April 13th, 2010

Jenifer Young
Environmental Manager
SR-520 Program Office
600 Stewart St. Suite 520
Seattle WA 98101

Dear Ms. Young,

I-312-001 Below are our comments on the SDEIS for the 520 project as proposed by the Washington State Department of Transportation. We are providing both general comments as well as specific comments we identify by the page numbers in the PDF copy of the SDEIS.

In general we believe that the SDEIS inadequately addresses the adverse impacts of the design and width of the bridge, the bascule bridge over the Lake Washington Ship Canal, proposed revisions of the Lake Washington Blvd on and off ramps and the effect of the traffic on residential streets in the historic Montlake neighborhood. We believe that the current proposal does significantly adversely affect the historic Montlake Neighborhood and little to nothing is listed in the SDEIS how these adverse effects will be mitigated.

I-312-002

I-312-003 In general we are opposed to the following design and construction planning components of the project and believe them to be of such a level of adverse impact that they should be removed or revised in the design of the project.

- The width of the project from Roanoke through Montlake and to Foster Island is too wide. Remove all the shoulder space from the design and lower the speed limit through the area if safety is an issue for you. Delete the 7th lane over the Portage Bay viaduct.

I-312-004

- The construction of the 2nd Bascule Bridge destroys the view, and negatively impacts the surroundings and traditions associated with the Historic Montlake Bridge including opening day of boating season, crew boat races and College football game days. It destroys the view of the Lake Washington Ship Canal from both the water and from the Bridge. Construction of the bridge will make such a miniscule difference for movement of traffic in the Montlake neighborhood from Pacific Avenue to the 520 bridge as to be worthless and a ridiculous wrecking of the ambiance around a bridge on the National Historic Register.

I-312-005

- The closing of the on and off ramps currently in place in the Arboretum. This would have the effect of increasing and concentrating traffic on Montlake Blvd and traffic in residential neighborhoods as drivers try to "beat the traffic" on Montlake. Moving them to the west will put an unconscionable amount of traffic virtually in the front yard of beautiful and historic homes along Lake Washington Blvd.

I-312-006

- Construction effects in the Montlake neighborhood are disastrous. Heavy trucks and vehicles would be using small residential streets in quiet neighborhoods for their hauling routes. Unfortunately for the residents the 6 and a half years of construction would not benefit their neighborhoods but make them worse. It is easier to put up with inconvenience if something good comes from the inconvenience. The A+ version of this project provides 6.5 years of

I-312-001

Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has identified a Preferred Alternative which includes a second bascule bridge, and which includes design refinements to replace the function of the Lake Washington Boulevard off-ramp while addressing concerns about traffic through the Arboretum and on Lake Washington Boulevard. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS describes the Preferred Alternative. Please see the responses to the specific comments below for further information on how the NEPA documents address the effects of the new bascule bridge, traffic on residential streets in the Montlake Historic District, effects of proposed Lake Washington Boulevard access to and from SR 520, and the mitigation measures for effects that warrant them.

I-312-002

After the SDEIS was published, WSDOT continued the Section 106 consultation process and increased communication with the Section 106 consulting parties. WSDOT met with the Montlake Historic District as part of the Section 106 process. WSDOT has worked extensively with the all of the Section 106 consulting parties to evaluate the effect of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project on the historic district and to identify mechanisms for resolving the project's adverse effect on historic properties in the project area.

The Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) between FHWA, ACHP, the SHPO, WSDOT and the other Section 106 consulting parties records the terms and conditions agreed upon to resolve the adverse effects from construction and operation of this project. WSDOT is also developing a Community Construction Management Plan (outlined in Attachment 9 to the Final EIS), in coordination with community groups and stakeholders to further mitigate for impacts from project construction.

The Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report

I-312-006 inconvenience for more traffic on Montlake, a monster freeway in the back yard and a useless and ambiance ruining 2nd bascule bridge with little or no improvement in traffic congestion.

I-312-007 Attached are specific comments made on the Cultural Resources Discipline Report and the Water Resources Discipline Report.

The Cultural Resources Discipline report seriously understates the permanent adverse impacts of the construction of the A+ version of the 520 replacement to historic neighborhoods, buildings and sites. Discussion of mitigation is unclear, absent or inadequate when discussed. There are no identified benefits for many of the aspects of the project design for example, the addition of a second bascule bridge and the doubling of the footprint of the bridge through the historic Montlake neighborhood.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the effects of this project on the community.

Paula Tony

Paula and Tony Oppermann
Seattle, Washington

(Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) discusses additional avoidance and minimization measures used to reduce the adverse effect from project construction and operation.

I-312-003

WSDOT understands your concerns regarding the construction and long-term impacts from the project. Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has identified a Preferred Alternative with 6 lanes and a managed westbound shoulder across Portage Bay. The Preferred Alternative has been designed to minimize SR 520's footprint as much as possible while allowing room for HOV lanes and the shoulders required to satisfy current safety standards regulated by FHWA and the Association of American State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). Highway lanes and shoulders are designed to standards that have been established to protect the safety of drivers. When circumstances warrant a change from these standards, WSDOT must request FHWA's approval of a "design deviation." WSDOT has already obtained approvals for design deviations for both lane and shoulder widths in response to community requests for a narrower roadway footprint. In the interest of safety, FHWA will not approve further narrowing of the corridor.

With the Preferred Alternative, the Portage Bay Bridge would include a 6-foot wide landscaped median, and reduced speed limit of 45 mph, and other strategies to address noise such as 4-foot concrete traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating.

The Preferred Alternative has also been designed to minimize SR 520's footprint in the west approach area and across Foster Island to the maximum extent possible while accommodating potential future light rail through the corridor. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for further description.

Because the following pages of this item are difficult to read, a full page version of this item is included at the end of the response to comments on the SDEIS in the printed version, and in a separate PDF file in the DVD and online version.

Discipline Report Comment Summary
Discipline Report: Cultural Resources

	Report	Page #	Line #'s	Reviewer	Comment	
I-312-008	Cult. Res.	ii	3-9	P. Oppermann	Buffer Area "one property deep" doesn't seem enough for the magnitude of this project.	
I-312-009	Cult. Res.	ii	14-16		Reference leaves out Historic Montlake district unless included in the Known or Anticipated construction limits. (Item 1 of APE components)	
I-312-010	Cult. Res.	ii	23-36		Consideration of the Miller Landfill and Foster Island as potential NRHP may have limited consideration of Options other than A+ due to anticipated mitigation	
I-312-011	Cult. Res.	iii	32-34		Quality decisions about the "preferred option" cannot be made without study of all of the potential impacts of construction	
I-312-012	Cult. Res.	iv	10-19		None of these adverse impacts would occur with Options other than A or A+	
I-312-013	Cult. Res.	iv	27-29		Quality decisions about the "preferred option" cannot be made without the Section 106 determination for all Options of the Project	
I-312-014	Cult. Res.	vi	27-29		Transportation of the pontoons WOULD affect Seattle Yacht Club and other boating communities' use of the Montlake Cut on more than the Opening Day of Yachting Season.	
I-312-015	Cult. Res.	1	10-11		Leaves out the Community of Laurelhurst. Or are they deleted because they are not a Cultural Resource. This whole report minimizes the long term effects of construction of this project.	
I-312-016	Cult. Res.	3	32-36		The six lane alternative is a misnomer. The width of the bridge is going to double and in some places more than double. In communities so impacted by the width of the bridge, cut down the shoulder width in the center and on the right. Don't add the auxiliary lane to create 7 lanes on the Portage Bay viaduct.	
I-312-017	Cult. Res.	4	18-21		The lids for Montlake Blvd are only for part of the east side of the Blvd. Add a lid to the West side as well which will reconnect the West side of Montlake to the Montlake Playfield and "blunt" the visual impact of the project from NOAA and Hamlin street.	
I-312-018	Cult. Res.	6	4		West Bound auxiliary lane increases visual impact for NOAA, SYC, Hamlin Street, Roanoke and Queen City Yacht Club, and University community.	
I-312-019	Cult. Res.	6	5-6		Transit only off ramp would increase traffic to Lake Washington Blvd which is going to be severely impacted by all options that close the Lake Washington Blvd on and off ramps.	
I-312-020	Cult. Res.	6	6-7		Adding the 2nd Montlake Bridge does very little to improve traffic and the visual impacts to walkers, bikers, boat traffic, Husky fans of football and especially crew	

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I-312-004

The design of the new bascule bridge would be context sensitive to minimize its effects on the setting and view of the historic Carl F. Gould Montlake Bridge. The design would complement the historic bridge and would not detract from the views of the historic bridge, or of the area surrounding the bridge. Stipulations are provided in the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) to ensure that the new bascule bridge would not diminish the integrity of the existing Montlake Bridge or other historic properties.

Through the Section 106 consultation process, and in an effort to avoid disruption of traditional activities, WSDOT has committed to suspend pontoon towing through the Cut during the Opening Day events, including the week before and the week after the ceremonies. This commitment is memorialized in The Section 106 Programmatic Agreement.

