



Board of Park Commissioners

*Neal Adams, Vice Chair
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Jackie Ramels, Chair*

April 14, 2010

Jenifer Young, Environmental Manager
SR 520 Project Office
600 Stewart Street, Suite 520
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: The Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee's Comments to the
SR520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Supplemental
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

Dear Ms. Young,

At its April 8, 2010, meeting the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners unanimously adopted the attached resolution as its official response to the SR520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project SDEIS. Please add these comments to the official record.

Sincerely,

Jackie Ramels, Chair
Seattle Board of Park Commissioners

Attachment: The Seattle Board of Park Commissioner's Comments to
the SR520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project
SDEIS

cc: Mike McGinn, Mayor, City of Seattle
The Honorable Richard Conlin, Chair, Seattle City Council
The Honorable Sally Bagshaw, Seattle City Council
The Honorable Mike O'Brien, Seattle City Council
The Honorable Nick Licata, Seattle City Council
The Honorable Jean Godden, Seattle City Council
The Honorable Tom Rasmussen, Seattle City Council
The Honorable Sally Clark, Seattle City Council
The Honorable Bruce Harrell, Seattle City Council
The Honorable Tim Burgess, Seattle City Council
Mark Emmert, President, University of Washington
Tim Gallagher, Superintendent, Seattle Parks
Peter Hahn, Director, Seattle Department of Transportation
Stephanie Brown, Seattle Department of Transportation

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION expressing the position of the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners regarding the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project.

WHEREAS, the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners has been in continuous existence since 1887 and acts in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, City Council, Seattle Parks and Recreation and other City departments; and

WHEREAS, State Route 520 has been, since its completion in 1963, and continues to be to this day, a blight on the Washington Park Arboretum; creating noise and visual intrusions into the park; encouraging cut-through traffic along Lake Washington Boulevard in much higher volumes than was originally intended for the boulevard, disturbing the serenity of the Japanese Garden, and affecting the passage of people and wildlife between Marsh and Foster Islands and the remainder of the Arboretum; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Park Arboretum is Washington State's official State Arboretum and contains internationally recognized woody plant collections and North America's largest collection of *Sorbus* and Maple, the second largest collection of species Hollies and significant collections of oaks, conifers and camellias; and

WHEREAS, a new Master Plan for the Arboretum was adopted in 2001 that was the culmination of five years of planning work undertaken by Seattle Parks and Recreation, the University of Washington, the Arboretum Foundation, community groups and members of the general public; and that will guide improvements to the Arboretum for the next 20 years, including many specific projects to enhance the physical and natural characteristics of the Arboretum such as increasing habitat diversity by restoring the natural function of Arboretum Creek and the northern shoreline; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Park Arboretum contains the largest freshwater wetland complex of its type in the Seattle region, and the Master Plan, in conjunction with the existing wetlands, includes the restoration, enhancement, and creation of new wetlands by restoring the ecological and wildlife function of the former garbage dump surrounding existing SR Route 520 ramps, and creating a Pacific Northwest Marshland collection along the shoreline of Union Bay; and

WHEREAS, implementation of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project, as currently proposed, will forever compromise the aesthetic setting, biological diversity, educational opportunities, and physical connections for people and wildlife within the Washington Park Arboretum:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SEATTLE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS THAT:

The Board cannot endorse any of the alternatives identified in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project, issued on January 22, 2010, due to the profound negative environmental impacts the project would have on the Washington Park Arboretum and the other City of Seattle Parks along the SR 520 corridor. The Board makes the below recommendations

The preferred alternative chosen must be consistent with the following principles:

- The structure should minimize the impacts on the Washington Park Arboretum, especially the Japanese Garden and Foster and Marsh Islands, and other adjacent and nearby parks such as East Montlake and McCurdy Parks;
- The structure should have the least number of travel lanes possible;
- The structure width should be the minimum necessary for safe passage;
- Any structure should be designed to have the least amount of coverage and shadow impacts on park land below;
- Any structure should be designed to have the least amount of impact to wetlands, aquatic resources and fish, in particular Federally protected salmonids that travel through Portage and Union Bays to and from their spawning grounds and the Pacific Ocean;
- All construction activities must be sited and timed to have the least impact on park users and the natural environment;
- Clear, open, and safe access for people and wildlife under the structure must be provided to reconnect severed components of the Arboretum; and,
- Any required wetland mitigation must occur within the Arboretum first; if the area within the Arboretum is insufficient to accommodate the required mitigation, Park sites within Seattle on or adjacent to Lake Washington must be considered.

