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C-030-001

I am President of the Portage Bay/Roanoke Park Community Council (PB/RP CC) and I wish to offer the following comments on the SR-520 SDEIS. The comments incorporate, by reference, the comments made by other residents of the PB/RP community (including, but not limited to: Alice Byers, Robert Buchanan, Gerry Conley, Ron Melnikoff, Erin O'Connor, Walter Oelwein, Joan Stewart and Douglas Stewart) and by Fran Conley, Coordinator for the Sustainable 520 Coalition, and Jerry G. Lilly, President, JGL Acoustics, Inc.

My comments are divided into two categories: (a) The adequacy of the DEIS and (b) Errors and omissions contained in the SDEIS.

C-030-002

(a) The adequacy of the DEIS

(1) Upon completion of SR-520's Scoping Phase, WSDOT issued a scoping document summarizing what it had learned and the approach it would follow. The document stated that mitigation would be "integral to and inseparable from" the SR-520 project. However, the SDEIS says that mitigation may or may not occur depending on the availability of funds. The phrase "integral to and inseparable from" was used by WSDOT officials and consultants in numerous public meeting when discussing community and environmental impacts and we were assured the mitigation commitment was the basis upon which the project would proceed. It was only in the SDEIS that WSDOT revealed that community mitigation was not firm but depended on the availability of funding. If community mitigation is no longer "integral to and inseparable from" the SR-520 project, its scoping documents are no longer relevant, information presented to and received

C-030-001

Comment acknowledged. Please see the responses to those comments elsewhere in this chapter.

C-030-002

It is not clear what text in the SDEIS this comment may be in reference to. The SDEIS does not state that "mitigation may or may or may not occur depending on the availability of funds." The estimated costs for natural environment and built mitigation have always been included in program-level cost estimating. In accordance with federal policies, including NEPA and FHWA's mitigation policy, WSDOT has included mitigation as an integral element of project development and the NEPA process. Specific mitigation measures have been developed through a number of venues, including, but not limited to the Regulatory Agency Coordination process, technical working groups, community construction management planning, and the Section 106 consulting party process, in which the Portage Bay/Roanoke Park community participated.

The SDEIS identified the potential for the project to be implemented in phases. The "phased implementation scenario" described in SDEIS Chapter 2 included the statement that "WSDOT would develop and implement all mitigation needed to satisfy regulatory requirements" (p. 2-37). Although lids would have been deferred under this scenario until the I-5 and Montlake interchange area improvements were built, WSDOT's intent, as stated on page 2-34, remained "to build a complete project that fully meets all aspects of the purpose and need." This was true for the Phased Implementation Scenario evaluated in the SDEIS, and it is also true for revised potential phasing evaluated in the Final EIS. See Section 2.8 of the Final EIS for further information.

The Final EIS includes additional information regarding project costs and mitigation measures.

C-030-002

from WSDOT during public meetings is no longer relevant, and the entire scoping and public participation process needs to be redone.

C-030-003

(2) The SR-520 planning process had an extended mediation process established by the legislature (Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill [ESSB 6099]). At the mediation committee's initial meetings there was disagreement about how many lanes SR-520 would have. The legislature had stipulated a 6-lane roadway with one lane in each direction for HOV and transit use and said that the roadway should be able to accommodate light rail in the future. One group argued that the legislature had mandated 6 vehicle lanes and that future light rail would be accommodated by expanding the roadway to 8 lanes. Another group argued that the 6-lane roadway had to be designed so that future light rail could be accommodated without adding more lanes. Because the two sides could not agree, the matter was referred to the mediation's Oversight Committee which was composed of the Governor and elected members of the state legislature. The finding of the Oversight Committee was that there was to be a total of 6-lanes in the SR-520 corridor, including the accommodation for future light rail. The recent Nelson-Nygaard (N/N) review of the SDEIS commissioned by the City of Seattle reported that WSDOT's SR-520 design will not accommodate light rail. If light rail is to be added to SR-520 in the future it will require an entirely new effort – including the possibility of having to build a new bridge and light rail corridor. The current design does not meet the legislative mandate given to WSDOT.

C-030-004

(3) WSDOT has taken the position that it will only consider alternatives moved forward by the SR-520 Mediation Committee. There are recreational open spaces and park lands within the PB/RP community that will be adversely impacted construction of an expanded SR-520 corridor (see comments submitted by Gerald Conley on this point for more details). Federal requirements under Section 4-F require that WSDOT investigate all available alternatives when open spaces and park lands will be adversely impacted and only if none are available will such impacts be considered unavoidable and mitigation pursued. Because WSDOT limited its SDEIS analysis to only those alternatives that came out of the mediation process, this was not done. And worse yet, the SDEIS states that mitigation may or may not be provided depending on the availability of funding. The SDEIS is therefore inadequate and needs to be redone.