The new bridge would allow for lane continuity between the Montlake Cut and the SR 520/Montlake interchange, which would improve traffic operations compared to No Build. The bridge would provide additional capacity for transit and carpools, bicycles, and pedestrians. Most notably, overall delay related to bridge openings would decrease for all vehicles because the additional capacity would allow congestion to clear more quickly. The changes in traffic volumes and operations on the local streets in the Montlake interchange area are described in Chapter 6 of the Transportation Discipline Report.

I-312-005

The Preferred Alternative would not include construction of any new ramps in the Arboretum, and would remove both the existing Lake Washington Boulevard ramps and the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps. Because the Lake Washington Boulevard ramps already exist, none of the alternatives or options evaluated in the SDEIS showed

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I-312-020					racing and car traffic that crosses the bridge is **severe** and worst of all it is **permanent**. The lane for transit and the two lanes Northbound for traffic on Montlake Blvd would once again Narrow down and the beginning of the backup would move between 300 to 400 feet North. This bridge would provide little gain in moving traffic and would do irreparable harm to the Montlake Bridge, the Lake Washington Ship Canal and the Montlake Historical District.	
I-312-021	Cult. Res.	6	19-24		These options would increase the traffic on Lake Washington Blvd since all non transit traffic wishing to get go North or South Bound would have to exit at Lake Washington Blvd. Now at least the traffic is dispersed with at least two exit choices.	
I-312-022	Cult. Res.	6	26-28		This option would be smart for getting transit onto the bridge and into the HOV lanes. However it would add ANOTHER traffic light to Montlake Blvd for a total of 4 in less than .2 of a mile. Also it would put heavy slow buses into the "fast lane of traffic" or WSDOT would have to add another long merge lane for buses and once again widening the 520 corridor through Montlake.	
I-312-023	Cult. Res.	6	36-38		This part of Option K is preferred and would have less impact on NOAA, Hamlin Street(West of Montlake Blvd), SYC, Roanoke and the Queen City YC.	
I-312-024	Cult. Res.	7	20-21		Adding another right turn only lane eastbound onto Montlake Blvd would add one more lane to an already wide footprint for little gain	
I-312-025	Cult. Res.	10	18-19		This indicates that the towing would be at the height of boating season and would have an impact on the use of the Lake Washington Ship Canal by canoes and boaters	
I-312-026	Cult. Res.	11	14-16		Leave out the construction of the 2nd Montlake Bridge, the auxiliary lane at Portage bay and building the new on ramps on Lake Washington Blvd to get closer to defer costs.	
I-312-027	Cult. Res.	12	5-7		Don't defer the lids	
I-312-028	Cult. Res.	15	21-22		Same comment as Page ii lines 14-16. Montlake not included nor is Laurelhurst	
I-312-029	Cult. Res.	17	14-17		Montlake Bridge and the Lake Washington Ship Canal fit as "objects that possess integrity of location design and setting as NRHP and yet little in the EIS mentions the impact of A and A+ on **permanently severely** impacting the location and setting of these two places	
I-312-030	Cult. Res.	17	19-21		The Montlake Bridge was designed by the Carl Gould the same person that designed Suzzallo Library and the crossing of the cut was meant to be a Gateway to the University of Washington. Altering the setting of the bridge will damage	

"greatly increased" traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard when compared with the No Build Alternative. The Preferred Alternative would reduce average traffic volumes in 2030 on Lake Washington Boulevard in the Arboretum compared to the No Build Alternative. Under the Preferred Alternative in 2030, a.m. peak hour volumes on Lake Washington Boulevard through the Arboretum would be 1,330 vehicles per hour with the Preferred Alternative, compared to 1,950 vehicles per hour with the No Build Alternative. P.m. peak hour volumes would be 1,410 vehicles per hour compared to 1,730 with the No Build Alternative.

I-312-006

Since the SDEIS was published, WSDOT has revised the potential haul routes. East Shelby and East Hamlin streets were identified as potential haul routes only for Options K and L and continue to be identified for those options in the Final EIS; however, they are not identified as potential haul routes for Option A or the Preferred Alternative. 24th Avenue East and the southern portion of Boyer Avenue East (south of East Lynn Street) are not identified as potential haul routes in the Final EIS for any of the alternatives or design options. Please see Chapter3 of the Final EIS and Chapter 10 of the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for updated haul route information.

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

See the response to Comment I-312-004 regarding the traffic effects of new bascule bridge.

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					its significance.	
I-312-031	Cult. Res.	17	31-34		To minimize and to mitigate are only to be done when you cannot avoid impacts. Avoidance should be the first priority. Adding auxiliary lanes, new on and off ramps, adding shoulders that are not on the bridge now and adding more bridges should be **avoided**.	
I-312-032	Cult. Res.	18	3-4		Doubling the width and increasing the height of the bridge plus adding new on and off ramps and a bascule bridge will "significantly affect the quality of the human environment" both during construction but more importantly it will affect the human environment permanently.	
I-312-033	Cult. Res.	19	6		Adding the 2nd bridge next to the current Montlake Bridge and altering the view of it from the street, bridge and from the water is an "unsympathetic change" to a Seattle landmark.	
I-312-034	Cult. Res.	19	6		Changing the view of Montlake Bridge from the street, bridge and the water seems to violate one of the criteria for a Seattle Land Mark.	
I-312-035	Cult. Res.	20	1-2		Reconfiguration of a project may be a mitigating factor for the Montlake Bridge as a Seattle Landmark	
I-312-036	Cult. Res.	48	1-2		This sentence doesn't seem to connect to the previous page or the paragraph that follows.	
I-312-037	Cult. Res.	48	36-37		It needs to be determined if Foster island is to be formally declared as TCP prior to construction so appropriate mitigation could be determined as does site mapping need to occur.	
I-312-038	Cult. Res.	55	11-12		Change caused by building the 2nd bascule bridge in the view of and from the Montlake Bridge, from the bridge and the water meets criteria listed to establish adverse effects.	
I-312-039	Cult. Res.	95	17-19		Included in Montlake Historical District Lake Washington Blvd which was part of the original Olmstead Plan. This area is highly impacted by the addition of off and on ramps. It benefits by the removal of RH Thompson Ramps only to be negatively impacted by the addition of ramps.	
I-312-040	Cult. Res.	96	1-5		Montlake Blvd. was part of the Olmstead Park Boulevard Plan. It was one of the gateways to the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition. It shouldn't be affected with the addition of another bridge, increased traffic or widening.	
I-312-041	Cult. Res.	96	26-30		Montlake was compromised by the construction of 520 according to the WSDOT SEDIS. Isn't there something about "Do no more harm" that should be invoked here especially for a recognized historic district.	

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I-312-007

See the responses to specific comments below.

The analyses performed for the Draft EIS, SDEIS, and Final EIS used accepted methodology based on WSDOT and FHWA guidance, as well as other guidance where applicable. They have been conducted consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. See the responses to comments I-312-004 regarding the effects and benefits of the new bascule bridge, and I-312-003 regarding the footprint of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project.

Since the SDEIS was published, WSDOT has performed additional analysis of the potential effect of the Preferred Alternative. Please see the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the FIES) for more information. Stipulations have been outlined in the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) to avoid, minimize and mitigate the project's adverse effects.

I-312-008

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project was determined in consultation with the SHPO. In determining the project APE, WSDOT considered three footprints, one of which is a buffer area one property deep or 200 to 300 feet from the construction footprint. Although, in a number of areas the APE was expanded further to include additional area that may experience an indirect effect from the project. Some examples of further expansion of the APE are the inclusion of the entire Roanoke Park Historic District and all of the navigable waters of Portage Bay.

In accordance with 36 CFR 800.4 (a)(3), WSDOT sought comments from the Section 106 consulting parties on the extent of the APE. The comments were taken into consideration and the APE was amended to