Mitigation of the continuing highway and future project impacts must be considered, regardless of the alternative/option chosen, to re-establish the Arboretum experience. As a starting point, the following should be considered in any mitigation package:

- Address the traffic impacts to the Arboretum caused by increased traffic along Lake Washington Boulevard (LWB) including prohibiting access to and from SR 520 to LWB; repaving LWB with "quiet" pavement; incorporating other traffic calming measures in LWB to discourage through traffic movements;

- Completely fund the Arboretum Master Plan, including wetland and shoreline restoration and planting (approximately \$60 million);
- Develop the stormwater pond in East Montlake Park for educational use;
- Provide a park-like lid at Montlake (depending on the option, the lid should extend as far as possible given the geography) which will create a strong connection between the neighborhood and the Arboretum;
- Replace (at WSDOT's expense) all of the functions served by the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) building; and,
- Design and provide access and parking at East Montlake Park for access to the Arboretum Waterfront Trail and for hand-launched boats.

L-001-001 | The Board also respectfully submits the following comments in response to the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project issued on January 22, 2010:

- **Bagley Viewpoint** - Bagley Viewpoint is a well visited viewpoint along Delmar Drive East which provides views to the east of Lake Washington, Montlake Cut, the University of Washington and the Cascade mountain range. No other viewpoint in Seattle provides this unique view to the east. The viewpoint was redeveloped following the construction of the access freeway to the Evergreen Point floating bridge in 1963. The freeway cut the viewpoint off from its previous connection to Interlaken Park.
 - Loss of this unique viewpoint must be mitigated. The SDEIS indicates that a lid is proposed in this area that will provide similar view functions and also serve to reconnect the neighborhood through the triangle between 10th Avenue East, East Roanoke Street and East Delmar Drive. WSDOT must ensure that this lid remains part of the project and does not get removed due to funding concerns. Absent the lid, WSDOT must provide a view opportunity similar to the one now provided by Bagley Viewpoint and work to reconnect this viewpoint to Interlaken Park as it was originally constructed.
- **Montlake Playfield** - While the physical impacts to the playfield associated with the SR 520 project will be minimal, the visual impacts and noise associated with the project, both during construction and after it is completed will be significant. Every effort must be made to limit the potential for noise from the freeway to impact users of the playfields, members of the public who come to the area to take advantage of the newly reconstructed hand-carried boat launch, and the public and fauna that use the newly enhanced wetland areas.
 - During construction, any temporary work bridges and/or barges must not restrict canoe/kayak access between the Montlake Playfield boat launch and Portage Bay.
 - Seattle Parks is just completing a large wetland restoration project along the perimeter of Montlake Playfield. There are additional wetland

L-001-002 |

L-001-003 |

L-001-004 |

L-001-001

The lids identified in the Preferred Alternative are an integral part of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project and will be built at the same time as the corresponding portion of the corridor. WSDOT will construct a new viewpoint on the 10th Avenue East/Delmar Drive East lid that will recreate the experience the Bagley Viewpoint was designed to provide (see the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation in Chapter 9 of the Final EIS for further discussion).

During design planning, the community identified pedestrian connections and improved traffic flow as the two most important purposes for this lid. The new 10th Avenue East/Delmar Drive East lid would function as a vehicle and pedestrian crossing, a landscaped area, and open space. A walkway across the lid would connect the two streets. The lid would range from 500 to 650 feet long (because of the angled lid edge) and would reconnect neighborhoods on both sides of the SR 520 corridor by providing walkways and open spaces above the SR 520 roadway. The lid would incorporate additional pedestrian connections between 10th Avenue East and Delmar Drive, redevelopment of the path from Bagley Viewpoint to Boyer Way, redevelopment of the Bagley Viewpoint Park, and vista points to overlook Lake Union, Portage Bay, and the panoramas east- and westward.

L-001-002

The Preferred Alternative includes a number of noise reduction strategies that would reduce traffic noise levels in the area of Montlake Playfield, relative to No Build and existing conditions, to the point that noise walls would not be recommended on the Portage Bay Bridge. These strategies include 4-foot concrete traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating, a reduced speed limit on the Portage Bay Bridge, and noise-absorptive materials around the Montlake lid portals. When the Preferred Alternative is completed, noise levels in the vicinity of the Montlake Playfield would be lower than existing noise levels year 2030

L-001-004

enhancement opportunities available. Montlake Playfield should be considered for any required wetland mitigation/enhancement as part of the projects mitigation requirements.