C-030-003

The Preferred Alternative has been designed to have forward compatibility with light rail transit. WSDOT has worked with Sound Transit since 2003 to design for future rail compatibility in the corridor. The April 2010 Nelson/Nygaard report identified several changes to the SDEIS options that were believed to be necessary to “meet the mayor’s goal of an SR 520 bridge that is readily convertible to rail.” While WSDOT believed that the design already met this goal, the agency worked with the City of Seattle and Sound Transit to identify changes that would enhance the corridor’s rail compatibility. The Preferred Alternative reflects these design changes and allows for two future rail options:

- Option 1: Convert the HOV/transit lanes to light rail. This approach would accommodate light rail by converting the HOV lanes to exclusive rail use. Trains would use the direct-access ramps at Montlake Boulevard to exit, or could utilize a 40-foot gap between the eastbound and westbound lanes of the west approach to make a more direct connection to the University Link station at Husky Stadium.
- Option 2: Add light-rail only lanes. This approach would allow several connections—via a high bridge, a drawbridge, or a tunnel, as suggested in the Nelson/Nygaard report—to the University Link station.

Both approaches would allow for the addition of supplemental floating bridge pontoons to support the additional weight of light rail, should the regional decision to do so be made and funded. Such a decision would need to be planned and programmed by regional land use and transit agencies, funded by a public vote, and evaluated in its own environmental analysis.

Section 2.4 of the Final EIS explains why initial implementation of light

C-030-005

(4) The Roanoke Historic District is an 18.25 acre area bordered by 10th Avenue East on the east, Harvard Avenue East on the west, East Shelby Street on the north and East Roanoke Street (and SR-520) on the south. It is a residential area of 99 homes within a framework of tree-lined streets, well maintained grounds and distinctive natural features. Over two-thirds of its homes are of architectural significance and it is one of only two residential districts in the City of Seattle listed on the Federal Register of Historic Districts. Section 106 requires that no historic places be impacted, or if they are, mitigation must be provided. The SDEIS discusses possible detour routes through the historic district, noise levels of over 100 dB within the historic district during construction, and the use of streets adjacent to the historic district as haul routes during construction (for additional details, see the comments submitted by Erin O'Connor). The SDEIS provides, at best, trivial attention to these impacts. If the final SDEIS remains in its current form both with regard to impact identification and the stipulation of required mitigation, we will appeal to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) not to sign the Section 106 required Memorandum of Agreement with WSDOT. And worse yet, the SDEIS again states that mitigation may or may not be provided depending on the availability of funding

C-030-006

(5) It is my understanding that courts have ruled that a project such as the SR-520 corridor cannot be divided up into segments and individually analyzed in different EISs when the design of one segment will influence the impacts of, and alternatives available to, the other. WSDOT obtained a no significant impact Record of Decision (ROD) for that segment of SR-520 east of Medina. According to the recent N/N report commissioned by the City of Seattle however, the design for SR-520 east of Lake Washington precludes the possibility of building a six-lane SR-520 corridor that accommodates light rail on the west side. Since Seattle's mayor has said he wants to study the possibility of having a six lane SR-520 corridor that would accommodate light rail, WSDOT's current segmentation of the corridor combined with its stated intent to begin construction on the east side appears to violate the no segmentation rule.

C-030-007

(6) ESSB 6099 called for the SDEIS to contain a Health Impact Assessment of how the replacement and expansion of the SR-520 corridor could affect public health. A generic overview of public health issues was conducted by King County Public Health and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency and delivered to WSDOT (see comments by Douglas Stewart for more details). It was presented to the SR-520

rail transit on SR 520 is not a reasonable alternative for the project, and Section 5.9 discusses how the Preferred Alternative relates to regional goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

C-030-004

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 states that an Agency can approve a transportation project that uses Section 4(f) land if the determination has been made that there is no feasible or prudent alternative to using the property. Please note that the definition of Section 4(f) protected properties does not cover all properties that may be perceived as parks, such as plantings in rights-of-way or informal open spaces not designated for park purposes.

Since the inception of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project, WSDOT has evaluated a wide range of project alternatives and options. Attachment 8 to the SDEIS, the Range of Alternatives and Options Evaluated report, described the evaluation process in detail.

As required under Section 4(f), WSDOT also evaluated whether there were feasible and prudent alternatives that would avoid the use of Section 4(f) properties. This evaluation was done both for the corridor as a whole and on a resource-by-resource basis, and was described on pages 121-133 of the Draft Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) Evaluation in Attachment 6 to the SDEIS. This evaluation was not constrained by the design options generated through mediation; it went beyond these options to look at the No Build Alternative, new corridors, new travel modes, and specific potential design changes that might avoid effects on each Section 4(f) resource. The analysis concluded that there were no feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of Section 4(f) resources. The design of the Preferred Alternative has been further refined to minimize harm to Section 4(f) properties.

