

**MEETING SUMMARY
SR 520 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AND HOV PROJECT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MOHAI, Seattle, WA
June 22, 2004 4:00 – 6:00 P.M.

Welcome and Meeting Objectives

Julie Meredith, Project Engineer, WSDOT, opened the meeting by welcoming the Advisory Committee and members of the public. The objectives for the meeting were as follow: provide an overview of the project, provide traffic analysis, report on the flexible transportation plan, report on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process and schedule, and report on ongoing community outreach.

Project Update

The environmental analysis is well underway on the alternatives. Some of the things that are still under consideration are a bridge operations facility on the Eastside, consolidating transit stops and direct access for transit on the Eastside, and bicycle / pedestrian path refinements along the corridor. There are two build alternatives and one no build alternative being studied in the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) due out in the summer of 2005.

The build alternatives include a 4-Lane and a 6-Lane Alternative. Because the SR 520 corridor is vulnerable to seismic and storm events, the DEIS is looking at two no build scenarios. The first assumes continued operation through 2030 even though the current design life expires somewhere around 2020. The second no build scenario assumes catastrophic failure of the facility. This could occur because a major earthquake or a severe storm causes significant damage resulting in loss of the facility.

4- and 6-Lane Alternatives

Both the 4- and 6-Lane Alternatives propose to rebuild the corridor with standard roadway geometrics, add a bicycle / pedestrian path, and size the pontoons to handle the extra weight of future high capacity transit (HCT). Both of the build alternatives assume a tolled facility using only electronic tolling methods.

The updated cost estimation validation process (CEVP) numbers were released in May. The 4-Lane Alternative is estimated to cost between \$1.7 and \$2.1 billion. The 6-Lane Alternative is estimated to cost between \$2.6 and \$2.9 billion. Figures for both of the alternatives assumed funding to come from the Regional

Transportation Investment District (RTID). The RTID package that was scheduled to go to voters this fall will not go on November's ballot. The project is still looking for additional funding from federal, state, and regional sources.

Transit Service Study

King County Metro and Sound Transit are working on a study looking at future transit service along the SR 520 corridor. The study will reflect transportation investments on I-405, I-90, and North Link and will provide transit facility recommendations for the SR 520 corridor.

8-Lane Alternative

At the April Executive Committee meeting the Committee decided to shelve the 8-Lane alternative. Preliminary traffic analysis found that the 8-Lane alternative sent too many vehicles onto to I-5 resulting in failure on both I-5 and SR 520.

The no build scenario in 2030 sends approximately 3600 vehicles per hour during the peak period onto I-5 Southbound. The 6-Lane Alternative sends approximately 3900 vehicles per hour. However, the 8-Lane Alternative sends approximately 4600 general-purpose vehicles per hour onto an already congested I-5.

Therefore, with the 8-Lane Alternative, approximately 1000 more vehicles are trying to enter I-5 per hour than the 6-Lane Alternative. Because of this added congestion, additional mitigation including at least one lane in each direction on I-5 would have to be completed from SR 520 to I-90. The analysis found that the SR 520 project was taking on current I-5 problems, which was significantly increasing the cost of project.

The analysis performed by the SR 520 team will be used in the I-5 Corridor Study which is beginning now and will finish in 2007. The I-5 Corridor Study is looking at overall operations on I-5 between Northgate and Boeing field. Depending on the findings and results of this study, the 8-Lane Alternative could return. The 8-Lane Alternative will be discussed in the "Alternatives Considered" section but not in the "Environmental Impacts" section of the DEIS. An 8-Lane Traffic Analysis report will be included in the DEIS appendices.

Questions / Comments

Barbara Culp, Bicycle Alliance of Washington, asked what had happened to the plan bicycle / pedestrian connection into Madison Park. She was upset it had been dropped.

David Allen, City of Seattle, responded that despite support for this plan by the Local Impacts Committee (LIC), the City of Seattle was not recommending it at this time because of some water issues.

Larry Sinnot, Ravenna / Bryant Neighborhood Association, asked which groups at the Arboretum the project was working with.

The project is involved in ongoing discussions with the University of Washington, the Arboretum Botanical and Garden Committee (ABGC), and Seattle Parks.

Barbara Culp asked why the bicycle / pedestrian path was not connecting with the 520 trail on the Eastside.

The 520 trail connection is outside the project limits.

Jonathan Dubman, Montlake Community Club, asked if the project limits were the same in each alternative.

The 6-Lane Alternative goes to 124th Avenue Northeast to improve traffic operations.

Jonathan Dubman asked why the connection to I-5 express lanes occurs both in the a.m. and p.m. only in the 6-Lane Alternative.

This happens in the analysis just to see the difference between the two. The final project could mix and match.

Mark Weed, EGIS Real Estate Services, advised that connections between SR 520 and the University of Washington stadiums should be discussed.

David Allen asked what the latest date that RTID could come to keep the project going.

The current CEVP figures assume that RTID would pass by next year.