L-001-005

- **Lake Washington Boulevard** - Lake Washington Boulevard is referred to as a city street throughout the SDEIS. The 4f evaluation fails to identify Lake Washington Boulevard as either a historic resource or a park and recreation resource. This officially designated park boulevard is a 204-acre, 9.2-mile-long linear park wholly owned by the City and under the jurisdiction of Seattle Parks and Recreation. It is a crucial element in the 1903 Olmsted Plan for Seattle's boulevard system, sometimes referred to as the "Emerald Necklace." Decisions about the future design of the SR 520 improvements must be made with the understanding that Lake Washington Boulevard was never designed to function as an extension of direct-access ramps to and from SR 520. Where Lake Washington Boulevard serves as a corridor through the Arboretum, vehicles and bicycles must be able to travel on it in a manner consistent with the design and intent of the surrounding Arboretum.
 - There should be no direct access from SR 520 to Lake Washington Boulevard. From the day it opened, SR 520 and the access ramps to and from Lake Washington Boulevard have encouraged and facilitated traffic through the Arboretum which would not otherwise be there. This increased traffic through the heart of the Arboretum limits access to the Japanese Garden from the rest of the Arboretum, reduces the air quality due to vehicle emissions, increases noise from traffic and makes crossing Lake Washington Boulevard unsafe.
- **Lake Washington Boulevard Access** - If direct access to and from Lake Washington Boulevard to SR 520 is a component of the final design of the project then the following must be considered:
 - Lake Washington Boulevard has become an extension of the on/off ramps to SR 520. Had existing environmental laws been in place, mitigation for the impacts on the Arboretum of the original 520 project would have been significant or more likely, the project would have been redesigned. If direct access to and from SR 520 to Lake Washington Boulevard remains a part of the future project, exacerbating the current condition, the Arboretum should be duly compensated for the use of the boulevard in the future.
 - As mitigation for the increased traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard directly attributable to SR 520, traffic calming measures must be implemented on the boulevard.
 - If the SR 520 project includes direct access ramps to and from Lake Washington Boulevard to SR 520, additional tolls should be included on these ramps. Tolls should be included as a way of travel demand management to discourage people from using Lake Washington Boulevard to access SR 520. Also, the revenue from these tolls should be dedicated to the Arboretum to help mitigate the impacts of the increased noise, air emissions and vehicular distraction on the physical

conditions with the No Build Alternative. The noise reduction strategies included in the Preferred Alternative would reduce noise levels along the corridor to the point that noise walls are not recommended in the Seattle portion of the project area, except potentially along I-5 in the North Capitol Hill area where the reasonableness and feasibility of a noise wall is still be evaluated (see Section 5.7 of the Final EIS). Information on noise modeling results for the Preferred Alternative can be found in Section 5.7 of the Final EIS and the Noise Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

While the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project would include a wider, and in some locations higher, Portage Bay Bridge than currently exists, it would not diminish the character, vividness, intactness, or unity of views of the Portage Bay Bridge compared to the No Build Alternative. Views of the Portage Bay Bridge from Montlake Playfield would change because the Preferred Alternative would include a bridge designed to be context-sensitive and compatible with its surroundings; this change is expected to be positive. A planted median along the center of the Portage Bay Bridge would screen views of the lanes on the other side of the median, which would make the bridge appear narrower to viewers in the park. The bridge would also include wider spaces between columns than the current bridge.

Construction activities in the vicinity of Montlake Playfield would include pile-driving for the temporary work bridges alongside the length of the Portage Bay Bridge (plus the one in Montlake Playfield for the Montlake Boulevard off-ramp); demolition of the existing Portage Bay Bridge; and construction of the new Portage Bay Bridge and Montlake Boulevard off-ramp. Impact pile-driving associated with the work bridges would occur during an 11-month period. Other construction activities would generate dust, noise, and vibration, and would result in changes to views from the park for the duration of the 63-month construction period. Best management practices, including those already developed and used as

L-001-005

nature, educational value and visitor experience of the Washington Park Arboretum.