C-030-007

Mediation Committee. The public health information contained in the report was never applied to the impact assessment of alternatives. Since – for example - the report found public health impacts were significantly impacted (reduced) by lids, and the size of the Montlake lid varies considerably by alternative, the public health information contained in the SDEIS was never used to assess different alternatives but only for making generalized, generic comments. This violates the mandate contained in ESSB 6099 and needs to be redone.

C-030-008

(7) ESSB 6099 required WSDOT study ways to reduce noise impacts within communities adjacent to SR-520. At the urging of the Mediation Committee WSDOT convened an Expert Noise Panel to study this issue and recommend ways to reduce such impacts. The Panel met, drafted a report, and presented it to the Mediation Committee. Thereafter, it was totally ignored by WSDOT in the SDEIS's assessment of noise impacts. (see comments by Steve Silverberg, Jim Simpkins and Alice Byers and the separately submitted comments by Jerry G. Lilly, President, JGL Acoustics, Inc.) WSDOT's position was that the only noise mitigation method meeting Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) standards is the use of noise walls, and that was the only type of mitigation contained in the SDEIS. However, a large number of the noise reducing options contained in the Expert Noise Panel's report could be incorporated in the design of the SR-520 corridor – thereby reducing noise and (possibly) eliminating the need to build noise walls. The so-called "K" option, for example, explicitly called for the use of rubberized asphalt quiet pavement to reduce noise in the SR-520 corridor, but this option was never used in the alternatives assessments conducted by WSDOT. This information is needed to make sound decisions about noise reduction along the SR-520 corridor and its omission means that the entire analysis of different alternatives' noise impacts needs to be redone.

C-030-009

(b) Errors and omissions contained in the DEIS

(1) Page 1-21, 4th bullet in the margin box: Currently reads, "Six lanes plus an auxiliary lane on the Portage Bay Bridge." Since the so-called auxiliary lane runs from one edge of the Portage Bay Bridge to the other, it should clearly be labeled as, "Seven lanes, one of which is an auxiliary lane."

C-030-010

(2) Page 1-23, 1st paragraph under the heading *What is the 6-lane Alternative?*: Currently reads: "The six lane alternative would widen the SR 520 corridor to six

C-030-005

Following a thorough analysis, research, and review, WSDOT determined that the Roanoke Park Historic District's characteristics of integrity would be altered by construction and operation of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project.

Through the Section 106 process, WSDOT met with the Section 106 consulting parties to develop the Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 of the Final EIS), which records the stipulations agreed upon to resolve the adverse effect from the project. Additionally, WSDOT is working with Section 106 consulting parties to develop a Community Construction Management Plan (outlined in Attachment 9 to the Final EIS), which will have specific stipulations to mitigate construction effects to ensure that the effects do not diminish the integrity of historic properties in the APE.

Stipulations of the Programmatic Agreement and the Community Construction Management Plan will resolve the effects that could temporarily or permanently alter or diminish the integrity of the historic district. The setting and feeling of the Roanoke Park Historic District would be indirectly affected by the project, but these effects would be minimized and mitigated through the Programmatic Agreement and Community Construction Management Plan.

Under the Preferred Alternative, detour routes and identified potential haul routes would not run through the Roanoke Park Historic District and, therefore, would not diminish the integrity of the district. Some potential haul routes would still run on existing arterial streets adjacent to the historic district, and they could temporarily diminish the integrity of the eligible properties along those streets. However, those effects will be minimized and mitigated through the Programmatic Agreement and construction management plan.

The Community Construction Management Plan will include measures

C-030-010

lanes from I-5 in Seattle to Evergreen Point Road in Medina.” This is incorrect, it should read, “The six lane alternative would widen the SR 520 corridor to six lanes main line lanes (i.e., not counting on- and off-ramps) from I-5 in Seattle to Evergreen Point Road in Medina, except for the Portage Bay bridge which would have seven lanes.”

C-030-011

(3) Page 1-25, 1st paragraph under the heading *Noise Reduction*: Currently reads: “...including a WSDOT requirement ... to attain a 10-decibel or greater reduction in the first row of properties affected by project noise.” While this is true it is misleading. Documents distributed to impacted residences during construction of the Harvard and Boylston Avenues East noise walls clearly state that while WSDOT prefers a noise reduction of at least 10-decibels, it will construct noise walls when the noise reduction is 3-decibels or more. The SDEIS should be revised to reflect WSDOT’s operating policies instead of its intents or targets.

