

SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Supplemental Draft EIS Comment Form

Please use this form to share your comments on the content provided in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement document. WSDOT will consider all comments received between Jan. 22 and April 15, 2010 in making its final decision in the environmental review process. Thank you for your comments.

You can provide comments using one of the following methods:

- Complete this form.
- Mail your comments to Jenifer Young, SDEIS Environmental Manager, Washington State Department of Transportation, 600 Stewart Street, Suite 520, Seattle, WA 98101.
- E-mail your comments to SR520Bridge_SDEIS@wsdot.wa.gov.
- Speak to a court reporter at an environmental hearing scheduled for 5 – 7 p.m., Feb. 23, at Lake Union Park Naval Reserve Building, 860 Terry Ave. N., Seattle.

1. Name: Stacy Schulze CommentDate: 4/15/2010 20:49
 2. E-mail: Comment Source: Online Comment Form
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7. Do you have any comments on the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

- I-334-001** The lack of transit options near the bridge (current Montlake Flyer stop) is short-sighted. The proposed increase in service coming from the U. District to mitigate the removal of a 520-Montlake stop doesn't go far enough (only to Evergreen Point), resulting in the need to transfer buses, meaning a rider from my neighborhood would have to take 3 buses. Also, if I were to visit a friend in Montlake before going to the Eastside, with the proposed lack of a 520-Montlake stop, I'd have to take a bus away from the bridge in order to come back and cross it. I want options that get me to my destinations quickly, not ones that send me out-of-the-way and increase my travel time.
- If the transit stop currently at 520-Montlake moves to the area of the stadium light-rail station to create a different transit transfer point, why is light-rail not being considered for the bridge?
- I-334-002** I disagree with adding more traffic to Montlake by adding extra lanes to the street. Montlake is the main street connecting several neighborhoods, and its character is important. Removing the green spaces would make the street more of a concrete landscape, counter to the neighborhoods it passes. To maintain a link between neighborhoods, the bridge should have a separate entrance, such as presented in option K.
- The options as presented only look at regular peak and off-peak traffic, but further information should be gathered for the effects of events at Husky Stadium and Hec-Ed Pavilion, which disrupt traffic patterns regularly.

These comments will become part of the public record for the SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Personal information is voluntary and will become part of the public record if provided. The Washington State Department of Transportation is a public agency and is subject to the State of Washington's Public Records Act (RCW 42.56). Therefore, comments may be made available to anyone requesting them for non-commercial purposes.

I-334-001

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.

Section 2.4 in the Final EIS explains why initial implementation of light rail transit on SR 520 is not planned. The decision to locate Sound Transit's initial east-west light rail transit corridor on I-90 rather than SR 520 has been made through extensive regional deliberation. Table 2-2 of the Final EIS illustrates the history of regional decision making on east-west mass transit routes, which began in 1967 when the Comprehensive Public Transportation Plan for the Seattle Metropolitan Area identified a rail corridor from Seattle to Bellevue and Redmond on I-90. Subsequent studies and agreements over the next 40 years have all continued to identify I-90 as the preferred rail transit corridor, with predicted ridership similar to or more than SR 520 and substantially lower costs and environmental effects. However, through coordination with Sound Transit, WSDOT has designed the Preferred Alternative to have enhanced compatibility with potential future light rail compared to the SDEIS design options.

The Preferred Alternative allows for two future rail options:

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

Chapter 2 of the Final EIS provides further discussion.

I-334-002

Since publication of the SDEIS, WSDOT has developed a Preferred Alternative, which is similar to Option A but with a number of design refinements that would improve mobility and safety while reducing negative effects. Chapter 2 of the Final EIS describes the Preferred Alternative.

Refer to Chapter 5 of the Final EIS and Chapter 6 of the Final Transportation Discipline Report (Attachment 7 to the Final EIS) for a description of how the No Build and Preferred Alternatives would affect local traffic.

The Final EIS transportation analysis continues to focus on the effects of the No Build and Preferred Alternatives on peak period traffic operations in the year 2030. This provides a comparison of relative effects between the alternatives. The only exception is the evaluation of the effects of Montlake Bridge openings on traffic operations during the off-peak hours that has been added to the comparison between the No Build Alternative and Preferred Alternative. Please see the Final Transportation Discipline Report, Chapters 6 and 8.