Randy Banneker, Banneker and Associates, asked what the project was planning to do for funding now that RTID is not coming.

We are looking at ways to front load the nickel package money.

Roland White, Kirkland Transportation Commission, asked if the project was looking at just preservation.

No.

Jean Amick, Laurelhurst Community Club, asked if tolls were for transportation demand management (TDM) or for revenue.

Revenue.

Mark Weed commented that he thought I-5 was not over capacity. In his experience things free up once you pass the exit to SR 520.

There is severe congestion on I-5 southbound between the University District and I-90 because of winding.

Jean Amick asked who was heading the I-5 study.

Michael Cummings from WSDOT.

Mark Weed asked if there would be a public committee for the I-5 project.

The structure has not been set yet.

Traffic Analysis

Michael Horntvedt, Parametrix, reported the traffic analysis that had been done for both the 4- and 6-Lane Alternatives. The analysis forecasts the traffic conditions along SR 520 in the year 2030. The model includes the Nickel Package projects, plans for local transportation improvements, North Link to Northgate, and the Monorail Green line. It does not include two-way HOV operation on I-90. The 4-Lane Alternative draws 7% more person trips in 13% fewer vehicles compared with the No Build Alternative. The 6-Lane Alternative draws 25% more person trips in 3% more vehicles than the No Build Alternative. Both alternatives operate better than the No Build Alternative.

Questions / Comments

Mark Weed asked how more people could cross the bridge than could in the No Build.

More people choose non-single occupant vehicle modes of travel in both of the alternatives.

Barbara Culp asked if the analysis takes into account diversion from I-90.

Usually diversion occurs on I-90 from SR 520.

Jonathan Dubman asked if the toll on the 4-Lane affects the results.

Yes, it directly influences mode choice.

John Resha, Greater Redmond Transportation Management Association (GRTMA), asked if the volumes showed unconstrained demand.

No.

Flexible Transportation Plan

A Flexible Transportation Plan is used to ensure the most efficient operations of a major roadway. It includes intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and transportation systems management (TSM), transportation demand management (TDM), enhancements to transit service and facilities, pricing, and pedestrian / bicycle improvements. The SR 520 Flexible Transportation Plan includes ITS and TSM, TDM, transit enhancements, tolling, and pedestrian / bicycle improvements.

SR 520 will have a shared pedestrian / bicycle path between Montlake and 96th Avenue Northeast with connections to local trails. It would also have improved pedestrian access to all transit stops.

The goal of the project is to have more transit service along SR 520 to meet future demand. The project will also provide shuttle service on the corridor during construction.

The technology component of SR 520's Flexible Transportation Plan includes such things as ramp meters, signal timing, cameras, and vehicle message signs.

The project will include various efforts for Transportation Demand Management including educational programs, vanpooling, and employer based programs.

Tolling is included on the SR 520 project to generate revenue not for demand management. Still, the toll has an effect on a person's choice of trip, route, and mode. Tolling results in the biggest reduction of trips. The project team is currently reevaluating the composition of its Flexible Transportation Plan.

Questions / Comments

Roland White, Kirkland Transportation Commission, asked why tolling is not used for congestion.

The project is tolling the facility in order to build it. Therefore, it needs to toll for the maximum revenue possible.

Jonathan Dubman suggested that there should also be an option for a 4-Lane Alternative that is tolled for congestion.

Randy Banneker asked if there would be easier access for bikes to the flyer stops.

Yes, both alternatives would rebuild the transit stops according to ADA standards making it easier for both pedestrians and cyclists.

Jonathan Dubman asked how funding for transit works on the project.

WSDOT can only pay for expanded transit service during construction. WSDOT is working with the transit agencies for a plan that addresses the future transit needs of the corridor.

Mark Weed commented that HOV lanes are a big investment for transit and ramp meters also help transit.

John Resha asked if there would be any programs aimed at the origination of trips.

The project team doesn't know exactly. Programs will not only be implemented by WSDOT. WSDOT will also work with other agencies and jurisdictions.

Toll Feasibility Study

Brent Baker, Parsons Brinckerhoff, reported on the tolling study. The Toll Feasibility Study looks at the funding capacity of tolling SR 520. It uses a 2014 analysis with two bookend toll schedules. The EIS uses tolls to evaluate maximum corridor impacts in 2030.

The Toll Feasibility Study uses two bookend tolling schedules. The lower bound schedule represents a toll set for traffic management. The lower bound toll is used to maintain good traffic flow conditions and has minimum effects on the rest of the roadway network. The upper bound schedule represents a toll set for maximum funding. It is set to optimize revenue and has greater effect on the roadway network. Both of the toll schedules use a variable toll dependent on time of day.

The traffic management schedule has a variable toll range of between free and \$3.00 in 2014 dollars, with an average one-way toll of \$1.74. The maximum funding schedule has a variable toll of between \$0.75 and \$4.60 in 2014 dollars, with an average one-way toll of \$3.07.