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I-312-042	Cult. Res.	135	17-20		"Construction effects . . . only thorough analyzed when final option is chosen." This hampers making a decision on which option is the best option	
I-312-043	Cult. Res.	136	37-40		Support the construction of lids but the Portage Bay viaduct is too wide. Cut out the Auxiliary lane and cut the width of the shoulders.	
I-312-044	Cult. Res.	141	24-28		Discusses the construction period 72 months. There are conflicting estimates of the construction periods through the whole SDEIS	
I-312-045	Cult. Res.	142	14-16 &30		Oppose the 7 lane plus wider shoulders that would take portion of NOAA property. Potential of the Abandonment of the buildings	
I-312-046	Cult. Res.	145	9-11		Option A would result in an adverse effect on NOAA FSC buildings. Narrow the corridor by abandoning the idea of an auxiliary lane and the wider shoulders in the middle and on the outside of lanes in each direction.	
I-312-047	Cult. Res.	145	20-21		"Constructing a new bascule bridge ...could have an adverse effect on the bridge." It is the permanent impact of changing the setting and view that would cause an adverse effect on the Montlake bridge and the Lake Washington Ship Canal.	
I-312-048	Cult. Res.	146	3-6		What about effecting navigation as well as Yacht Club activities.	
I-312-049	Cult. Res.	146	37-40		Could the buffer be preserved by cutting down on the shoulders on the sides and center of the new bridge.	
I-312-050	Cult. Res.	147	4-5		These houses would be physically affected by increased noise, and dust even after the finish of the bridge	
I-312-051	Cult. Res.	147	14-23		Lowering the main line of 520 would help the visual impact after lidding. No lids are planned West of Montlake Blvd. How will the lid planned East of Montlake Blvd be impacted if the planned transit lane is built?	
I-312-052	Cult. Res.	147	28-35		Previous comments above address the issue of the necessity to do any of these takings.	
I-312-053	Cult. Res.	147	36-37		Is the taking of 3000 square feet of land plus widening 24th Ave East and Montlake place only for the construction period or for the whole project. It is not clear in the SDEIS	
I-312-054	Cult. Res.	148	4-17		The most significant of the adverse effects would be avoided by narrowing and making deeper the footprint of the 520 corridor, installing lids over the as much as possible. The 2nd Montlake bridge should not be installed for so little benefit to traffic. The Historic District has already been seriously compromised by 520.	
I-312-055	Cult. Res.	149	3-4		Adding the HOV eastbound on ramp would install a 4th traffic light on Montlake Blvd. It would also affect the lid that could be constructed to reconnect the	

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accommodate these concerns.

Please see the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report for the project's final APE (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

I-312-009

The three APE components described on page ii of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report served as a baseline when determining the project APE. The APE was designed to fit the nature of this project and was extended in many places, so the components on page ii do not describe the boundaries of the APE. The geographic extent of the APE can be seen in Exhibit 14 of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS).

To accommodate the Section 106 consultation process, and incorporate all areas that may be directly or indirectly affected by the project, the APE has since been revised a number of times, but it has never included the entire Montlake Historic District. The revised APE can be seen in the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

I-312-010

Since the SDEIS was published, and upon additional research and review, WSDOT determined the Miller Street Landfill to be not eligible for the NRHP. DAHP concurred with this determination on September 2, 2010.

The configuration of the bridge span over Foster Island is most similar to Option A, but with a number of design refinements to minimize potential effects. WSDOT does consider Foster Island an NRHP-eligible TCP, and has coordinated with the affected tribes to identify appropriate mitigation for the project impacts to the TCP. WSDOT is working in consultation with the tribes and DAHP to develop a Foster Island

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					Montlake Neighborhood.	
I-312-056	Cult. Res.	149	6-9		Constructing these on ramps would negatively affect the homes along the Lake Washington Blvd already compromised by 520. Leave the Lake Washington on ramp east bound and off ramp west bound. Do not make the West bound off ramp at 520 transit only. It spreads out the impact of traffic rather than stacking it up all on a short strip of Lake Washington Blvd.	
I-312-057	Cult. Res.	149	4-7		The acquisition of right of way on Foster Island for Option K despite its cost and length of time of construction would be more beneficial to the Montlake Historic District than all of the disruptions caused by new Lake Washington Blvd ramps and the 2nd Montlake Bridge.	
I-312-058	Cult. Res.	149	25-33		Lowering the profile of this bridge across Foster Island is a positive but lowering of the profile should occur from the Portage Bay Viaduct through Montlake. Construction of K would over the long term have less destructive visual and traffic impact to the Montlake Bridge and Montlake Historic Districts. Changes in the setting of the TCP would be preferred to the changes of the human environment on Montlake Blvd and in the homes along both Montlake and Lake Washington BLVD	
I-312-059	Cult. Res.	156	34-36		Testing of the disruption these University Building would experience could be done as part of the construction of the Sound Transit Tunnel. If they "cope" with the Sound Transit Construction, the tunneling for Option K would most likely be tolerated. WSDOT has determined that "No Adverse effects would be experienced	
I-312-060	Cult. Res.	157	21		Removal of the current Lake Washington Boulevard ramps would increase traffic on East Lake Washington Blvd and Montlake Blvd which should be avoided. Do no more harm with any new construction in the neighborhoods.	
I-312-061	Cult. Res.	157	22-25		Removal of the old RH Thompson ramps would be a positive for both the Montlake Historic District, Lake Washington Blvd and the Arboretum	
I-312-062	Cult. Res.	157	29-30		Is this 6.98 acres going to be the same or less with Option A–. It is not clear	
I-312-063	Cult. Res.	164	12-16		This section addresses the construction period but doesn't address noise when the project is complete.	
I-312-064	Cult. Res.	164	34-37		This section fails to mention boat traffic during Husky Football season	
I-312-065	Cult. Res.	167	32		The only reason to add a 2nd Montlake bridge would be if there was a plan to widen Montlake blvd in front of Husky stadium to University Village. To add a second Bridge with only one extra lane on Montlake (transit only in some plans)	

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Treatment Plan for avoidance, minimization and mitigation of the adverse effect to the TCP.

I-312-011

The discussion on page 135 of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report provided the context for this statement. The entire statement on that page is "This section discusses potential construction effects and notes all known effects from the project on historic properties. Specific construction details are not known at this time. Once a preferred alternative is selected and construction details can be evaluated, construction effects on historic properties will be thoroughly analyzed before publication of the final EIS. Formal determinations of these effects on historic properties will then be made. As noted in the Methodology section, for the areas near the I-5 and SR 520 interchange, and between I-5 and the Portage Bay Bridge, the project would be the same under each option. Therefore, the analysis of effects is discussed in this section only once. Because the options have differing components, the area east of the Portage Bay Bridge is discussed separately for each design option." Therefore, the SDEIS disclosed construction effects. The Final EIS provides an updated analysis, and includes the formal Section 106 determinations. See the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report in Attachment 7 to the Final EIS for analysis of the effects and discussion of the Section 106 process.

The SDEIS disclosed construction effects. The Final EIS provides an updated analysis, and includes the formal Section 106 determinations. See the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report in Attachment 7 to the Final EIS for analysis of the effects and discussion of the Section 106 process.

I-312-012

Comment noted.

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I-312-065					increases capacity for cars to stack up for an addition 640 ft. In fact why add a 2nd bridge to get a total of 1416 feet of one lane "car stacking capacity" in a historic neighborhood.	
I-312-066	Cult. Res.	169	24-26		There would be periodic adverse affects to boating as the pontoons are towed through Portage Bay and the Montlake cut. The tow times would include Husky football season.	
I-312-067	Cult. Res.	170	17-19		Unless the new construction significantly reduces idle time on the Pacific Interchange, and Montlake Blvd they will be NO reduction in noise or air pollution. In fact the second bridge and the immediate narrowing down of the extra lanes just north of the 2nd bridge appears to be a "car holding or car stacking plan rather than making the traffic move faster. In addition with the closing of the current Lake Washington ramps the plan brings more cars to the already congested Montlake interchange.	
I-312-068	Cult. Res.	171	5-12		Do no more harm to the Montlake Historic District. At least the no build option would do that. None of the plans would do anything to improve the visual impact or the physical barrier of the freeway to the west of the Montlake Blvd. One WSDOT consultant says it will add an additional 100 feet of corridor to the current configuration. Using the information from the ESDIS it would double the footprint of the concrete from 64 to something like 115+	
I-312-069	Cult. Res.	173	27-39		Portage Bay Bridge would be higher and a whole lot wider with a serious diminution of the view	
I-312-070	Cult. Res.	174	4-7		The construction of a wider higher bridge over Portage Bay might not compromise the NRHP but it would significantly change the visual experience and setting and feeling of the Queen City and Seattle Yacht Clubs and anyone who uses Montlake Playground, Portage Bay, and the West Montlake park.	
I-312-071	Cult. Res.	174	30-34		The EIS says the Portage Bay Bridge would be only 35 feet wider that the current bridge but if you add 3 lanes plus two 10 foot wide shoulders plus 2 4 foot wide center lanes, it adds up to 58 feet. It is too wide.	
I-312-072	Cult. Res.	174	37-39		The EIS says the project will be 111 feet closer to NOAA and that means it will be 111 feet closer to the Seattle Yacht Club. Noise walls will not compensate for the loss of view	
I-312-073	Cult. Res.	175	19-21		Wider (by a significant amount) Higher Bridge would have a negative visual effect for all communities as well as Roanoke Park.	
I-312-074	Cult. Res.	176	3-5		There is no mitigation conceivable that would mitigate the view from the current	

I-312-013

The SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS) provided sufficient details of the potential adverse effect of A, K, and L, and was able to conduct a comparison across the design options. The Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the FIES) contains WSDOT's Section 106 determination of effects for the project and includes a detailed discussion of the Preferred Alternative, which further reduces negative effects from the SDEIS options.

