove and reduce significantly the amount of park area in the Montlake neighborhood. The report is confusing as it sometimes refers to the area east of Lake Washington Blvd as "Open Space" and at other times refers to this as part of the Arboretum. The net result is that the amount of open green space (whether labeled park

I-256-002

I-256-001

Since the SDEIS was published, WSDOT and FHWA have developed a Preferred Alternative that is similar to Option A, but with a number of design refinements to reduce negative effects.

The westbound off-ramp to Lake Washington Boulevard, included as part of the Option A with suboptions, is not included as part of the Preferred Alternative. Under the Preferred Alternative, westbound SR 520 traffic would be able to access Lake Washington Boulevard via a new intersection located on the lid at 24th Avenue East. The new intersection on 24th Avenue East would not result in a direct effect on the houses along Lake Washington Boulevard and would potentially reduce traffic on the historic park boulevard.

The Preferred Alternative would physically remove 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. 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. The reduced trip volume, along with other Lake Washington Boulevard enhancements would benefit the setting and feeling of the park boulevard.

As part of the Arboretum Mitigation Plan, WSDOT has committed to fund traffic calming measures along Lake Washington Boulevard and to work with the Seattle Department of Transportation on further measures to

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space or not in this report) is reduced dramatically.

I-256-003

I don't believe that the SDEIS fairly or accurately weighs the impact on our neighborhood. It is internally inconsistent and incomplete as it fails to weigh any reasonable options. These flaws are particular bad around the Lake Washington Blvd ramp suboptions.

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.

manage traffic in the Arboretum. WSDOT has also committed to restoring the peninsula after the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps are removed, and transferring it to the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee so it can be incorporated into the Arboretum. The Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) provides analysis of potential effects to historic properties from construction and operation of the Preferred Alternative. Please see the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report for more information.

I-256-002

Since the SDEIS was published, WSDOT has identified a Preferred Alternative that is similar to Option A, but with a number of design refinements to further reduce negative effects. As demonstrated in the Recreation Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS), the Preferred Alternative reduces the temporary and permanent acquisition to all recreational resources, compared to the options evaluated as part of the SDEIS.

The University of Washington Open Space Area is located east of Montlake Boulevard, north of the Montlake Cut. The Washington Park Arboretum is located primarily south of SR 520, but does extend north of SR 520 to incorporate both Foster and Marsh Islands. The locations of these sites are depicted in a number of exhibits in the Recreation Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS).

WSDOT has continued to work with the City of Seattle and the University of Washington, through the Parks Technical Working Group, on mitigation for recreation effects. Through this coordination and the project's Section 6(f) process, WSDOT, the City of Seattle and the University of Washington have identified a replacement site that would be purchased and/or developed to replace the recreational facilities converted by the project. This replacement site, located on Portage

Bay, would result in a net gain of 1.3 acres of Section 6(f) recreational space in the Seattle area. Please see Chapter 10 of the Final EIS for additional information.

WSDOT has also continued working with the City of Seattle and FHWA on appropriate mitigation for recreation effects under Section 4(f). Please see Chapter 9 of the Final EIS, or the Recreation Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS) for more information.

I-256-003

Analysis of the effects on neighborhoods is included in Section 5.3 of the SDEIS and in the Social Elements Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS). Updated information regarding effects of the Preferred Alternative can be found in Chapter 5 of the Final EIS and the Social Elements Discipline report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

Further, the Preferred Alternative responds to concerns from residential neighborhoods through a number of design enhancements that occurred since the SDEIS was published. These features include a considerably larger Montlake lid, which is a full rather than partial lid and runs from the Montlake interchange to the Lake Washington shoreline; noise reduction strategies such as 4-foot concrete traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating; and reduced shoulder widths where possible. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for additional information.

WSDOT considered a wide range of alternatives before narrowing them down to those evaluated in the Draft EIS. The SDEIS provided a comprehensive analysis of effects based on the project design and construction information available at that time. The project alternatives and design options strive to minimize effects while fulfilling the adopted purpose and need for the project. Analyses presented in the SDEIS used accepted methodology based on WSDOT and FHWA guidance, as well as other guidance where applicable.