C-030-012

(4) Page 2-1, 1st paragraph under the heading *What is the No Build Alternative?:* Currently reads: “For the transportation analysis included in this document, it was assumed that traffic in the No Build (NB) Alternative would not be tolled.” Throughout the SDEIS, comparisons are made between traffic volumes, speeds, and other traffic-related variables between the NB and other alternatives. Because no information is presented about the NB alternative under a tolling assumption, these comparisons are meaningless. For example, Exhibit 5.1-3 (page 5-6) comparing peak vehicle demand and throughput between the NB alternative and alternatives A, K, and L shows westbound traffic slightly lower in the morning and slightly higher in the afternoon. Is this the result of the new roadway’s alignment and wider shoulders or does it result from the A, K and L alternatives being tolled while the NB alternative is not? This type of information is necessary for making informed decisions, yet it is concealed throughout the SDEIS. Analysis of traffic volumes and flows for a tolled NB alternative is critically necessary to make informed decisions about how to optimize the SR-520 corridor. It needs to be provided throughout the SDEIS.

(5) Page 2-5, bottom paragraph: Currently reads, “Since traffic modeling assumptions were applied consistently across options, they show the relative performance of each option in comparison to No Build.” As discussed above under (4), this is not true. Because the NB alternative is not tolled while the other alternatives are tolled in the traffic modeling, the relative performance of A, K,

to keep construction noise below the maximum levels in the Seattle Municipal Code. WSDOT will use a combination of best management practices, minimization and mitigation measures to ensure that construction activities stay within those levels.

C-030-006

The regulation alluded to in the comment is 23 CFR 771.111 (f)(3), which states that actions evaluated in an EIS or a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) “shall not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.” Adding rail to the SR 520 corridor is not a reasonably foreseeable transportation improvement. As documented in the 2008 SR 520 High-Capacity Transit Plan, the proposed mode of high-capacity transit in this corridor is bus rapid transit, with future rail funded only for long-range study and not included in any regional plan. Nevertheless, the design for the portion of SR 520 east of Lake Washington does not preclude potential future light rail or other high capacity transit mode. For specific information about how the SR 520, Medina to SR 202 project design addresses this topic, see pages 4-1 and 4-16 of the SR 520, Medina to SR 202: Eastside Transit and HOV Project Environmental Assessment (WSDOT 2009), published December 2009.

As described in Chapter 1 of the Final EIS, funding for the floating bridge—the most vulnerable portion of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina corridor—has been secured, and a WSDOT has solicited proposals for construction of this portion of the project. Chapter 1 also describes construction sequencing for the project, which allows several years for full funding to be obtained through a variety of state and federal sources. Thus, funding and construction of the Eastside project does not preclude the Preferred Alternative or any other alternative for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project.

C-030-012

and L alternatives cannot be compared with the NB alternative. Such comparisons are only valid when all alternatives are analyzed under the same assumptions.

C-030-013

(6) Page 2-9, 2nd full paragraph: Currently reads, "One idea discussed in mediation is to build a parking lot with a driveway entrance on the southwest corner of Roanoke and Boylston." Correct but very misleading. My mediation notes show the idea of a parking lot was briefly discussed and then rejected by the representatives of both the Roanoke and Eastlake neighborhoods. It was raised again during a post-mediation meeting between WSDOT and PB/RP CC representatives and was once again rejected.

C-030-014

(7) Page 2-10, 1st full paragraph: Currently reads: "Option A would have two general-purpose lanes and an HOV lane in each direction, plus a westbound auxiliary lane, making it about 10 feet wider than Options K or L." This is incorrect. Table 2.2, page 2-12, shows the width of the different options ranging from 10 to 21 feet. Also, a more accurate statement about the Portage Bay Bridge is, *Option A would have two general-purpose lanes and an HOV lane in an eastbound direction and three general-purpose lanes and an HOV lane in a westbound direction.* There is nothing in SR-520's Option A design that would distinguish the roadway or use characteristics of an auxiliary lane relative to a general purpose lane. The distinction is meaningless except that it identifies the lane as being on the Portage Bay Bridge.

C-030-015

(8) Page 2-34, 1st bullet under paragraph 4: Currently reads, "The floating portion of the Evergreen Point Bridge...is the highest priority in the corridor...because of the high risk of catastrophic failure." The last session of the Washington State legislature transferred funds from construction of the floating portion of the bridge to construction of SR-520's east of Lake Washington land-based roadway. The DEIS must (a) explain how this is compatible with the floating portion of the bridge being the project's priority or (b) the statement needs to be deleted.

C-030-016

(9) Page 2-38, 3rd paragraph: Currently reads, "...the Portage Bay Bridge would be built to its ultimate width – seven lanes for option A, six lanes for options K and L." This contradicts page 1-23, 1st paragraph, reads: "The six lane alternative would widen the SR 520 corridor to six lanes from I-5 in Seattle to Evergreen Point Road in Medina."