I-312-014

Effects of pontoon towing on navigation channels are described on page 45 of the Navigable Waterways Discipline Report. The Navigable Waterways Discipline Report Addendum provides further information. The Montlake Cut, which is 100 feet wide at full depth, would be able to accommodate pontoon transport, although travel of other vessels through the cut would be limited during transport of a pontoon through the cut. The Mitigation section of the Addendum describes measures to mitigate potential effects, including avoidance of in-water barge work Portage Bay, along the Montlake Cut, and through the Arboretum (as far east as the west side of Foster Island) during Opening Day of boating season as well as the week before and the week after Opening Day. Also see the Recreation Discipline Report Addendum, which describes construction effects and mitigation measures for recreational boating.

I-312-015

Laurelhurst is not included in the list from page 1 of the Cultural Resources Discipline Report because the APE does not encompass the Laurelhurst community, since direct and indirect project effects would not cause alterations in the character or use of any historic properties that may be located in that neighborhood. The cultural resources assessments focus solely on historic properties in the APE.

Discipline Report Comment Summary
Discipline Report: Cultural Resources

I-312-074					Montlake bridge and from the Lake Washington Ship Canal. This view from the water and from the bridge is a treasure to the City, the University, the neighborhood and the thousands of people who walk over and boat under this historic bridge.	
I-312-075	Cult. Res.	177	5		The assumption that the noise at the Canoe House is going to decline with construction of Option A. More noise over the second bascule bridge and a floating bridge that is closer to the Canoe House? Can't prove it but it seems like an outlandish assumption.	
I-312-076	Cult. Res.	177	11-13		The view from the east end of the cut of the Montlake bridge would be destroyed and how is that not adverse. It doesn't affect the bridge but it an adverse effect to the Lake Washington Ship Canal. There is also an adverse affect to the view from the bridge to the east and from the 2nd bridge to the west. The issue is building the 2nd bridge is an enormous adverse effect on the historic bridge and the Montlake Neighborhood for no documentable gain for traffic.	
I-312-077	Cult. Res.	177	35-36		The partial lid covers almost nothing west of Montlake Blvd. Also the lid to the east will be smaller if the left hand turn for HOV vehicles into the HOV lanes on the bridge is built.	
I-312-078	Cult. Res.	178	2-4		Same comment as above. Nothing is done to reunite the Montlake Historic District on the West side of Montlake Blvd with a lid. A lid is a preferred option to the trail under 520.	
I-312-079	Cult. Res.	178	11-12		This means the freeway will be 66 feet closer to houses on Hamlin street on the east side of Montlake Blvd.	
I-312-080	Cult. Res.	179	12-13		Strongly support removing the RH Thomson ramps to nowhere.	
I-312-081	Cult. Res.	179	15-17		More work needs to be done to plan so that the impact on the Historic Montlake District is not so adverse.	
I-312-082	Cult. Res.	179	29-32		While removing the HR Thomson on ramps is a great idea, removing the current on and off ramps in the Arboretum changes one bad effect to another. It also increases traffic on East Lake Washington Blvd and does nothing to keep more traffic out of the Historic Montlake District. Do no more harm than is already done	
I-312-083	Cult. Res.	180	13-14		There would be an addition of another traffic light Southbound on Montlake Blvd for a total of 3 within 800 feet and a 4th within another 200 feet. That is 4 traffic lights within 1000 feet. If you count the traffic light at the Pacific Avenue that is 5 traffic lights within approximately 1800 feet. How can anyone think that the	

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The SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS) discussed the potential effects from project construction that were known at that stage of the NEPA process. Additional analysis of potential effects from construction of the Preferred Alternative was conducted for the Final EIS. Please see the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report for more information (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

I-312-016

The design of the new Portage Bay Bridge, under the Preferred Alternative, includes two general purpose lanes and an HOV lane in each direction, plus a westbound managed shoulder. Standard engineering terminology includes only through lanes, not ramps or shoulders, in describing the number of lanes in a facility.

In response to community interests, the width of the inside shoulders would be narrowed from 4 feet to 2 feet, and the width of the outside shoulders would be reduced from 10 feet to 8 feet. While the Preferred Alternative does not include an auxiliary lane on the Portage Bay Bridge, it does include a managed shoulder, which would operate as a travel lane during peak periods. With the reduced width of the shoulders and the elimination of the auxiliary lane, the width of the new structure has been reduced to 105 feet. The new Portage Bay Bridge would operate as a boulevard or parkway with median plantings and a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour.

I-312-017

The Montlake lid does not extended to the west of Montlake Boulevard because WSDOT determined that a lid in that area would diminish the integrity of historic properties, namely NOAA, and would increase the amount of wetland fill. However, the Preferred Alternative includes a larger Montlake lid, stretching from west of Montlake Boulevard to east of 24th Avenue NE, terminating near the Lake Washington shoreline. The

Discipline Report Comment Summary
Discipline Report: Cultural Resources

I-312-083					expense of tunneling with maybe one traffic light isn't the best long term plan to move traffic and to spare a neighborhood.	
I-312-084	Cult. Res.	180	17-20		The Montlake Historic District needs no more traffic directed into it. Leave the current on ramps in the Arboretum.	
I-312-085	Cult. Res.	181	25-27		Support lowering the profile of 520 through Montlake to Portage Bay with a lid westbound toward NOAA.	
I-312-086	Cult. Res.	182	11		It seems that creative design and engineering could take care of this problem.	
I-312-087	Cult. Res.	186	13-15		This mentions a lid west of Montlake Blvd but illustrations indicate is very small.	
I-312-088	Cult. Res.	191	27-35		Survey the Miller Street landfill to determine if K is feasible. K disturbs less of the Montlake Historical District and prevents the 2nd bascule bridge and in the long term has less impact that A or A+	
I-312-089	Cult. Res.	192	2-4		Do the studies to determine whether the profile of 520 could be lowered.	
I-312-090	Cult. Res.	194	23-24		Recommend an independent contractor	
I-312-091	Cult. Res.	196	28-29		It may not physically affect the Montlake bridge to construct another but it will **permanently** ruin one of the great sites in Seattle for little or no gain.	

lid would function as a vehicle and pedestrian crossing, a landscaped area, and open space. Bicycle and pedestrian movement would be enhanced in the Montlake Historic District, which would allow for continuous travel across SR 520 and would reconnect all segments of the neighborhood. The realigned Bill Dawson trail would reconnect the west side of the historic district with other elements, including the Montlake Playfield. Please see Chapter 3 of the Final EIS for more detailed information pertaining to the Montlake lid.

The view from the properties along East Hamlin Street and NOAA would benefit from the larger Montlake lid, the context-sensitive design of the Portage Bay Bridge, along with its planted median and boulevard feel.

I-312-018

The auxiliary lane of Option A would increase the visual effects at NOAA, primarily. The Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report (page 63) notes that for Option K and L "The decrease in width would noticeably decrease the effects on the NOAA campus (Exhibit 2-7, Attachment 2), but may not be discernible from most viewpoints (Exhibit 2-6, Attachment 2)."

I-312-019

A transit off-ramp was not proposed at Lake Washington Boulevard as part of Option A with suboptions. Because the Lake Washington Boulevard ramps already exist, none of the alternatives or options evaluated in the SDEIS showed "greatly increased" traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard when compared with the No Build Alternative. The Preferred Alternative would reduce average traffic volumes in 2030 on Lake Washington Boulevard in the Arboretum compared to the No Build Alternative. Please see the response to Comment I-312-005.

Discipline Report Comment Summary
Discipline Report: Water Resources

	Report	Page #	Line #'s	Reviewer	Comment	
I-312-092	Water Resources Discipline	3	Exhibit 1	Tony Oppermann	Not listed that should be: Jurisdiction: WA State Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. Regulations: Hydraulic Code of Washington. Purpose/Intent: Permit to "use, divert, obstruct or change any of the salt or fresh waters of the state.	
I-312-093	"	8	1	"	Many design options have been proposed by the community, clear up to the K, L and M level. The so called "preferred option" is still the WSDOT plan with a + suffix. Since Alternative A is the original WSDOT design, I feel that WSDOT has not made an honest effort to consider any option other than their own.	
I-312-094	"	8	Paragraph 2	"	Project Alternatives. This SDEIS does not really evaluate the real current alternatives!! It should address the A+ and the M alternatives. Much of the information in this document has already been reviewed and determinations made to either include, modify or delete elements of those previous alternatives. I would like to see a document that address the A+ and M alternatives.	
I-312-095	"	10	Paragraph Seattle	"	Removal of the SR520 bus (flyer) stations will just throw X number of buses into the mixmaster at the interchange of SR 520 and Montlake Blvd. Montlake Blvd. between Pacific St. and SR520 will become a huge bus and vehicle parking lot! And will add several minutes to the bus commute from both the eastside and the University into Seattle and also the return routes. Flyer stations should be kept on SR520 and/or modified to provide service for people going to Seattle, to the north (I-5) and into the University area at Montlake.	
I-312-096	"	11?	Exhibit 6	"	The basic problem here is that you have a lot of traffic going north and south intersecting with a lot of traffic going east and west. Alternative A(+) keeps all this traffic in **ONE** location, Montlake Blvd. from Pacific Street to SR520. A giant mixmaster! Options K and L (and M) dilute this mess (thus decreasing the problem) over	

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I-312-020

See the response to Comment I-312-004 regarding the effects of new bascule bridge.

