

Draft Summary
SR 520 SDEIS Technical Workshop Kick-off
Museum of History and Industry
June 17, 2008 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Preview

Dave Dye, WSDOT Deputy Secretary, opened the meeting and noted that the meeting purpose was to present the three options for the west side SR 520 corridor that will be evaluated in the Supplemental Draft EIS. Over the past three months, WSDOT has met with proponents of the Transit-Friendly Alternative (Alternative A) and the Parkway Plan (Alternative K), to refine and develop the options.

Virginia Gunby, Ravenna-Bryant, and Larry Sinnott, Friends of Seattle Olmsted Parks, presented the “Transit-Friendly Alternative.” Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation, presented the “Parkway Plan.” Dave Warner, SR 520 Project West Side Design Lead, presented Alternative L.

Transit-Friendly Alternative – Alternative A

Virginia Gunby and Larry Sinnott presented the goals and major design elements of the Transit-Friendly Alternative. The Transit Friendly Alternative prioritizes transit connections. The proponents of Alternative A have developed a base alternative that will be evaluated with sub-options, if necessary based on additional technical analysis. Both Virginia Gunby and Larry Sinnott emphasized the need for a corridor management agreement and traffic demand management.

The Alternative A base option:

- Includes an interchange at Montlake Boulevard, similar to the configuration of the existing interchange.
- Does not include Lake Washington Boulevard ramps.
- Does not include a median transit stop.
- Adds a second Montlake bridge parallel to the existing Montlake bridge.
- Includes a westbound transit-only off-ramp to Montlake Boulevard.
- Includes lids at Montlake Boulevard, 10th Avenue and Delmar Drive East, and I-5.

Sub-options to Alternative A pending technical evaluation:

- Lake Washington Boulevard westbound off-ramp (designed to split northbound traffic and southbound traffic east of the Montlake Boulevard lid).
 - Include only if it is necessary for traffic operations.
- Eastbound Lake Washington Boulevard on-ramp.
 - Include only if the transit improvements and westbound off-ramp do not serve traffic demand.
- Eastbound direct access.
- Foster Island berm.
 - Consider cost, environmental effects and urban design features.

The mediation group presented topics for further consideration, including:

- Traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard.
- Lid function and design.
- Potential for phased construction of the second Montlake bridge.
- Effects to the NOAA facility.
- Stormwater treatment.
- Traffic demand management.
- Carbon footprint.
- AM/PM peak local traffic volumes on Montlake Boulevard.

- Effects of proposed developments at Children’s Hospital and University Village.
- Alternative A sub-options.
- Increased transit service.
- Context sensitive design at the lids.
- Traffic demand management and tolling at Lake Washington Boulevard.

Parkway Plan – Alternative K

Paige Miller presented the goals and major design elements of the Parkway Plan. The Parkway Plan was developed by a coalition of representatives from some of the communities along the west side SR 520 corridor. The major goals of the Parkway Plan are a roadway that is designed to be quieter with minimal visual effects.

The design of Alternative K:

- Keeps the bridge low.
- Includes quieter pavement as a design element.
- Includes a berm over the roadway at Foster Island.
- Includes a single-point urban interchange under the mainline SR 520 at east Montlake Boulevard near the existing location of the Museum of History and Industry.
- Includes a tunnel under the Montlake Cut.
- Separates freeway and local traffic across the Montlake Cut, allowing Montlake Boulevard to be a local traffic access roadway.
- Includes access to and from SR 520 and the Arboretum with a roundabout at the terminus of a new roadway parallel to the existing Lake Washington Boulevard.
- Considers pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.

The mediation group presented the following topics for further consideration:

- Lane configuration in the tunnel (number of general-purpose and HOV lanes).
- Compatibility of the tunnel with Light Rail.
- Cost.
- Effects to the NOAA facility.
- In-water construction.
- Tribal considerations at Foster Island.
- Stormwater treatment.
- Traffic demand management.
- Carbon footprint.
- 2030 traffic volumes on Montlake Boulevard.
- Noise.
- Number of lanes on Montlake Boulevard at Pacific Street.
- Emergency access to the University of Washington Medical Center.
- Transit stops and transit access.
- Effects of roadway grade on accidents and traffic speeds.
- Need for utility relocation.
- Structural support for building above the tunnel.
- Limited access right-of-way.
- Access from the north to I-5.
- Traffic effects to Lake Washington Boulevard through the Arboretum.
- Cost of limitation strategies for traffic to Lake Washington Boulevard.
- Traffic at the Lake Washington Boulevard roundabout.
- Access at Pacific St.
- No-build traffic conditions.
- Bike/pedestrian connections across the Lake Washington Boulevard ramps.
- Effects of proposed developments at Children’s Hospital and University Village.
- Traffic demand management and tolling at Lake Washington Boulevard.

Results of the Expert Panel on Tunnel Construction

In May, WSDOT convened an eight member expert review panel to consider options for the alignment and construction of a tunnel under the Montlake Cut. John Reilly, the panel chair, and panel members Red Robinson and José Carrasquero-Verde, presented the preliminary findings. Red Robinson presented on the geo-technical considerations of the area and José Carrasquero-Verde presented on the environmental considerations.

The three tunneling construction methods evaluated by the panel included:

- Tunnel boring method.
- Sequential excavation method.
- Immersed tube tunneling method.

The panel found that the sequential excavation method is the most viable method considering the geo-technical, environmental, and design constraints of the area.

Dave Dye noted that the supplemental draft EIS will evaluate the sequential excavation method (SEM) for a tunnel under the Montlake Cut. Based on the panel's preliminary findings, the SEM provides the best opportunities for minimizing environmental effects and allows for a better geometry than other methods.

The mediation group presented the following issues for further consideration:

- Grade.
- Cost.
- Length of construction.
- Construction impacts.
- Visual effects of the tunnel portals.
- Noise effects of the tunnel portals.

Alternative L

Dave Warner, presented the major design elements of Alternative L. Alternative L was developed to have an alternative to a tunnel crossing of the Montlake Cut evaluated in the Supplemental Draft EIS. Alternative L is similar to Alternative K, but includes a second draw-bridge across the Montlake Cut from the east Montlake area to Pacific Street.

The design of Alternative L:

- Includes a single-point urban interchange over the mainline of SR 520 at east Montlake Boulevard near the existing location of the Museum of History and Industry.
- Includes a second draw bridge over the Montlake Cut.
- Includes Lake Washington Boulevard ramps.

The mediation group presented the following topics for further analysis:

- Effects to McCurdy Park.
- Cost.
- Mitigation.
- Navigation through the Montlake Cut.
- Effects of proposed developments at Children's Hospital and University Village.

Process and Schedule Going Forward

The next technical work session will be held on July 15, 2008. The agendas for upcoming work sessions will be shared with the mediation group prior to the work sessions.