- o The most recent data from the Seattle Department of Transportation indicates that Lake Washington Boulevard carries 16,100 vehicles.¹ The SDEIS indicates that the ramps to and from Lake Washington Boulevard to SR 520 carry 3,000 vehicles in the AM and PM peak hours. Given 3,000 vehicles during two hours, the total amount of traffic that uses Lake Washington Boulevard exclusively to access SR 520 could be as high as 10,000 vehicles per day. Taken together, these traffic numbers indicate that as much as 62% of the traffic which uses Lake Washington Boulevard is directly related to SR 520. While Lake Washington Boulevard is a park boulevard, it is available for City residents to use as they travel throughout the City. However, this direct use of the boulevard as an access ramp to and from SR 520 is a highway use for which the boulevard was never intended. If WSDOT intends to continue to use Lake Washington Boulevard for a highway on and off ramp, then WSDOT must compensate the City annually in the range of \$1 - \$2.1 million, based on present value and an 8% rate of return, for the use of the property in a proportional share to the percentage of traffic which uses the boulevard to access SR 520.

L-001-006

- **Washington Park Arboretum** - The Washington Park Arboretum, State Arboretum for the State of Washington, is a stunning gem in Seattle's park system. It provides respite, scenery, recreation and solace to thousands of visitors in every season of the year. It provides educational, recreational, conservation and volunteering opportunities to those who seek it out. The City of Seattle and the University of Washington have been cooperatively managing this park since the original 1934 agreement.
 - o Since the SR 520 highway was opened, the Arboretum has been fractured by the highway structure itself and the noise, pollution and visual intrusion of the structure on the physical nature, educational value and visitor experience of the Washington Park Arboretum. A percentage of the tolls collected on the main line of SR 520 should be dedicated to improvements in the Arboretum as mitigation for past current and future impacts of siting a transportation facility in the heart of a natural area and arboretum.
 - o The physical nature, educational values and visitor experience within the Washington Park Arboretum should be enhanced by the construction and operation of the SR 520 I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV project if properly designed with sensitivity to the park.
 - o All efforts must be made to avoid any adverse impacts to the Arboretum, both during construction and through the long term operation of the SR 520 facility.

¹ Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADWT) (5-day, 24-hour)

a matter of policy by WSDOT, would be implemented to protect the park from construction-related effects such as dust, vibration, noise, light and glare, and accidental damage from construction equipment. To the extent possible, WSDOT would limit the noisiest construction activities to the least active times at area parks (not weekends or special events).

L-001-003

Construction of the Preferred Alternative would not restrict launch of hand-carried boats from existing launch sites in south Portage Bay. However, access near and beneath the Portage Bay Bridge would be limited at times during construction for reasons of public safety.

L-001-004

WSDOT has coordinated with the City of Seattle Parks and Recreation Department to discuss potential wetland mitigation opportunities. City-owned sites, such as Montlake Playfield, Magnuson Park, and Seward Park, were discussed as part of the Natural Resources Technical Working Group (NRTWG). Representatives from the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department and the Seattle Department of Planning and Development participated in the NRTWG process. Following meetings with Parks and Recreation staff, the Montlake Playfield wetland restoration opportunities were ultimately not advanced as mitigation sites because of their size and mitigation value. Please see the Conceptual Wetlands Mitigation Plan (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS).

L-001-005

The Preferred Alternative would remove the Lake Washington Boulevard ramps, resulting in a reduction in the trip volumes on Lake Washington Boulevard in the Washington Park 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

L-001-006

- o To the extent that there will be adverse impacts to the Arboretum, every impact must be thoroughly mitigated.
- o Unavoidable adverse impacts must be mitigated. Those of shorter duration must be addressed during the construction phase. Long term impacts of facilitating increased traffic through the Arboretum which has a direct impact on the physical nature, educational value and visitor experience in the Washington Park Arboretum need to be avoided through sound design or mitigated appropriately.
- o Design of the new structure should address the potential for increased noise through the Arboretum as a result of the increased traffic. The project must be designed such that noise levels decrease from the levels experienced today.

L-001-007

- o The project must be designed such that the visual impact of the structure complements and does not detract from the physical nature, educational value and visitor experience of the Washington Park Arboretum. Designing a "signature" bridge does not reduce the visual impact of a concrete and/or steel structure in the heart of a 230-acre arboretum.