C-030-007

The SR 520 Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was developed in response to Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6099 to support and inform legislatively mandated mediation efforts and was to be included in the Project Impact Plan developed by the Mediation Group. King County Health and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency led preparation of the HIA with support from WSDOT. All parties agreed that the HIA was not part of the NEPA process, although the HIA used data from the DEIS, and the SDEIS referred to the results of the HIA. In general, the HIA recommended potential measures that could be incorporated to improve the region's overall quality of health, rather than attributing specific health outcomes to the project itself. It noted, however, that many of the measures already included in the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project (e.g., bicycle/pedestrian paths, lids, urban design elements) would improve walkability, bicycling, and transit access in the project area, thereby providing general health benefits. While there is rarely a section entitled "Human Health Impacts" in an EIS, evaluating and protecting human health is one of the reasons behind many of the studies conducted in the preparation of an EIS.

C-030-008

The Preferred Alternative incorporates a number of the noise reduction strategies that were recommended by the Expert Noise Review Panel in 2008, including 4-foot concrete traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating, noise-absorptive materials around lid portals, and a reduced speed limit. Not all of these measures can be modeled for noise effects using existing modeling methods, since little data is available to date regarding their performance. 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. However, based on noise modeling results for the Preferred Alternative, the

- C-030-017** (10) Page 3-2, Exhibit 3-1 shows the Delmar/SR-520 and SR-520/I-5 lids used as staging areas. These lids are adjacent to the Roanoke Historic District. How will impacts of these staging areas on the Historic District be either avoided or mitigated – as required under Section 106? This issue is not discussed in the SDEIS.
- C-030-018** (11) Page 3-4, 1st complete paragraph: Currently reads, "...several residential streets would also be used for truck haul routes, including 11th Avenue East and East Miller Street." This creates a haul route through a residential area and next to Seattle Prep school. The impact of a haul route on the school needs to be discussed.
- C-030-019** (12) Page 3-5, Table 3-2, *Estimated Number of Peak Construction Period Haul Route Trips on Local Highways*: The table is both incorrect and misleading. For option A, the table reports 350 trips per day and 45 trips per hour on SR-520, and 270 trips per day and 35 trips per hour on I-5 (although not discussed in the SDEIS, the assumption appears to be that hauling will take place 8 hours per day). The correct number of trips per day is 43.8 on SR-520 and 33.8 on I-5. Similar errors exist for the other options. Additionally, this number of trips equals one truck trip every 1.4 minutes on SR-520 and every 1.8 minutes on I-5. During the 3-hours of so-called *rush hour* traffic, neither SR-520 nor I-5 can accommodate an additional truck entering the roadway every 1.4 and 1.8 minutes, respectively.
- C-030-020** (13) Page 3-6, paragraph under the heading Delmar Drive East: Currently reads, "The Delmar Drive East bridge would be closed for approximately 9 months under all options. While it's closed, traffic would be detoured to 10th Avenue East." 10th Avenue East runs directly through the federally certified Roanoke Historic District, and the use of a street in a certified historic district street violates Section 106 requirements. The SDEIS must acknowledge that it will violate the tranquility of the historic district and address how this will be avoided or mitigated.
- (14) Page 3-13, 1st paragraph under the heading *10th Avenue East/Delmar Drive East Lid*: Currently reads, "Delmar Drive East would remain closed for 9 to 12 months ." This contradicts the statement on page 3-6 that the bridge will be closed "approximately 9 months." The purpose of the SDEIS is to provide

combination of 4-foot traffic barriers, a larger Montlake lid, and lower speeds on the Portage Bay Bridge would reduce noise levels in the Seattle portion of the corridor to such a degree that noise walls would not be recommended under FHWA and WSDOT criteria, 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). Measures that cannot be modeled, such as quieter concrete, may further reduce noise levels, although this potential benefit cannot be validly predicted.

C-030-009

The requested change was not made because the original statement is accurate.

C-030-010

The requested change was not made because the original statement is accurate.

C-030-011

The statement refers to WSDOT's guideline to make every effort to achieve a 10-decibel reduction in noise when determining where noise walls should be placed. Pages 115 and 116 of the Noise Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS) included more details about the lower limits of noise reduction that WSDOT considers in determining noise wall locations. Please also see the Noise Discipline Report Addendum prepared for the Final EIS (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS), which describes the noise effects related to the Preferred Alternative and makes recommendations regarding noise walls in each area the project could affect.

As stated in the response to Comment C-030-008, noise walls are not recommended with the Preferred Alternative, except in Medina and

C-030-020

information on worst case impact scenarios to decision makers. The statement on page 3-6 should read, "the bridge will be closed approximately 12 months."

C-030-021

- (15) Page 5-2, 1st paragraph under heading *How is travel demand predicted to grow in the SR 520 corridor?*: Currently reads: "Between today and the year 2030, the region will ... need to accommodate close to 50 percent more traffic." This is a misleading statement since table 5-1-1, page 5-5 shows the following:

	SR-520	total cross lake	SR-520 % change	total % change
existing	115,000	313,000		
NB	135,000	397,200	17.4%	26.9%
A	131,000	397,900	13.9%	27.1%
K/L	133,800	397,900	16.3%	27.1%

Total cross lake travel will increase by only half that amount and SR-520 will increase by only a third.

