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Sent: Wednesday, April 14, 2010 2:53 PM
To: SR 520 Bridge Replacement & HOV Project
Subject: SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program Feedback

Sent from: Wendy DeLaunay
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Comments:

RE: Opposition to WSDOT SR 520 DEIS and Construction Option A or A+ I live at the Bayshore Condominiums (2524 Boyer Ave. E. #212). We also own two other units in the building and a house just down the street. We are located directly South of the SR520 Viaduct. Our building extends over the water and was built in 1958. My husband and I attend most (not all due to work) of the 520 meetings and are always assured that there will be sound walls and/or lids to control the sound and that pollution will be dealt with and our wild life, plant life, trees and parks in our neighborhoods will be preserved. I have made a list of my concerns and request they be acknowledged and included in our building of a new bridge: 1. Noise Mitigation - The Bayshore property is well within 300 feet of the construction corridor at the Portage Bay viaduct. We request construction processes for noise mitigation during construction. And bridge deck evaluation of 'quiet pavement' on the bridge vs. I-405 test; and use of sound walls on the sides of the Portage Bay viaduct or Lid. 2. I am requesting a digital video of our current structure and mitigation for damage for dust/air quality from bridge removal as well as vibration on the Bayshore construction footprint/ pilings and the impact on the foundation and marina moorings and replacement of any of valuable personal items broken due to construction. 3. Bayshore Marina Impact/ Access: We own 2 boat slips and request mitigation of financial impacts and marina access. 4. Parking/Boyer Ave. Disruption: My renters and I will be impacted by parking, congestion and potential closures of Boyer Ave. With Delmar closed for 9-12 months, increased. We request mitigation of Boyer Ave. traffic impacts from heavy equipment. And any loss of renters/rent do to congestion on boyer. 5. State Environmental Policy Act intentions: We request consideration of reclamation of the South Portage Bay environment. Original SR 520 construction affected the bay in many ways: slit build up, water quality, shoreline, native species, native plants, and salmon habitat. Reclaiming South Portage Bay with removal of silt, invasive plant life, restoration of shoreline (see www.fabnia.org) and better recreational access will provide an important dimension to Seattle's

I-264-001

I-264-002

I-264-003

I-264-004

I-264-005

I-264-006

I-264-001

Comment noted. Responses to the comments that relate to specific concerns are provided per topic in the following.

I-264-002

WSDOT is proposing a number of measures to minimize noise impacts during construction. Those measures are described in Section 6.7 of the Final EIS and may include the following: require all engine-powered equipment to have mufflers; require all equipment to comply with EPA noise standards; limit use of noise equipment such as pile drivers and jack hammers to daytime work hours; install temporary or portable acoustic barriers around stationary equipment; shut off idling equipment, restrict use of back up alarms during evening hours; schedule construction operations to avoid periods when noise would create an annoyance; establish a complaint hotline to investigate noise complaints; and monitor noise and vibration levels to so that any issues that arise with noise or vibration can be quickly resolved with the contractor.

Noise reduction strategies in the design features of the Preferred Alternative would address operational noise, such as 4-foot concrete traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating; using noise-absorptive materials around the lid portals; encapsulating expansion joints; and reducing the speed limits through the Portage Bay area. With the reduction in noise that would result from these strategies, noise walls are not recommended in Seattle, except potentially along I-5 in the North Capitol Hill area where the reasonableness and feasibility of a noise wall is still be evaluated. 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 surface conditions cannot be determined with certainty, it is not included in the noise model for the project. See the Noise Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) as well as

I-264-006
I-264-007

urban quality of life. I have been part of the neighbor clean up committee and we built a nature trail and park. I/We believe WSDOT is biased, as we believe local officials and agencies of government are under pressure from business interests anxious for mass cross-lake transit at any cost. Thus WSDOT has controlled the release of information only favorable to the least costly option. Option A does not have the "broad-based support from local communities" that WSDOT asserts. The legislative workgroup's recommendation to put 7 lanes across Portage Bay, ignores our neighborhoods, and the Seattle City Council's resolution that calls for no more than 6 lanes. Option A ignores our concerns to mitigate highway noise. Although WSDOT convened an expert panel on noise, there is no provision in Option A for any noise-abatement systems. Option A adds a second drawbridge across the Montlake cut, destroying homes (some of which may be historic). And it fails to improve transit speed or reliability and overloads the intersections on either side. WSDOT's own analysis predicts the volume of traffic able to cross the cut will not increase beyond what can cross it even if we do nothing at all. Option A ignores years of cooperative work with WSDOT to build a 21st century highway vs. just laying concrete at any environmental or health expense. As a result hundreds of SR 520 adjacent neighborhood households are now unalterably opposed to the current proposals. In conclusion, I/we urge you to respect Seattle's Portage Bay urban environment that integrates fragile shorelines, eagles, osprey, blue herons, beavers, salmon and perch with dense residential Seattle neighborhoods. Should our urban environment be treated differently than old growth timber, rivers and streams, or endangered species? I/We advocate 'building SR 520 right' this time. We seek a construction solution for a safer more efficient SR 520 bridge that respects our urban environment with quiet pavement, park like lids and mitigation of noise, dust, vibration, congestion and the impact of heavy equipment and traffic redirection in our urban neighborhoods. WSDOT A+ recommendation fails us. Noise, disruption, and a design that adds to the blight that most communities hope to reduce or eliminate. We urge you and the Seattle City Council to insist on a construction plan that genuinely mitigates noise and construction with a design that respects our urban residential environment.