The Study looked at 24 different funding scenarios that resulted in a funding range through tolls of between \$320 million and \$1.07 billion on the 6-Lane Alternative. Several scenarios could yield around \$700 million. The 4-Lane Alternative would yield approximately 5-10% less.

Questions / Comments

Jean Amick asked if Eastbound and Westbound traffic would have different prices.

The demand is balanced so there would only be subtle price differences.

Larry Sinnot asked how long the toll would be in place.

If the State backs the bonds the bridge could be paid off by 2043.

Mark Weed asked if the tolls could keep going after the bridge is paid off.

The State might be able to continue revenues for maintenance. If the tolls went away behavior on the bridge would shift dramatically.

EIS Schedule

Paul Krueger, WSDOT, updated the Committee on the schedule through the release of the DEIS and beyond. The EIS will include sixteen discipline reports for each of the alternatives and five additional reports. Currently, the reports are being prepared and will be available as appendices to the EIS. The DEIS is scheduled for release on June 30, 2005. The final EIS would come a year later and would include more information on the preferred alternative.

Community Outreach

Susie Serres, EnviroIssues, provided an update on the ongoing Community Outreach of the project. The project team has been reaching out to the community in a variety ways since the last Advisory Committee meeting including two rounds of open houses, jurisdictional and community briefings, and community roundtables. Approximately 150 people came to each round of open houses.

The roundtables have spent time looking at potential designs for the proposed lids from the 6-Lane Alternative. The roundtables looked at the potential lids at 10th and Delmar, Montlake Boulevard, Evergreen Point Road, 92nd Avenue, and 84th Avenue. So far there have been two roundtable meetings on the Eastside and one on the Westside.

Additional community input regarding lids on the Westside has also come from a separate group known as the Local Impacts Committee (LIC). The LIC is comprised of community members from North Capitol Hill, Portage Bay / Roanoke, and Montlake communities. They are looking at the local impacts of a rebuilt SR 520 project. The LIC is jointly funded between the State and the City of Seattle. David Allen, SDOT, shared some of the lid design ideas of the LIC.

Advisory Committee members were reminded that their role is to communicate project information out to their groups and then feed input to the Executive Committee.

Questions / Comments

Barabara Culp asked if the LIC looked at the connection over to the Seward School.

The LIC did look at ways to make Roanoke more pedestrian friendly.

Mark Weed commented that WSDOT recommend for a Sound Transit connection at Montlake Boulevard and asked if it was possible when building to accommodate for a future Sound Transit station.

The project will have to bring back Eric Chipps and other staff from Sound Transit to discuss these ideas more fully.

Committee Members

Present	Last	First	Organization
X	Adam	Miles	City of Medina
X	Amick	Jean	Laurelhurst Community Club
	Andrews	Deborah	Arboretum Foundation
	Aschenbach	Hans	Roosevelt Neighbors' Association
X	Bannecker	Randy	Bannecker and Associates
X	Culp	Barbara	Bicycle Alliance of WA
	Dent	Bob	Hunts Point
X	Dubman	Jonathan	Montlake Community Council
	Eades	Bertha	Redmond
	Gunby	Virginia	1000 Friends of Washington
	Hart	Fred	Greater University of Chamber of Commerce
	Hoard	Aaron	UW Regional Affairs
	Holman	Linda	Univar USA
	Hurley	Peter	Transportation Choices Coalition
	Joneson	Kingsley	Portage Bay/Roanoke Park Community Council
	MacIsaac	Jim	Eastside Transportation Association
	McKinley	Kirk	Pedestrian Advocate
	Newstrum	Elizabeth	Yarrow Point
	Ray	Janet	AAA of Washington
	Reckers	Jim	Eastside Community Council
X	Resha	John	Greater Redmond Transportation

Present	Last	First	Organization
			Management Association
	Shoemaker	Delee	Microsoft
	Tate	Bob	Clyde Hill
	Tochterman	Thomas	Tochterman Management Group
	Wasserman	Eugene	Neighborhood Business Council
X	Weed	Mark	Fisher Properties
	White	Rich	Boeing
X	White	Roland	Kirkland Transportation Commission

Public Participants

- David Allen, City of Seattle
- Larry Sinnot, Ravenna-Bryant Community Association
- El Jahncke, City of Mercer Island
- David Godfrey
- Janet Roach
- Gregory Hile
- Jessyn Schor

Project Team Members

- Maureen Sullivan, WSDOT-UCO
- Julie Meredith, WSDOT-UCO
- Greg Wornell, WSDOT-UCO
- Kinyan Lui, WSDOT-UCO
- Brad Phillips, Parametrix
- Michael Hornvendt, Parametrix
- Lorie Parker, CH2M Hill
- Brent Baker, Parsons Brinckerhoff
- Susie Serres, EnviroIssues
- Chelsea Galano, EnviroIssues
- Bryan Jarr, EnviroIssues