



November 13, 2009

Senator Rodney Tom
Co-chair, SR 520 Legislative Workgroup
220 John A. Cherberg Building
PO Box 40448
Olympia, WA 98504-0448

Representative Scott White
Co-chair, SR 520 Legislative Workgroup
321 John L. O'Brien Building
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Senator Tom and Representative White:

This is in regard to your concern about how the SR 520 Westside Options serve transit and light rail riders at the Montlake Multimodal Center.

Sound Transit, King County Metro, WSDOT and the University of Washington worked diligently to develop a high capacity transit plan and a Montlake Multimodal Center Plan that were responsive to each of the three alternatives being developed for the Westside Montlake interchange. Our analysis determined that none of the alternatives denied transit accessibility or the ability to make a direct connection to the Montlake Multimodal Center in the Montlake "triangle" area and the new Sound Transit light rail station. We also recognize that there are different transit markets in question: those traveling across SR 520; those utilizing SR 520 to access the University of Washington or other destinations in the vicinity; and those transit users crossing the corridor on Montlake Boulevard, whether or not they are making a transfer to a SR 520 route. All the Westside options provide access to local and regional bus service and light rail at the same location, at the Montlake Multimodal Center.

Each is a distinct market and each is affected differently under the various interchange alternatives. Additionally, transit operations are only one of many considerations in making a decision on a preferred alternative. To date we have seen developing analysis from WSDOT as the alternatives have evolved and we look forward to reviewing the final analysis once the alternatives have been fully defined and studied. While we remain committed to working with our partners and the community on transit issues, needs and concerns, Sound Transit will defer commenting on interchange preferences until the full analysis has been conducted and the draft supplemental environmental impact statement is released for comment. Once a preferred interchange design is adopted we will work with WSDOT and our

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partners to make sure it is optimized for transit operations to the fullest extent possible.

I look forward to obtaining more information about Option M and how it works for transit. It appears to combine transit, HOV and general purpose traffic into single lane on-and off-ramps to the tunnel under the Montlake Cut. If this is the case I would expect the WSDOT analysis to show the resulting detrimental impact to transit as operations are slowed, resulting in decreased speed and reliability.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the SR 520 project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gregory A. Walker".

Gregory A. Walker, AICP
Planning and Development Director
Sound Transit