I-312-021

See the responses to comments I-312-005 and I-312-019 regarding traffic volumes on Lake Washington Boulevard. Non-transit traffic would be able to use the Montlake on- and off-ramps under Option A and the Preferred Alternative.

I-312-022

With Suboption A, the addition of an eastbound HOV direct access on-ramp would not require a new signal on Montlake Boulevard beyond what would be provided with Option A; this traffic movement would be accommodated at the Montlake Boulevard/SR 520 westbound ramps intersection, which would already serve the westbound HOV direct access off-ramp.

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. Similar to Suboption A, the Preferred Alternative would provide a westbound HOV direct access off-ramp and eastbound HOV direct access on-ramp that would tie into a signal at the Montlake Boulevard/SR 520 westbound ramps intersection. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS describes the Preferred Alternative. Chapter 5 of the Final EIS and Chapters 6 and 8 of the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) describe how the No Build and Preferred Alternatives would affect local traffic and transit operations.

I-312-023

Comment noted.

Discipline Report Comment Summary
Discipline Report: Water Resources

I-312-096					three locations and allows individuals options that will allow them to get to where they want to go without dealing with ALL the other vehicles (including buses that no longer stop on SR520 but have to go into the mixmaster too).	
I-312-097	"	12	5-6	"	A transit only off-ramp from west bound SR 520 would do nothing to help traffic going north on Montlake Blvd. If west bound traffic wanting to go north on Montlake Blvd. (a large volume) is required to exit in the Arboretum, the traffic in the neighborhood of the proposed off ramp will be horrible – likely service level FFF from the day it opens. (Also, the affect on a beautiful old residential area would be devastating.) There would likely be a steady load of traffic on Lake Washington Blvd. during daylight hours from the exit to Montlake Blvd. and then on the Blvd. to the north and south.	
I-312-098	"	12	8-10	"	Another bascule bridge in the middle of this mixmaster would only serve as a parking area for the increase in traffic that will occur in this area, not to mention the destruction of an historical Seattle view point and the loss of two fine homes. Again, traffic would not flow any faster or efficiently because of the intersection at Pacific Ave. and the load of traffic from the bascule bridges to SR 520.	
I-312-099	"	12	24-30	"	A suboption to A proposes, essentially to move the existing on and off ramps to and from SR 520 to the west. This is a horrible proposal!! The existing ramps should remain in the same location as present (and rebuilt in the same location if necessary). Placing these ramps to the west, as shown on some plans, puts them virtually in the front yards of several very fine, older (historic) homes. The present location is in the Arboretum which is not ideal but creative mitigation plans (landscape and vegetation) can be developed that would reduce the present inpact on the site.	
I-312-100	"	12	30-35	"	A suboption to A proposes an eastbound onramp to SR 520 from the Montlake Blvd. bridge over the highway into the (left hand) HOV lane. Left hand on and off ramps have always been traffic headaches (e.g. the Mercer St. off ramp from northbound I-5). This would also	

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I-312-024

Since the SDEIS was published, WSDOT and FHWA have developed a Preferred Alternative that increases safety and mobility while reducing negative effects. Final transportation models have demonstrated that the eastbound off-ramp would reduce congestion and increase traffic flow from the SR 520 mainline. Under the Preferred Alternative, the eastbound off-ramp would be one lane that would taper off the main line and become three lanes at Montlake Boulevard (one more lane than today). Please see the Final Transportation Discipline Report for more information (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

I-312-025

Pontoons will be towed through the Ship Canal channel, Portage Bay, the Montlake Cut, and into Lake Washington with no stopping. Their presence and activity will be similar to a gravel barge that is of similar size, which travels through the Montlake Cut every day. Passage of the gravel barge does not result in a complete closure of the Cut. For the Preferred Alternative, 77 pontoons would be towed through the Montlake Cut to Lake Washington at various times over a two-year period. There would usually be 3 to 4 pontoons towed per month and sometimes up to 12 per month. WSDOT would minimize effects on recreational boating by not towing pontoons through the Montlake Cut the traditional Opening Day ceremonies, as well as the week before or the week after Opening Day.

I-312-026

While the Preferred Alternative includes a new bascule bridge across the Montlake cut in order to improve traffic and transit operations in that area and to allow for bicycle lanes, it includes a managed shoulder on the Portage Bay Bridge instead of an auxiliary lane, and it would remove the exiting Lake Washington Boulevard ramps. Access to Lake Washington Boulevard by westbound SR 520 traffic would be moved to a new

Discipline Report Comment Summary
Discipline Report: Water Resources

I-312-100					require installation of another traffic light in an area already burdened with too many.	
I-312-101	"	13	22	"	A suboption for K would construct a 'right turn only' off ramp from eastbound SR 520 to southbound Montlake Boulevard. After casual observation of this intersection for 40 years, it appears this would be unnecessary and would certainly not be cost beneficial.	
I-312-102	"	13	35-38	"	"Suboptions for Option L would include adding a left-turn movement from Lake Washington Boulevard for direct access to SR 520 and adding capacity on northbound Montlake Boulevard NE to NE 45th Street". There is no explanation or diagram that I could find that explains this statement.	
I-312-103	"	77	12	"	Why dissolved zinc would increase only in Options K and L is not explained.	
I-312-104	"			"	General comment. Options K, L and M all provide relief for traffic flowing through this area. They siphon off some of the vehicles from the main heavy flow and allow them to bypass the interchange at SR 520 and Montlake Blvd. thus avoiding having to deal with every vehicle that travels through this intersection. Option A+ pours all the traffic from all directions into one small area which can only slow everything down.	

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intersection located on the Montlake Boulevard lid at 24th Avenue East. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for additional information.

I-312-027

As discussed in Chapter 2 of the SDEIS, WSDOT identified the potential for the project to be implemented in phases. Under the Phased Implementation Scenario, lids would have been completed together with the other project elements in that area.

The SDEIS discussed the possibility of constructing the project in separate phases over time, with the vulnerable structures (the Evergreen Point floating bridge, west approach bridge, and Portage Bay bridge) built first. This "Phased Implementation scenario" was analyzed for each environmental resource. As discussed in Section 2.8 of this Final EIS, due to the funding shortfall, FHWA and WSDOT still believe it is prudent to evaluate the possibility of phased construction of the corridor should full project funding not be available by 2012. Currently committed funding is sufficient to construct the Evergreen Point floating bridge and landings; a Request for Proposals has been issued for this portion of the project, with proposals due in June 2011. Accordingly, this Final EIS discusses the potential for the floating bridge and landings to be built as the first phase of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project. This differs from the SDEIS Phased Implementation scenario, which included the west approach and the Portage Bay bridge in the first construction phase. However, as with the SDEIS Phased Implementation scenario, lids would be built at the same time as the corresponding portion of the corridor, and mitigation measures would be undertaken concurrently with the portion of the project causing the impact.

I-312-028

Please see the response to comment I-312-009, which reiterates that these components were the baseline of determining a project-specific APE.

Laurelhurst is not included in the APE because the project would not cause direct or indirect effects to any historic properties that may be located there. Additionally, only a portion of the Montlake Historic District is included in the APE.

I-312-029
While the removal of two homes and the addition of the new bascule bridge would change views from residences along the cut and from the historic bridge, the overall setting would not be degraded. Please refer to Exhibits 2-22 and 2-23 in Attachment 2 of the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report.

I-312-030
Please see the response to comment I-312-004, which states that the design of the new bascule bridge would be context sensitive to minimize its effects on the setting of the historic bridge. Stipulations are provided in the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) to ensure that the proximity of the new bascule bridge to the historic Montlake Bridge would not diminish the integrity of the historic property.

I-312-031
Comment noted.

I-312-032
Comment noted.

I-312-033
Please see the response to comment I-312-004, which states that the context sensitive design of the new bascule bridge would complement the historic bridge and would not detract from the view of it from surrounding viewpoints. Stipulations are provided in the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) to ensure that

the proximity of the new bascule bridge would not diminish the integrity of the Montlake Bridge or other historic properties.

I-312-034

Please see the response to comments I-312-004 and I-312-033, which state that the context sensitive design of the new bascule bridge would complement the historic bridge and would not detract from the view of it from surrounding viewpoints.

I-312-035

Since the SDIES was published, WSDOT and FHWA have developed a Preferred Alternative that increases safety and mobility while reducing negative effects. As part of the Preferred Alternative, the second bascule bridge would allow for lane continuity between the Montlake Cut and the SR 520 Montlake interchange, which would improve traffic operations compared to the No Build Alternative.

The Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) contains stipulations to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to the historic Montlake bridge.

I-312-036

This section has been revised in the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS).

I-312-037

WSDOT's cultural resources investigation identified Foster Island as an NRHP-eligible Traditional Cultural Property (TCP). In consultation with interested tribes, WSDOT has determined that the Preferred Alternative would have an adverse effect on the Foster Island TCP. WSDOT is working in consultation with the tribes and DAHP to develop a Foster

Island Treatment Plan for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of the adverse effect to the TCP.

