

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 Justus Stewart **CommentDate:** 4/15/2010 6:44  
2. E-mail justus.stewart@gmail.com **Comment Source:** Online Comment Form  
3. Address: 1221 1st ave  
4. City: Seattle  
5. State: WA  
\* 6. Zip Code: 98101

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-337-001** | The SDEIS does not sufficiently take into account impacts to the environment from increased traffic on SR 520, in any scenario where automobile traffic volumes are increased. The preferred alternative is in violation of the State's own VMT and GHG reduction goals.

**I-337-002** | Furthermore, the SDEIS fails to sufficiently address negative environmental impacts to the City of Seattle and the Arboretum. The Arboretum and its wetland areas are essential amenities for all residents of the region, and the State has not provided sufficient evidence that the impacts under the proposed preferred alternative cannot be avoided through better design.

With a modicum of effort on a better design for the bridge, the State could ensure a better outcome for generations. It is your responsibility to do so.

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-337-001**

The EIS analyses environmental effects from the project alternatives and options, including effects on noise, air quality, water quality, etc. Increased demand for travel across Lake Washington is a result of population and employment growth, and would occur with or without the project. Section 5.9 of the Final contains a discussion of how the project relates to regional goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Chapter 2 of the Final EIS also provides further discussion of project alternatives, including why a transit optimized 4-Lane Alternative is a reasonable alternative, and why initial implementation of light rail transit on SR 520 is not a reasonable alternative for the project.

**I-337-002**

The NEPA documents for the SR 520 I-5 to Medina project adequately address the project's potential environmental effects.

Since the SDEIS was published, WSDOT has identified a Preferred Alternative that is similar to Option A, but with a number of design refinements. The Preferred Alternative reduces the land acquisition in the Arboretum from all options evaluated in the SDEIS. The Preferred Alternative includes a narrow footprint across Foster Island, with reduced right-of-way acquisition in the Arboretum compared to the SDEIS options.

While this project would affect ecosystems in several ways, some of the effects would be beneficial, such as the removing the R.H. Thomson Expressway ramps, providing stormwater treatment facilities where none currently exist, and raising the height of overwater structures. Negative effects would include filling and shading of wetlands and aquatic habitats. To reduce these effects to wetlands and aquatic habitats, WSDOT has developed a Preferred Alternative with a number of design refinements. Additionally, WSDOT will provide compensatory mitigation

for all project effects, which is intended to fully mitigate for project effects on wetlands and aquatic resources. For more information on proposed mitigation, please see the Conceptual Wetlands and Aquatic Resources mitigation plans in Attachment 9 of the Final EIS.

In early 2010, the Washington State Legislature passed and Governor Gregoire signed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6392, which directed WSDOT to develop a mitigation plan for the Washington Park Arboretum. To develop that plan, WSDOT worked collaboratively over an eight-month period with the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens Committee to develop mitigation for the Preferred Alternative and identified a number of potential mitigation projects for the Arboretum. See Attachment 9 of the Final EIS for a copy of the Arboretum Mitigation Plan.

WSDOT has also worked with the City of Seattle in refining the design of the Preferred Alternative to avoid effects to recreational resources where possible. The footprint of the Preferred Alternative minimizes park impacts, compared to all options presented in the SDIES. The Preferred Alternative also maintains the connectivity of area parks. The final design of the Montlake lid would also be designed to include open space and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connectivity features, recommended by the ESSB 6392 workgroup. Please see the ESSB 6392: Design Refinements and Transit Connections Workgroup Recommendations Report (Attachment 16 of the Final EIS) for more information.