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Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2010 8:17 PM
To: SR 520 Bridge SDEIS
Cc: Hannele Ruohola-Baker; david baker
Subject: SR520

I-310-001

Comments on the SR 520 replacement.

Regarding the proposed SR 520 replacement, serious consideration needs to be given to incorporation of rail transit, and less surface area for traffic. Limitations of the I-5 corridor traffic capacity and undesirability of additional single occupancy vehicles as well as the desire and ultimate need to decrease the carbon footprint all support expansion of rail. Replacement of SR 520 needs to be with anticipation of the next 100 years in mobility, and sustainability, integrating with the technology of the future. Work on what would be the intersecting north-south rail line has already begun.

I-310-002

Furthermore the impact of greater traffic onto a widen Montlake Blvd [option A] will have a significant negative impact on the adjacent neighborhood. The current 4 lanes of traffic already impacts the walkability and biking experience but is within a width and is with mature trees that keep it livable. Additional lanes and roadway width would turn Montlake Blvd into an 'Aurora Ave' experience; a huge noisy scar. Any additional northwardly directed traffic should be tunneled.

Regards,

Dennis Shaw & Julie Howe

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The SR 520 project would complete the HOV lane system in the corridor and add a bicycle/pedestrian lane to the corridor. The project would not add general-purpose lanes. The project would result in immediate benefits for transit speed and reliability in the corridor by providing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes across the floating bridge and better HOV connections at the Montlake and I-5 interchanges (see Section 5.1 of both the SDEIS and Final EIS). The HOV lanes would allow for the near-term implementation of bus rapid transit, as called for in the SR 520 High-Capacity Transit Plan (see Section 2.4 of the Final EIS for more information). Because the project would improve reliability and efficiency for transit and carpools, it would create incentives for people to choose an alternative to driving alone.

Section 2.4 in the Final EIS explains why initial implementation of light rail transit on SR 520 is not planned. While WSDOT believed that the design of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project already accommodated potential future light rail, 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 potential future rail options. See Section 2.4 of the Final EIS for further discussion.

I-310-002

Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has developed a Preferred Alternative, which is similar to Option A but with a number of design refinements that would improve mobility and safety while reducing negative effects. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS describes the Preferred Alternative. The Final Transportation Discipline Report indicates that with the Preferred Alternative, transportation operations would be improved in the Montlake area compared to the No Build Alternative. The second bascule bridge would create lane continuity between the Montlake Cut and the SR 520 Montlake interchange, which would improve traffic operations compared to the No Build Alternative. The bridge would

provide additional capacity for transit/HOV, bicycles, and pedestrians and would provide bicycle lanes across the Montlake Cut. Most notably, overall delay related to bridge openings would decrease for all vehicles because the additional capacity would help clear congestion more quickly.

The ESSB 6392 workgroup considered priority treatments for transit in the project area and the Montlake corridor. Since the SDEIS was published, WSDOT, in collaboration with the City of Seattle, King County Metro, and Sound Transit, has evaluated transit signal priority in the Montlake interchange area. Chapter 6 of the Final Transportation Discipline Report describes the changes in traffic volume and operations on the local streets in the Montlake interchange area with the Preferred Alternative. Chapter 7 describes the effects of the Preferred Alternative on nonmotorized transportation facilities and connections. Chapter 8 describes the effects of the Preferred Alternative on transit service, facilities, ridership, travel times during a.m., p.m., and off-peak periods, and rider connections.