I-312-038

Please see the response to Comment I-312-038.

I-312-039

The Preferred Alternative would reduce effects to the Lake Washington Boulevard and Washington Park Arboretum by removing the existing Lake Washington Boulevard eastbound on-ramp and westbound off-ramp and the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps. Access to Lake Washington Boulevard by westbound SR 520 traffic would be moved to a new intersection located on the Montlake Boulevard lid at 24th Avenue East. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for additional information. The result of this and other features of the Preferred Alternative is a reduction in the trip volumes on Lake Washington Boulevard in the Arboretum compared to the No Build Alternative. Under the Preferred Alternative in 2030, a.m. peak hour volumes on Lake Washington Boulevard through the Arboretum would be 1,330 vehicles per hour, compared to 1,950 vehicles per hour with the No Build Alternative. P.m. peak hour volumes would be 1,410 vehicles per hour compared to 1,730 with the No Build Alternative.

I-312-040

To accommodate the new bascule bridge, Montlake Boulevard would be restriped and reconfigured between SR 520 and the Montlake Cut to include two general-purpose lanes and one HOV lane for improved transit connectivity. Although Montlake Boulevard was part of the original Lake Washington Boulevard, designed by the Olmsted brothers, and is a NRHP-eligible resource from Madison Street to NE Pacific Street, the boulevard remains a transportation facility. WSDOT has coordinated with the Seattle Department of Transportation, as part of the Engrossed

Substitute Senate Bill 6392 workgroup, to refine the transportation design of the Montlake Interchange and to manage traffic along the historic Lake Washington Boulevard. As part of the Arboretum Mitigation Plan, 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.

I-312-041

The National Environmental Policy Act states that the federal government must use all practicable means to preserve important cultural and historic aspects of our heritage. Other environmental laws such as the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) also require that effects on significant cultural resources be considered during the public environmental review process. Section 106 of the NHPA requires that all federal agencies consider significant cultural resources as part of all licensing, permitting, and funding decisions.

Through the Section 106 consultation process, WSDOT has worked with the Montlake Community Council to identify avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures for the adverse effect resulting from construction and operation of the Preferred Alternative. The consultation process resulted in the development of a Programmatic Agreement, which records the terms and conditions agreed upon to resolve the project's adverse effect.

I-312-042

The statement is misquoted in the comment. Please see the response to Comment I-312-011.

I-312-043

The Preferred Alternative includes two lids, one at 10th Avenue East and

Delmar Drive East and a larger lid in the Montlake Area, as well as an enhanced bicycle and pedestrian path.

Due to public and agency feedback, the width of the Portage Bay Bridge has been reduced from the SDEIS options. Please see the response to comment C-312-016 for more information about the design refinements of the new structure.

I-312-044

The construction durations disclosed in the SDEIS were approximate and estimated with the information available at time of publication. The information contained within the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report had not been updated prior to publication, resulting in the inconsistency noted by the commenter. Construction durations have been updated and revised for the Final EIS to reflect construction of the Preferred Alternative. Construction durations reported in the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report have also been updated for consistency.

I-312-045

Comment noted. WSDOT received a number of comments in support of and in opposition to Options A, K, and L and the associated suboptions. These opinions are summarized in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement Summary of Comments (WSDOT, April 2010), available at http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/SDEIS.htm.

Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has identified 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 and Chapters 5 and 6 describe its environmental effects.

I-312-046

Since the SDEIS was published, FHWA and WSDOT have developed a Preferred Alternative that is similar to Option A, but incorporates design refinements that respond to feedback on the SDEIS. A key feature of the Preferred Alternative is an alignment shift to the south at the east end of the new Portage Bay Bridge (Please see Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for more information on design features for the Preferred Alternative). This shift means that the Preferred Alternative would not require relocation of any buildings or activities on the NOAA NWFSC campus, and access to the campus would be maintained during construction.

I-312-047

Please see the response to Comment I-312-038.

I-312-048

The Potential Effects section of the Navigable Waterways Discipline Report and Addendum (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS and the Final EIS, respectively) both provide discussion of effects on navigation in Portage Bay during construction. The Recreation Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) describes effects on recreational boating in Portage Bay during construction. Also see the response to comment I-312-14, regarding construction effects of pontoon towing on navigation and recreational boating in and around Seattle Yacht Club.

I-312-049

Under the Preferred Alternative, a majority of the Canal Reserve Land would be permanently acquired for construction of the Montlake lid and the bicycle/pedestrian path. Buildings located on the south side of East Hamlin Street would lose the landscaped buffer provided by the Canal Reserve Land south of the alleyway behind them. Currently, the SR 520 ramp is 135 to 195 feet from the rear of the properties along East Hamlin Street. Under the Preferred Alternative, the ramp would be

approximately 65 to 130 feet from the rear of these properties. The new bicycle and pedestrian path would be north of the ramp, below grade, with retaining walls on each side. Approximately 45 to 100 feet of buffer would remain between the rear yards of the houses and the north retaining wall of the new bicycle and pedestrian path. Although the Canal Reserve Land would be acquired, the land would become part of the landscaped Montlake lid, so open green space would remain in the area and the homes would benefit from the new landscaped lid.

I-312-050

With the Preferred Alternative, the proposed noise reduction strategies for the Portage Bay Bridge include: 4-foot concrete traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating; reducing speed limits through the Portage Bay area to 45 mph; encapsulating expansion joints; and using noise-absorptive materials around the Montlake and 10th Avenue East/Delmar Drive East lid portals. The noise modeling indicated that these strategies will reduce the level of future noise from the completed project over existing noise levels. The air quality analysis conducted for the project shows a reduction in emissions of criteria pollutants with the operation of the project, compared to No Build and existing conditions. See the Air Quality Discipline Report and Addendum for further information.

I-312-051

Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has identified a Preferred Alternative that includes a full lid from Montlake Boulevard to beyond 24th Avenue E near the Lake Washington shoreline. The intent is to provide greater pedestrian amenity in the central part of the Montlake neighborhood while simultaneously providing a better location and environment for the regional bus stops incorporated in the transit/HOV direct access ramps. The lid would function as a vehicle and pedestrian crossing, a landscaped area, and open space. The revised and expanded Montlake lid would improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity across SR 520, reduce crossing distance for many

pedestrians, and improve pedestrian safety. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for further information.

I-312-052

A number of design refinements were included in the Preferred Alternative to reduce negative impacts to historic properties. Although the Preferred Alternative would affect the Montlake Historic District in similar ways to that described on page 147 of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDIES), it would also provide a number of benefits to the district. There would be a beneficial change to the Montlake Historic District from the removal of the Lake Washington and R.H. Thomson Express way ramps, from adding a planted median on Lake Washington Boulevard and enhancing the boulevard to a true park boulevard, from lower noise levels in some areas from the Montlake lid, and from additional public green space and connectivity from the lid.

Through the Section 106 process, WSDOT has worked to avoid, minimize and mitigate for the project's adverse effects to historic properties. While construction of the Preferred Alternative would result in a temporary diminishment of the integrity of the the historic district, operation of the project would not. To ensure that construction impacts are minimized and mitigated, WSDOT has worked with the Montlake Community Council and other Section 106 consulting parties to develop a Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS) and is working with these parties to develop a Community Construction Management Plan (CCMP) (outlined in Attachment 9 to the Final EIS). The Programmatic Agreement records the terms and conditions agreed up on to resolve the adverse effect from the project. The CCMP will further minimize construction impacts and address quality of life issues.

I-312-053

The bullet on page 147 of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline

Report, referenced in the comment, discusses the permanent acquisition needed to accomplish the widening of East Montlake Place East and 24th Avenue East under Option A. The 3,000 square foot taking would be a permanent use of the land, and would enable WSDOT to add the additional lanes.

I-312-054

Please see the response to comment C-312-017, which describes the larger Montlake lid included as part of the Preferred Alternative.

Please see the response to comment C-312-004, or the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS), which discuss the transportation benefit of the second bascule bridge.

Please see the response to comment C-312-052, which describes the process used to avoid, minimize and mitigate the project's adverse effect.

I-312-055

Refer to response to comment I-312-022.

I-312-056

The Preferred Alternative would not include construction of any new ramps in the Arboretum, and would remove both the existing Lake Washington Boulevard ramps and the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps. Because the Lake Washington Boulevard ramps already exist, none of the alternatives or options evaluated in the SDEIS showed “greatly increased” traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard when compared with the No Build Alternative. The Preferred Alternative would reduce average traffic volumes in 2030 on Lake Washington Boulevard in the Arboretum compared to the No Build Alternative. Please see the response to Comment I-312-005.

I-312-057
Comment noted.