C-030-022

- (16) Page 5-5, Table 5.1-1, *Daily Vehicle Demand*. This table must contain an error. Adding additional lanes and tolling SR-520 causes total cross lake vehicle trips to increase by two-tenths of one percent over a 20 year period. This needs to be explained.

C-030-023

- (17) Page 5-40, entire section under the heading *How would the project affect economic activity?*: The economic analysis in this section is inadequate for the following reasons: (a) only project benefits are discussed and there is no acknowledgement of any economic costs resulting from the project even though businesses in the Montlake Blvd., North Capitol Hill (at Miller and 10th) and Roanoke Park (at Harvard and Eastlake) will experience street closures and suffer negative impacts from having the streets in front of them used as haul routes for as much as six years of construction – a long enough period of time to permanently impact their ability to survive; (b) there is a likelihood that houses negatively impacted during construction will flood the market and permanently lose value; even if they regain their value after construction, property tax revenues will decrease during the multi-year construction period (c) Table 5.2-4 is in error. It states that a decrease of \$1.8 million in taxable value within the City of Seattle will result in a property tax decrease of \$4,940 – an implied levy rate of 2.6944. The actual King County levy rate charged on Seattle properties in 2008

potentially along I-5 in the North Capitol Hill area where the reasonableness and feasibility of a noise wall is still be evaluated, because they do not satisfy WSDOT feasibility criteria.

C-030-012

As explained on page 1-37 of the SDEIS, the SR 520 Variable Tolling Project will implement tolling on SR 520 in 2011 for the primary purpose of managing traffic congestion. This toll would remain in place until the construction of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project, and would then be replaced with new tolls adopted by the Transportation Commission to provide project funding in accordance with the financing plan. Although the state Legislature has authorized allocation of revenues from the Variable Tolling Project to fund the SR 520 Pontoon Construction Project and the SR 520, Medina to SR 202: Eastside Transit and HOV Project, the toll would be removed when the bonds for those projects are repaid, which is expected to be before 2030. Therefore, if the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project were not built, there would be no toll in effect in 2030, which is the year used to compare the No Build Alternative and the Build alternatives. This is why the baseline No Build Alternative assumption is that the SR 520 corridor would not be tolled.

WSDOT and FHWA recognize the possibility that the Legislature might choose to extend the duration of variable tolling for congestion management purposes, even if the I-5 to Medina project were not implemented. Additionally, discussions of tolling are taking place at a regional level. Accordingly, WSDOT performed a sensitivity analysis to understand how traffic modeling results for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project might differ if the No Build Alternative were tolled. This analysis showed that transit and HOV use would increase with a tolled No Build, but only by about half as much as they would under the Preferred Alternative. It also showed that the tolled No Build Alternative would move about 10,000 fewer people each day through the SR 520 corridor than the untolled No Build, and about 20,000 fewer people than the

C-030-023

was 8.6879 – which would have resulted in a property tax decrease of \$12,382, two and a half times greater than the SDEIS estimate; (d) the accepted, standard methodology to calculate the economic impact of the project on property tax revenues collected in Seattle is to calculate the net present value (NPV) of property tax decreases over the life of the project, the one-year tax effects contained in table 5.2-4 is both unusual and misleading. The SDEIS needs to address and present findings for each of these elements of economic cost.

C-030-024

(18) Page 5-99, the entire section under the heading *What has been done to avoid or minimize adverse effects on cultural resources?*: The only historic district impacted by the project that is currently listed in both the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the Washington Heritage Register (WHR) is the Roanoke Park Historic District. IT IS NOT EVEN DISCUSSED IN THE SDEIS even though WSDOT’s plans include having a detour route go right through the District. This is really an amazing omission – particularly since representatives of the PB/RP CC have held numerous meetings with WSDOT staff and consultants about their concerns over the impacts the project could have the District.

(19) Page 5-100, the entire section under the heading *How could the project mitigate avoidable adverse effects on cultural resources?*: The only historic district impacted by the project that is currently listed in both the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the Washington Heritage Register (WHR) is the Roanoke Park Historic District. IT IS NOT EVEN DISCUSSED IN THE SDEIS even though WSDOT’s plans include having a detour route go right through the District. This is really an amazing omission – particularly since representatives of the PB/RP CC have held numerous meetings with WSDOT staff and consultants about their concerns over the impacts the project could have the District.

C-030-025

(20) Page 6-8, Table 6.1-4, *Summary of Effects of Truck Traffic in Seattle*: The table’s footnote “a” states that the calculations are based on a 10 hour haul day. This is in error. The “Per Hour” results in the table only work if they are calculated on the basis of an 8 hour haul day.