L-001-008

- **Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan** - In May 2001, the Seattle City Council approved the long-range master plan for the Washington Park Arboretum, creating a road map for Arboretum improvements over the next 20 years. The master plan ensures the Washington Park Arboretum will effectively fulfill three primary purposes—conservation, recreation and education—for decades to come. Together, University of Washington Botanic Gardens and Seattle Parks and Recreation, with support from the Arboretum Foundation, are working to implement the master plan. Substantial public and private funds have recently been raised and spent to improve the visitors' experience. The newly created Pacific Connection Gardens have been created, the Japanese Garden Gatehouse has been redeveloped and a number of other park improvements have been made. All these contributions will likely be negatively impacted by the proposed SR 520 project.
 - o The Master Plan adopted in 2001 made note of the fact that there would be limited new buildings built within the Washington Park Arboretum. Instead, UW, the Arboretum Foundation and Seattle Parks and Recreation would address their long term need for additional educational, maintenance and classroom space by expanding into the building which currently houses the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI), once MOHAI vacated the building. The City of Seattle owns the building which MOHAI currently occupies. Since all of the options in the SDEIS involve expansion of the roadway such that the MOHAI will be demolished, WSDOT must provide replacement space as envisioned in the Master Plan.
 - o There are four significant projects at the north end of the Arboretum which are identified in the Arboretum Master Plan: complete the Waterfront Trail as a loop all the way around Duck Bay; add access,

No Build Alternative. P.m. peak hour volumes would be 1,410 vehicles per hour compared to 1,730 with the No Build Alternative. Please see the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for further discussion of trip volumes. As part of the Arboretum Mitigation Plan (please see Attachment 9 to the Final EIS), WSDOT has also committed to fund traffic calming measures along Lake Washington Boulevard and to work with the Seattle Department of Transportation on further measures to manage traffic in the Arboretum.

One of WSDOT's key efforts under ESSB 6392 was to work with the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABCG), of which the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department is a member, to identify appropriate mitigation for effects of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project on the Washington Park Arboretum. This work involved review of the Arboretum Master Plan and commitments by WSDOT to provide funding toward a number of projects in the plan. This 8-month coordination effort resulted in the Arboretum Mitigation Plan, which is included in Attachment 9 of the Final EIS.

The approximately 2-mile-long segment of Lake Washington Boulevard that runs from NE Pacific Street to East Madison Street is acknowledged as a designated park boulevard and evaluated as such in the Final EIS, the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS), the Recreation Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS), and discussed in the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation (Chapter 9 of the Final EIS). WSDOT also evaluated this segment of Lake Washington Boulevard as historic property that is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). However, under this designation it remains a city arterial street; the Seattle Department of Transportation has not defined special traffic restrictions or other protective measures for park boulevards. It should also be noted that Lake Washington Boulevard was discussed under Section 4(f) as a historic property, not as a park property. Lake

L-001-008

sitting and viewing areas on the west side of Duck Bay; daylight Arboretum Creek; and, create an entry at the west/north end of the Arboretum with the same grand character as the south entry. The redevelopment of SR 520 has the potential to negate the potential to undertake some or all of these projects to the detriment of the Arboretum and contrary to the goals set out in the Master Plan. To the extent mitigation measures are necessary as a result of unavoidable significant impacts associated with the SR 520 project, these identified Arboretum Master Plan project should be fully funded by WSDOT for implementation by Parks and/or UW.

Adopted by the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners the 8th day of April, 2010 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this ____ day of _____, 2010.



Chair of the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners

Washington Boulevard is a transportation facility undergoing transportation improvements as a part of this project. The integrity of the historic property would not be diminished as a result of those improvements and the official with jurisdiction has not objected to this finding. Therefore, Lake Washington Boulevard is excepted from Section 4(f) in accordance with 774.13(a).

Over the long term, the Preferred Alternative, in comparison to the No Build Alternative, would improve regional air quality and reduce noise in the Washington Park Arboretum. As documented in the SDEIS and Final EIS and in the Air Quality Discipline Report and Addendum, criteria pollutant emissions and air toxics would decrease from existing conditions by 2030. In addition, the reduction in traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard compared to the No Build Alternative would result in further reduced vehicle emissions in the Arboretum. Therefore, air quality in the Arboretum with the Preferred Alternative is expected to be similar to, or slightly improved over, No Build Alternative conditions. With the Preferred Alternative, noise levels in the Arboretum in the areas closest to SR 520 would be reduced compared to the No Build Alternative. The proposed noise reduction approach would also avoid the aesthetic effects of noise walls in this natural area. Please see the response to Comment L-001-002 regarding the noise reduction features of the Preferred Alternative.