I-312-058
Through the analyses conducted for the SDEIS, WSDOT determined that Options K and L would result in higher impacts to natural resources than Option A. As a result of the SDEIS analysis, direction from the Legislative Workgroup, and input from the community and agencies, FHWA and WSDOT identified a Preferred Alternative that is similar to Option A but with a number of design refinements to minimize effects. In agreement with FHWA, WSDOT continues forward to complete NEPA documentation by analyzing the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. If Options K or L were identified as the Preferred Alternative in the future, WSDOT would provide additional information as part of final design and permitting and ensure that negative effects associated with these options are mitigated to the extent practicable.

The profile of the bridge across Foster Island would range from 14 to 20 feet clearance between the ground and the bridge. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for a description of the Preferred Alternative. WSDOT has been working closely with the tribes to design a bridge across Foster Island with minimal disturbance to this cultural and historic resource. The design of this span was developed in close partnership with the tribes, and they agree that it is the least invasive of all options.

I-312-059
See the response to comment I-312-058 regarding Option K. If Option K were identified as the Preferred Alternative in the future, additional detail regarding tunnel construction would be provided as appropriate during final design.

I-312-060

The Preferred Alternative would not include construction of any new ramps in the Arboretum, and would remove both the existing Lake Washington Boulevard ramps and the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps. Because the Lake Washington Boulevard ramps already exist, none of the alternatives or options evaluated in the SDEIS showed "greatly increased" traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard when compared with the No Build Alternative. The Preferred Alternative would reduce average traffic volumes in 2030 on Lake Washington Boulevard in the Arboretum compared to the No Build Alternative. Please see the response to Comment I-312-005.

I-312-061

Please see the response to comment C-312-039, which states that the Preferred Alternative would remove the R.H. Thomson Ramps, resulting in a positive effect to the Washington Park Arboretum and Lake Washington Boulevard.

I-312-062

Page 157 of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report is a discussion of the effects to the Montlake Historic District from construction of Option K, which would include a permanent acquisition of more acreage than with Options A or L.

The Preferred Alternative would permanently acquire approximately 6.2 acres from the Montlake Historic District. The effects of this acquisition would be mitigated through stipulations contained within the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (Attachment 9 to the Final EIS).

I-312-063

Page 164 of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report is a focused discussion of the potential effects to the Montlake Historic

District from construction of Option L. Potential effects to the Montlake Historic District from operation of Option L begin on page 186 and end on page 188. Noise is discussed, and the section states that most locations in the Montlake Historic District would experience a decrease in noise levels with Option L.

I-312-064

As discussed in the Recreation Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS), there would be no effect on boating traffic to and from events at Husky Stadium as there would be no work bridges near the shoreline area of Union Bay at this location and no impediments to vessel traffic in the vicinity.

The nearest construction activities to the moorage area would be on land, for installation on the outfall pipe for the stormwater facility located on the University of Washington Open Space. However, there should be no effect to boat moorage with that activity. Construction of the new bascule bridge across the Montlake Cut would occur mostly on land. The footings are not in the water and the bridge spans themselves would be constructed and assembled largely on land. There would be limited effects to boating traffic through the Montlake Cut with this construction activity. See the Construction Techniques Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS) for information on project construction in this area.

I-312-065

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.

The new bascule bridge could have an effect on the visual quality of the historic Montlake Bridge that would diminish its integrity, an effect on historic properties with a view of the new bridge that would diminish their integrity, and would require the removal of two residential properties that contribute to the Montlake Historic District. However, the new bascule bridge would not obscure the view of the existing bridge, and the context-sensitive design would limit the visual impact of the new bridge, thus minimizing negative effects. Please see the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report and Addendum, and the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report, both in Attachment 7 to the Final EIS, for further information.

I-312-066

Please see the response to comments C-312-025 and C-312-064, which explain that towing pontoons through the Montlake Cut, which is a navigable waterway, would not have a large impact recreational boating. WSDOT would further minimize potential effects by suspending

pontoons towing through the Cut during Opening Day and the week before and week after Opening Day. Additionally, WSDOT would work with the University of Washington to coordinate construction activities to minimize construction on game days and for other special events. Please see the Recreation Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS) for a more detailed discussion.

I-312-067

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.

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. For a description of the Preferred Alternative's effects on air quality and noise, refer to the Final EIS Air Quality Discipline Report and Noise Discipline Report.

I-312-068

Throughout the NEPA evaluation process, WSDOT has evaluated a wide range of project alternatives. Through an in-depth analysis of the No Build Alternative, WSDOT demonstrated that the alternative would not meet project purpose and need. WSDOT's transportation analyses have show that the No Build Alternative would not increase mobility of

people and goods through the corridor. Above all, the existing SR 520 facility is increasingly susceptible to catastrophic failure and is in need of replacement. The No Build Alternative does not address this concern and would not increase safety and reliability, failing to meet the project need. Once completed, the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project would improve mobility, access, neighborhood connectivity, air quality, and water quality in the project area.

The Preferred Alternative includes a landscaped lid between Montlake Boulevard and east of 24th Avenue NE, which would significantly improve visual quality in the general Montlake area. To address the concerns expressed about the visual quality to the west of the Montlake Historic District, WSDOT will apply the principles of Context Sensitive Design/Solutions (CSD/S) in the design of the new facilities. In addition, WSDOT has involved community groups and stakeholders in the design process. In the end, the design and aesthetics of the new facilities will be reviewed by the Seattle Design Commission before becoming final.

WSDOT is not able to ascertain what the context of the statement made by a consultant and cannot determine whether this comment characterizes the information correctly. The Preferred Alternative would add additional width to the corridor, to meet the project purpose and need of improving the mobility of people and goods, in a manner that is safe and reliable while reducing negative effects.

I-312-069

As noted on page 173 of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report, “For all options, the new profile of the Portage Bay bridge would match the existing profile for the western half of the bridge with a 5-percent grade.” The eastern half would be raised at approximately the midpoint of the bridge and slope gently to the eastern landfall near NOAA. As a result, the bridge height would be raised 12 feet, at most, above the existing bridge in the vicinity of the existing low point.

For all of the 6-lane options, the overall character and quality of this landscape unit would change as a result of the new Portage Bay Bridge, but views from water or ground level near the new bridge would be more open. The greater column spacing would open up views under the bridge, especially looking northward from the south side of the bridge (see Exhibit 2-5 in Attachment 2 of the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report). The east end of the new bridge near NOAA would be farther north, which could have a moderately positive effect for Montlake Playfield views. A wider west end of the bridge would affect views from the homes next to the bridge on the north side, making the bridge more dominant in eastward views. This would not change visual quality because the bridge is already the dominant structure in the views in this area (Exhibit 2-4 in Attachment 2 of the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report). Also, see Attachment 2 of the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for visualizations of the Preferred Alternative.

I-312-070

As discussed in the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report Addendum (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS), the primary changes to visual quality and character in the Portage Bay Area would result from the design of the new Portage Bay Bridge, which would include aesthetic treatments such as haunched girders and false arches at the west end of the bridge, a planted median on the bridge, and wider spaces between columns and a higher, wider road deck than the current bridge. Potential aesthetic treatments could contribute to context sensitivity and appropriateness of design. The wider spaces between columns could open up views of water beyond the bridge and could also provide an increased user experience.

Of the potentially affected resources listed in this comment, the Seattle Yacht Club is the only one that was evaluated in the Final Cultural

Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 of the Final EIS), because it is listed in the NRHP. The Queen City Yacht Club, Montlake Playfield, Portage Bay and West Montlake Park are not historic properties. Through research and review, WSDOT has determined that the setting of the Seattle Yacht Club would be altered slightly by the larger, closer bridge, but the property would retain integrity of the characteristics that allow the Yacht Club to convey its significance. Additionally, the visual effect on the property would not be significant.

I-312-071

The new Portage Bay Bridge design under the Preferred Alternative would have two general-purpose lanes and an HOV lane in each direction, plus a managed westbound shoulder. In response to community interest and public comment on the SDIES, the width of the new Portage Bay Bridge at the midpoint has been reduced from 110 feet to 105 feet. At most, the new structure would increase the existing width of the Portage Bay Bridge by 42 – 47 feet.

I-312-072

Noise walls are not intended to compensate for lost views. In general, noise walls block views.

I-312-073

Please see the response to Comment I-312-069. The quality of views of open water from homes directly adjacent to the north side (Roanoke) of the new Portage Bay Bridge would be lower due to the loss of vegetation from construction, the proximity of the north side of the bridge, and the loss of open water surface. These effects would decrease with distance from the bridge and with the regrowth of screening vegetation.

I-312-074

Comment noted.

I-312-075

The Preferred Alternative includes several noise reduction strategies, such as 4-foot concrete traffic barriers with noise-absorptive coating, reducing the speed limit through the Portage Bay area to 45 mph, encapsulating expansion joints, and using noise-absorptive materials around the Montlake and 10th Avenue East/Delmar Drive East lid portals. WSDOT will continue to consider other noise reduction methods as design development progresses.

With the noise reduction strategies included in the Preferred Alternative, noise levels along the corridor would be reduced 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). Noise levels at the Canoe House are expected to decrease slightly with the Preferred Alternative compared to the No Build Alternative.