C-030-026

(21) Page 6-23, paragraph under the section heading *How would construction affect economic activity?*: Currently reads: “On balance, the positive effects [of

Preferred Alternative. In other words, the mobility benefits of the Preferred Alternative are even greater when compared to a tolled No Build Alternative than they are compared to the untolled No Build used for the EIS analysis. The sensitivity analysis is summarized in more detail in Section 5.1 of the Final EIS.

C-030-013

This sentence does not suggest that the idea would be implemented, but that the idea was discussed. The design of the Preferred Alternative does not include a parking lot with a driveway on the southwest corner of Roanoke and Boylston.

C-030-014

Under SDEIS design Option A, the Portage Bay Bridge had two general-purpose lanes and a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane in each direction, plus a westbound auxiliary lane. The Portage Bay Bridge design from Option A was sometimes referred to as a 7-lane bridge (see the 2009 Description of Alternatives Discipline Report). However, the bridge design was only one element of the larger 6-lane design, so the overall Option A design was that of 6 lanes.

Since the SDEIS was published, WSDOT has identified a Preferred Alternative, which is similar to Option A, but with a number of design refinements. The design refinements of the Portage Bay Bridge include narrowing its footprint, providing a managed shoulder rather than an auxiliary lane, reducing shoulder widths, constructing a landscaped median, and reducing the design speed of the bridge to 45 mph to reduce noise. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS describes the Preferred Alternative.

Under the Preferred Alternative, the width of the Portage Bay Bridge would range from 105 to 158 feet, including two general-purpose lanes and an HOV lane in each direction, plus a managed westbound

C-030-026

the project] ... would be more widely dispersed through the local and regional economies than the location-specific negative effects of increased traffic congestion and noise. For this reason, construction of the 6-Lane Alternative is expected to have a net beneficial economic effect." This statement is both incorrect and misleading. It is incorrect because the project's widely dispersed benefits are not a "reason" for it to have a net beneficial economic effect. In fact, because the SDEIS does not even identify – let alone estimate/calculate - the project's potential non-construction economic costs, it is impossible to estimate its net economic effects. It is misleading because even if the statement were correct, the proper conclusion would be: "since the project's positive effects would be more widely dispersed through the regional economy than the location-specific negative effects of increased traffic congestion and noise, the project is expected to have a net beneficial economic effect on the region but a net negative economic effect on areas adjacent to the SR-520 corridor."

I appreciate the opportunity to submit the above comments for the PB/RP CC.

Sincerely

s/ Theodore Lane
President, PB/RP CC

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shoulder. It is standard practice when describing highway corridor widths to refer to a typical cross-section, which does not include ramps and tapers.

C-030-015

The replacement of the floating portion of the Evergreen Point Bridge is still the highest priority for the SR 520 project. The floating bridge portion of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project was, and remains, fully funded by the Washington State Legislature.

C-030-016

Please see the response to Comment C-030-014. The statement on page 1-23 is an overview of the project. Under the Preferred Alternative, the Portage Bay Bridge would include two general-purpose lanes and an HOV lane in each direction, plus a managed westbound shoulder.

C-030-017

As a result of Section 106 consultation, WSDOT has eliminated the staging areas adjacent to the Roanoke Park Historic District. Additionally, WSDOT has agreed that no construction staging would occur within the Roanoke Park Historic District.

C-030-018

Construction assumptions developed for the project identify major freeways such as I-5, SR 520, and I-405 as primary haul routes intended to carry most project truck traffic. However, there will be times when city streets will need to be used as secondary haul routes. Secondary haul routes for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project were identified based on criteria such as shortest off-highway mileage, and providing access to locations needed for construction where direct highway access is unavailable.

Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has refined potential haul routes to avoid using non-arterial neighborhood streets. Local jurisdictions can limit the use of non-arterial streets for truck traffic; therefore, efforts were made to identify designated arterial streets for potential use as haul routes. Local jurisdictions will determine final haul routes for those actions and activities that require a street use or other jurisdictional permit. The permit process typically takes place during the final design phase and prior to construction.

East Miller Street and 11th Avenue East are not identified as potential haul routes in the Final EIS for any of the alternatives of design options. Additional information and an updated map of potential haul routes are in Chapter 3 of the Final EIS and in the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

C-030-019

Table 3-2 is correct. The assumed duration of a work-shift for most elements of the project is 10 hours, but some elements were assumed to be constructed in multiple shifts per day. Simple division of total trips by an assumed duration of shift is not a valid calculation. Additionally, results were rounded to reflect the level of certainty for this type of estimate at this early stage of construction planning. Reporting daily trip estimates at an accuracy of one-tenth would be an invalid representation of the data. The hourly results are not intended to indicate that this amount of truck activity would be present during peak traffic hours. Construction hauling is generally scheduled to avoid peak traffic as much as possible due to the higher cost of travel at that time.