I-264-008

I-264-009

I-264-010

I-264-011

Section 5.7 of the Final EIS for information regarding noise effects of the Preferred Alternative.

I-264-003

Mitigation for the removal of moorage slips will be in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended. Marina access will be maintained throughout the duration of construction.

I-264-004

The Delmar Drive road closure described in the SDEIS is no longer planned. Delmar Drive will be shifted onto a portion of the new lid while the existing bridge is removed and re-constructed. Closures of Boyer Avenue East are not planned and congestion is not anticipated. Contractors working for WSDOT will be required to follow City of Seattle street use policies as well as apply for and obtain appropriate permits from the City during construction.

I-264-005

If the project results in "real" property impacts (fee area acquisitions) the owner will be compensated fairly. In addition to paying the owner the market value for the property needed for the project, owners are also to be paid for any loss in market value (damages) to the remaining portion of the affected property.

I-264-006

WSDOT is not required to mitigate for effects from existing conditions. However, the sediment load entering Union Bay would be addressed by the construction of a biofiltration swale to treat stormwater. The stormwater treatment proposed as part of the Preferred Alternative would improve surface water quality. Refer to the Water Resources Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for details.

I-264-007

The decision-making process for this project has lasted over 10 years and has incorporated extensive participation from stakeholder groups, including the Westside communities. The Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Discipline Report and Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) document the participation that has occurred, including the Westside mediation that followed the Draft EIS.

As explained in Chapter 1 of both the Draft EIS and the SDEIS and documented more fully in the Range of Alternatives and Options Examined report (Attachment 8 to the SDEIS), the SDEIS design options were the product of an alternatives analysis that had already considered multimodal solutions and a DEIS that evaluated No Build, 4-lane, and 6-lane alternatives. This process identified the 6-Lane Alternative—four general-purpose lanes plus two HOV lanes to serve transit and carpools—as best meeting the project purpose of improving mobility for people and goods.

WSDOT and the mediation participants agreed at the conclusion of the mediation process that Options A, K, and L would be evaluated in the SDEIS. As stated in the SDEIS (page 1-21): “Although the mediation participants, the legislative workgroup, and other political bodies can provide recommendations, it remains FHWA’s responsibility under NEPA, and WSDOT’s under SEPA, to select the final preferred alternative and to ensure that the environmental review process has evaluated a reasonable range of alternatives.” Also see the responses to comments in Item C-040, which was submitted by the Coalition for a Sustainable 520, for further discussion of the relationship between public involvement, the range of alternatives, and the Preferred Alternative, and how the process has been and continues to be consistent with NEPA regulations.

Cost is one factor among many considered by decision-makers, and the

NEPA process ensures that environmental effects are considered in decision-making.

I-264-008

See the response to comment I-264-002.

I-264-009

Comment noted.

I-264-010

The project is a replacement of an existing highway, not addition of a new highway. However, in response to public and agency comments, the Preferred Alternative analyzed in this Final EIS includes design refinements in the Portage Bay area, including a shift in the alignment of the Portage Bay Bridge, a landscaped median and a reduced speed limit on the Portage Bay Bridge, and noise reduction strategies such as 4-foot traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating (see Chapter 2 and Section 5.7 of the Final EIS). WSDOT has analyzed effects on urban habitat and wildlife, and on neighborhoods.

WSDOT has analyzed effects on cultural and historic resources consistent with applicable policies and regulations. Please see Sections 5.6 of the SDEIS and Final EIS, the Cultural Resources Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS) and Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for more information. Ecosystems analysts looked for the occurrence of wildlife and wildlife habitat up to 0.25 miles from the proposed project alignment, and for bald eagle nest sites within 1 mile of the proposed project alignment. Regarding wildlife and habitat, see Section 5.11 of the SDEIS and Final EIS, and the Ecosystems Discipline Report and Addendum in Attachment 7 to the Final EIS). Regarding neighborhoods, see Section 6.3 of the SDEIS and Final EIS, and the Social Elements Discipline Report and Addendum in Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

I-264-011

See the response to comment I-264-002 regarding noise reduction strategies included with the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative includes lids in the Roanoke and Montlake areas and quieter concrete pavement. Additionally, WSDOT has revised the potential haul routes since the SDEIS was published. Please see Chapters 3 and 6 of the Final EIS for information on the revised potential haul routes.

WSDOT will minimize and mitigate negative effect from constructions wherever feasible. Minimization and mitigation measures for project construction and operation can be found in the mitigation sections of the various discipline reports (in Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

As design progresses and construction plans develop, WSDOT will coordinate with stakeholders and the communities that will be directly affected by construction of the project through the permitting and approval process to define appropriate construction mitigation measures. This may include seeking a noise variance process, haul truck traffic route modification, and others for construction activities as appropriate.