I-312-076

While the removal of two homes and the addition of the second bridge would change views from residences along the cut and from the historic bridge, the overall setting would not be degraded. Please refer to Exhibit 2-23 in Attachment 2 of the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Discipline Report.

I-312-077

Please see the response to comment I-312-017, which discusses the larger Montlake lid included as part of the Preferred Alternative.

Please see the response to comment I-312-068, which addresses the visual quality concerns west of Montlake Boulevard.

I-312-078
Please see the response to comment I-312-017, which discusses the larger Montlake lid and connectivity in the Montlake area.

I-312-079
Correct. The new SR 520 ramp would be approximately 65 to 130 feet from the rear of properties located on the south side of East Hamlin Street. Please see the Final Cultural Resources Assessment and Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for information regarding the Montlake Historic District.

I-312-080
Comment noted.

I-312-081
Please see the response to comment I-312-002, which discusses WSDOT's approach to avoiding, minimizing and mitigating the impacts to the Montlake Historic District.

I-312-082
The Preferred Alternative reduces effects on the Arboretum by eliminating the existing Lake Washington Boulevard eastbound on-ramp and westbound off-ramp and the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps. Westbound SR 520 traffic would be able to access Lake Washington Boulevard via a new intersection located on the Montlake Boulevard lid at 24th Avenue East. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for additional information.

Further, the Preferred Alternative would include a higher profile across Foster Island than Option A, to reduce potential effects to the island's cultural resources and to wetlands. The modifications included in the Preferred Alternative are a constant-slope profile which raises the bridge

height over Foster Island and varies the shoulder widths to reduce the overall footprint (see Chapter 2 of the Final EIS).

I-312-083
Comment noted. Refer to response to comment I-312-022 for a description of how the eastbound HOV direct access on-ramp would tie into Montlake Boulevard with Suboption A.

WSDOT received a number of comments in support of and in opposition to Options A, K, and L and the associated suboptions. These opinions are summarized in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement Summary of Comments (WSDOT, April 2010), available at http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/SDEIS.htm

I-312-084
The Preferred Alternative would not include construction of any new ramps in the Arboretum, and would remove both the existing Lake Washington Boulevard ramps and the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps. Access to Lake Washington Boulevard by westbound SR 520 traffic would be moved to a new intersection located on the Montlake Boulevard lid at 24th Avenue East.

I-312-085
See the response to comment I-312-051 regarding the enhanced and expanded Montlake lid that is part of the Preferred Alternative. The project does not include a lid west of Montlake Boulevard in the vicinity of the NOAA NWFSC. A lid located further to the west would have more environmental effects such as wetlands and more impacts to historic properties and the NOAA facility.

I-312-086
Comment noted.

I-312-087
Lines 12 - 15 on page 186 of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report says, “The Montlake Boulevard interchange would be widened and incorporated into a lid over SR 520, the mainline of which would be lowered up to 10 feet. This lid would run from the west side of Montlake Boulevard to the new 24th Avenue East Bridge.” As with all options evaluated in the SDEIS, the western edge of the Montlake lid would roughly align with the western edge of the Montlake Boulevard and would not extend further over the historic district. A westward expansion of the lid would directly impact a number of historic properties in the Montlake Historic District. For further clarity, please see Exhibit 4 of the SDEIS Cultural Resources Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the SDEIS).

I-312-088
Comment noted.

I-312-089
The Preferred Alternative modifies the profile of the bridge in the west approach, compared to Option A. The bridge height has also been lowered across the floating bridge in comparison to Option A. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for a description of the Preferred Alternative.

I-312-090
Comment noted.

I-312-091
Comment noted.

I-312-092
This component of the water regulations will be addressed in the

permitting activities related to the construction and operation of the replacement bridge.

I-312-093

The Preferred Alternative is similar to Option A, but includes a number of design refinements that minimize the effects presented in the SDEIS. These refinements respond to comments made on the SDEIS and to WSDOT's work with many project stakeholders under Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6392, which was passed by the Washington State Legislature in 2010. See Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for a description of the planning process and the Preferred Alternative. 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.

I-312-094

The SDEIS provided a comprehensive analysis of Option A with suboptions. The effects of the suboptions are described throughout the SDEIS text and exhibits, and in the discipline reports where effects differ from the options without suboptions.

Chapter 2 of the Final EIS discusses the reasons that Option M, proposed during the legislative workgroup, was not considered a reasonable alternative. The primary reasons for its dismissal were environmental impact and cost. As stated in the findings of the legislative

workgroup, “Because the Montlake Cut is an environmentally sensitive area, we believe the permitting of OPTION M’s wetlands impacts will be very risky and very costly to mitigate and we believe there would be a high likelihood of a much longer delay (12 to 24 months) in order to negotiate the permitting issue with the US Army Corps of Engineers.” Additionally, the Cost Review Panel was concerned that given the range of probable costs for Option M, it was unlikely to fit within the legislatively established budget for the project.

Chapter 1 of the SDEIS provides an overview of how Options A, K, and L were developed. Attachment 8 to the SDEIS, Range of Alternatives and Options Evaluated describes the history of the alternatives and options considered for the EIS.

I-312-095

The Montlake Freeway Transit Station stops were removed in all of the design options considered in the SDEIS, based on a decision making process that was part of Westside mediation. The mediation process was mandated by Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6099 and is described on pages 1-17 through 1-19 of the SDEIS. The mediation workgroup consisted of members from adjacent neighborhoods, transit agencies, jurisdictions, and State agencies. Removing the Montlake Freeway Transit Station would minimize the width of the freeway through the Montlake area, reducing the width by up to 40 feet compared to keeping the station. The mediation workgroup did not recommend any design options that included the Montlake Freeway Transit Station stops. See Attachment 8 to the SDEIS, Range of Alternatives and Options Evaluated, for further discussion of how and why removal of the stops was considered.

The Preferred Alternative includes removal of the Montlake Freeway Transit Station stops; however, it also includes a modified Montlake Boulevard interchange and lid. Modifications include a full lid from

Montlake Boulevard to the Lake Washington shoreline, and bus stops on the lid for both eastbound and westbound buses (see Chapter 2 of the Final EIS for a description of the Preferred Alternative). The intent is to provide greater pedestrian amenity in the central part of the Montlake neighborhood while simultaneously providing a better location and environment for the regional bus stops incorporated in the transit/HOV direct access ramps (see Chapter 2 of the Final EIS). At the option of the transit agencies, SR 520 buses will be able to exit at the Montlake interchange during the off-peak periods to service passengers to/from the Montlake lid transit stop. University Link light-rail service, expected to be operational in 2016, will accommodate some of the trips that now use the bus stops. Chapter 8 of the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) provides further discussion of expected transit operations with the Preferred Alternative, including expected transit travel times, rider connections, and how future transit would incorporate service currently provided at the stops.

I-312-096

Comment noted.

I-312-097

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. Similar to Option A, the Preferred Alternative would provide a westbound HOV direct access off-ramp that would tie into a signal at the Montlake Boulevard/SR 520 westbound ramps intersection. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS describes the Preferred Alternative. Chapter 5 of the Final EIS and Chapters 6 and 8 of the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) describe how the No Build and Preferred Alternatives would affect local traffic and transit operations.

I-312-098
Comment noted. WSDOT received a number of comments in support of and in opposition to Options A, K, and L and the associated suboptions. These opinions are summarized in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement Summary of Comments (WSDOT, April 2010), available at http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/SDEIS.htm.

Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has identified 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 and Chapters 5 and 6 describe its environmental effects.

I-312-099
Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has identified a Preferred Alternative with a westbound off-ramp to 24th Avenue E instead of a flyover ramp to Lake Washington Boulevard. As shown in Exhibit 2-14 of the Final EIS, the westbound off-ramp will travel across the northern edge of a modified lid to 24th Avenue E. At this intersection, drivers can turn left to access Lake Washington Boulevard, or continue on to Montlake Boulevard for right-turn only movements. The Preferred Alternative does not include an eastbound on-ramp from Lake Washington Boulevard.

The modifications included in the Preferred Alternative are intended to minimize impacts to the Arboretum in terms of vehicle volumes and speeds, access for visitors, and the overall environment of the park.

I-312-100
Refer to response to comment I-312-22.

I-312-101
Comment noted.

I-312-102
These suboptions were shown on Exhibit 2-16 of the SDEIS.

I-312-103
The increase in zinc pollutant load is related to the ratio of existing pollution generating impervious surface (PGIS) currently untreated which will be treated in the future and the increase of new PGIS associated with the replacement bridge. In areas where zinc load are predicted to decrease, the amount of existing PGIS to be treated is greater than the increase in new PGIS. In areas where zinc loads are predicted to increase, the amount of existing PGIS to be treated is less than the increase in new PGIS.

For the identified Preferred Alternative, the change in predicted zinc loading is negative for all TDAs in the project area. This means that construction and operation of the Preferred Alternative replacement bridge will reduce the amount of zinc discharged in all TDAs will decrease relative to existing amounts.

I-312-104
Comment noted.