Pages 10-11 through 10-19 of the SDEIS Transportation Discipline Report included a more thorough discussion of haul trips and their effects on SR 520 and I-5. This discussion has been updated in the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

C-030-020

Updated construction strategies for the Preferred Alternative would not require closure of Delmar Drive East to traffic for any extended amount of time. Short closures, including night and weekend closures, are expected, but anything more than these brief periods is not anticipated. Although Section 106 does not prohibit the use of streets in a certified historic district, no proposed detour routes exist within the boundaries of the Roanoke Park Historic District.

C-030-021

No change was made because the original statement is accurate. The two items are referring to two different types of analyses. One is a calculation of travel demand based on regional population, while the table exhibits the daily vehicle demand specific to the project options. As noted in the response to Comment C-030-020, no extended closures of Delmar Drive East are required under current construction planning approaches.

C-030-022

Table 5.1-1 shows daily vehicle demand under existing conditions and in 2030 under the No Build Alternative and 6-Lane Alternative Options A, K, and L. Overall growth in demand for cross-lake travel is based on forecasted growth in population and jobs and on where that growth is expected to locate (this is forecasted based on regional and local land use plans). Demand for travel on various cross-lake corridors is based on features of the transportation network, such as capacity, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, tolls, and transit service.

Table 5.1-1 shows that total cross-lake vehicle demand is projected to increase by 27% in the next 20 years due to population and employment growth. This is the difference between the No Build Alternative projections and existing conditions. This growth is not an effect of the project. The No Build Alternative was evaluated at the same

horizon year, 2030, as the 6-Lane Alternative options. The difference between the No Build Alternative and Options A, K, and L only represents the effect of building the project itself. Therefore, the minor difference in total cross lake demand does not include the effect of growth over 20 years as indicated in the comment. Please see Section 5.1 of the Final EIS for an updated version of the traffic analysis.

C-030-023

The economic analysis in the SDEIS is a summary of the full analysis in the Land Use, Economics, and Relocations Discipline Report. The following are responses to the lettered items in the comment.

- a) The economic effects that could result from construction-related traffic congestion in the I-5 and Montlake areas as a result of the Preferred Alternative were described in Section 6.2 of the SDEIS. Section 6.2 of the Final EIS includes additional information on the effect that construction-related traffic congestion and road closures could have on local businesses.
- b) Research indicates that the impacts of a transportation project on property values cannot be calculated with certainty because property values fluctuate constantly based on a variety of factors, including the general condition of the economy at the national, state, and local level.
- c) The property tax effect is based on the 2008 tax levy rate for the City's portion of the taxable right-of-way, as reported by the King County Assessor.
- d) The method used to calculate tax effects for the SDEIS is the standard method used for environmental analyses. Calculating property tax decreases over the life of the project cannot be done with certainty because taxes are based on more than just the

assessed value of a property. Other factors that affect property tax revenues over the long term include the specific taxes levied in the area, as well as fluctuations in local real estate values. In addition, about half of the property tax is determined by levies that have been approved for such services as schools, parks, water districts, emergency medical service and fire/rescue, and others.

C-030-024

The Roanoke Park Historic District and its status as an NRHP-listed resource are discussed on page 4-42 of the SDEIS. The reason that the district is not discussed in the text cited on page 5-99, which pertains to mitigation, is that WSDOT has determined that the project would not diminish the integrity of the Roanoke Park Historic District. Therefore, the historic district is not discussed in this mitigation section. Implementation of the Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) and the Community Construction Management Plan (outlined in Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) will resolve potential effects that would temporarily or permanently alter or diminish the integrity of the Roanoke Park Historic District. As noted in responses to earlier comments, the detour route through the Roanoke Park Historic District has been eliminated.

The definition of adverse effect used in the Cultural Resources section of Chapter 5 comes from 36 CFR 800.5, "An adverse effect is found when an undertaking may alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of a historic property that qualify the property for inclusion in the National Register in a manner that would diminish the integrity of the property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association." WSDOT has determined that this project will not affect the characteristics of the Roanoke Park Historic District that qualify it for inclusion in the National Register. The SR 520 project will not alter the district's association with the broad patterns of Seattle's history, the architectural style of many homes within the district, or its representation of the work of several notable architects.

The Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) adopted a revised structure that dedicates two sections to a discussion of the potential effects on the Roanoke Park Historic District from construction and operation of the project. Please see Chapter 7 or the Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report for more information.

C-030-025

This table is correct. Please see the response to Comment C-030-019.

C-030-026

In its full context, the statement cited indicates that the project's regional positive economic effects would more than offset its localized negative economic effects. This statement remains true. A more detailed estimate of the localized effect on businesses from construction-related traffic congestion on SR 520 and adjacent local streets west of Lake Washington has been included in the Land Use, Economics, and Relocations Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).