L-001-006

The Preferred Alternative has benefited from extensive input from agencies and the public during NEPA/SEPA evaluation, and as a result has further minimized effects on the Washington Park Arboretum compared to designs studied previously. Please see the response to Comment L-001-005 regarding traffic volumes, noise levels, air quality, and mitigation planning and funding for the Arboretum. The Preferred Alternative would remove the existing Lake Washington Boulevard ramps to and from SR 520, reduce traffic volumes and noise levels in the

Arboretum, and reduce air pollutant emissions. In addition to the reduction in traffic associated with the existing Lake Washington Boulevard ramps, the Preferred Alternative has been designed to minimize the footprint of SR 520 across Foster Island to the maximum extent possible while accommodating potential future light rail through the corridor. The Preferred Alternative includes a narrow footprint across Foster Island, with reduced right-of-way acquisition in the Arboretum compared to the SDEIS options. In addition, a constant-slope profile would improve the clearance of the crossing above the Arboretum Waterfront Trail from its existing 8 feet to between 14 and 20 feet. The higher clearance also would improve conditions for wetland vegetation east and west of the island. Please see the Ecosystems Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for further discussion of effects on wetlands. Also see the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for discussion effects on the Arboretum and Foster Island as cultural resources.

As noted in the response to Comment L-001-005, WSDOT worked with the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee to develop a mitigation plan for the Arboretum as required by ESSB 6392. The group identified Arboretum resources that could be affected by the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project; clarified effects on identified resources; identified appropriate mitigation opportunities within the Arboretum for these effects; provided an information link to and from legislative and regulatory technical working groups; and submitted a final plan to the Governor and the Transportation Committees of the Washington State Legislature on date. WSDOT will continue to work with the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee to ensure that project effects on the Arboretum will be minimized as much as possible and to implement the agreed-upon mitigation for remaining adverse effects. As part of the plan, WSDOT, in consultation with the ABGC, will develop a design review plan for landscaping and recreational facilities within the right-of-way to minimize

effects of the new bridge on the Arboretum. Because Foster Island is a Traditional Cultural Property, this effort will also include the tribes.

Regarding construction effects, WSDOT, through the Section 106 process, has coordinated with the Section 106 consulting parties to identify ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effect of the project on historic properties. This consultation process resulted in a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement, which is included in Attachment 9 to the Final EIS. As specified in the Programmatic Agreement, WSDOT is developing a Community Construction Management Plan to address overall construction effects within the project area. WSDOT will also work with the City of Seattle to prepare a construction traffic management plan. Current construction sequencing plans call for improvements to the Montlake interchange to be completed before closure of the Lake Washington Boulevard ramps. Please see Chapters 3 and 6 of the Final EIS for further discussion of detour routes and their effects.

L-001-007

Please see the response to comment L-001-005 regarding removal of the Lake Washington Boulevard ramps, and L-001-006 regarding the change in the bridge profile across Foster Island. With the Preferred Alternative, while the new SR 520 roadway would be wider and higher than the existing structure, the visual quality analysis found that operation of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project would not result in a change in the character, vividness, intactness, or unity of views in the Washington Park Arboretum and its vicinity. Please see the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for visualizations related to the Arboretum with the Preferred Alternative, showing views from the trail, views of Marsh Island, and views of the SR 520 west approach bridge within the Arboretum. The Addendum also includes two new viewpoints approximately 100 feet from the bridge, showing the bridge profile of the Preferred Alternative

over Foster Island. As discussed in the response to the previous comment, WSDOT is working to create a context-sensitive bridge design across the island and to avoid or minimize effects on culturally sensitive locations. Please see the responses to comments L-001-005 and L-001-006 for more information regarding mitigation planning for the Arboretum.

L-001-008

Please see the response to Comment L-001-005 regarding the Arboretum Mitigation Plan (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS). Through this effort, WSDOT has committed to provide funding toward a number of projects in the Arboretum Master Plan. The Arboretum Mitigation Plan was unanimously approved by the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens Committee in December 2010. Because the demolition of the MOHAI facility would not result in direct or indirect adverse effects on the Arboretum and would not alter the integrity of historic properties within the Arboretum, additional space for educational materials is not included in the mitigation plan.