18 July 2006

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Draft EIS

Appendix O

Recreation

Discipline Report

Washington State Department of Transportation

SoundTransit

U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Draft EIS

Recreation
Discipline Report

Prepared for

Washington State Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Sound Transit

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April 5, 2005

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

dBA	decibel (A-weighted scale)
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
HOV	high-occupancy vehicle
IAC	Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation
MOHAI	Museum of History and Industry
mph	miles per hour
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

Introduction

Why are recreational facilities considered in an EIS?

The project area is situated close to many recreational facilities in Seattle and Eastside communities. The facilities vary in size, type, and function. Recreational facilities are discussed in this EIS because of their importance to the quality of life of these communities. Perhaps Seattle's Parks and Recreation Plan (City of Seattle 2000) best describes this importance when it states that,

> "A recreational facility system is diverse and woven into the fabric of Seattle's neighborhoods. It is an integral part of everyday life within our city. The system contributes significantly to the city's identity, stability, urban design and network of public services. It promotes the physical, mental, social, and spiritual well being of our citizens. The condition of the park and recreation system reflects the city's health and is essential to our quality of life."

Recreational facilities in the project area are generally owned or maintained by the parks and recreation departments of Seattle, Medina, Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, Yarrow Point, Kirkland, and Bellevue. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Seattle Department of Transportation, and the University of Washington also own and maintain property used for recreational purposes in the project area.

Federal and local regulations specifically protect parklands. Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (23 USC 138) prohibits the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) from approving a project or program that uses land from a significant public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or historic site, except if:

- There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the land.
- The project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property.

Section 4(f) mandates that special efforts must be made to "preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites." In addition, because federal funds granted through Section 6(f) of the U.S. Land and Water Conservation Act (administered through the State Interagency

Committee [IAC] for Outdoor Recreation) have been used to acquire or develop recreational facilities in the project area, all practical alternatives to the project element that would affect that facility must be evaluated. See Appendix P, *Section 4(f) Resources Evaluation*, for an evaluation of alternatives and special efforts to preserve parklands.

Seattle parklands are further protected under Seattle Ordinance 118477 (which adopted Initiative 42), enacted in February 1997. This ordinance specifies that all lands and facilities held now or in the future by the city of Seattle for parks and recreational purposes, whether designated as park, boulevard, or open space, must be preserved for such use. This land or facility may not be sold, transferred, or changed from park use to another use unless the city receives in exchange land or a facility of equivalent or better size, value, location, and usefulness. The exchanged land or facility must also continue to serve the same community and to function as a park and/or recreational facility. The Seattle City Council must determine whether an exchange is necessary and that no other reasonable alternative is available.

Washington Park Arboretum Trail System
The trail system is part of the Olmsted Plan for Seattle's Parks, Boulevards, and Playgrounds.

Some of the parks located in Seattle are part of the Olmsted Plan for Seattle's Parks, Boulevards, and Playgrounds. Designation as part of the Olmsted Plan heightens the historic and cultural importance of the resource to the surrounding community and to the city as a whole. Even though no regulatory importance is attached to this designation, Seattle's Parks and Recreation Plan (City of Seattle 2000) demonstrates the city's intention to preserve and enhance Olmsted park and boulevard resources as key elements of the citywide parks system.

What are the key points of this report?

A total of 17 recreational facilities are located along the project corridor in Seattle and the Eastside. In Seattle, portions of Bagley Viewpoint, Montlake Playfield (submerged land), McCurdy Park, East Montlake Park, and the Washington Park Arboretum (Arboretum) would be acquired under both the 4-Lane and 6-Lane Alternatives. Under the 4-Lane Alternative, 6.51 acres of parkland and under the 6-Lane Alternative, 6.64 acres of parkland would be initially acquired. The Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) building also would be

acquired and demolished under either build alternative. After construction, 4.55 acres (4-Lane Alternative) and 2.97 acres (6-Lane Alternative) of McCurdy Park, East Montlake Park, and Washington Park Arboretum could be returned to recreational use.

Total Acreage Acquired/Returned in the Project Area

	4-Lane Alternative Initial Acquisition	4-Lane Alternative Returned	6-Lane Alternative Initial Acquisition	6-Lane Alternative Returned
Seattle	6.51 acres	4.55 acres	6.64 acres	2.97 acres
Eastside	—	—	—	—
Total	6.51 acres*	4.55 acres	6.64 acres*	2.97 acres

*Does not include Montlake Playfield submerged land.

In the Eastside project area, Fairweather Park and Wetherill Park would be directly affected only under the 6-Lane Alternative. Temporary construction easements on 0.30 acre of parkland would be acquired to reconstruct sections of the Points Loop Trail in the two parks.

WSDOT would coordinate with each jurisdiction in which parklands are affected to identify appropriate mitigation measures that are consistent with all local, state, and federal plans and policies.

What are the project alternatives?

The SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project area comprises neighborhoods in Seattle from I-5 to the Lake Washington shore, Lake Washington, and Eastside communities and neighborhoods from the Lake Washington shore to 124th Avenue Northeast just east of I-405. Exhibit 1 shows the general location of the project. Neighborhoods and communities in the project area are:

- Seattle neighborhoods—Portage Bay/Roanoke, North Capitol Hill, Montlake, University District, Laurelhurst, and Madison Park
- Eastside communities and neighborhoods—Medina, Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, Yarrow Point, Kirkland (the Lakeview neighborhood), and Bellevue (the North Bellevue, Bridle Trails, and Bel-Red/Northup neighborhoods)

The SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Draft EIS evaluates the following three alternatives and one option:

- No Build Alternative
- 4-Lane Alternative
  - Option with pontoons without capacity to carry future high capacity transit
- 6-Lane Alternative

Each of these alternatives is described below. For more information, see the *Description of Alternatives and Construction Techniques Report* contained in Appendix A of this EIS.

Exhibit 1. Project Vicinity Map

What is the No Build Alternative?

All EISs provide an alternative to assess what would happen to the environment in the future if nothing were done to solve the project's identified problem. This alternative, called the No Build Alternative, means that the existing highway would remain the same as it is today (Exhibit 2). The No Build Alternative provides the basis for measuring and comparing the effects of all of the project's build alternatives.

This project is unique because the existing SR 520 bridges may not remain intact through 2030, the project's design year. The fixed spans of the Portage Bay and Evergreen Point bridges are aging and are vulnerable to earthquakes; the floating portion of the Evergreen Point Bridge is vulnerable to wind and waves.

In 1999, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) estimated the remaining service life of the Evergreen Point Bridge to be 20 to 25 years based on the existing structural integrity and the likelihood of severe windstorms. The floating portion of the Evergreen Point Bridge was originally designed for a sustained wind speed of 57.5 miles per hour (mph), and was rehabilitated in 1999 to withstand sustained winds of up to 77 mph. The current WSDOT design standard for bridges is to withstand a sustained wind speed of 92 mph. In order to bring the Evergreen Point Bridge up to current design standards to withstand at least 92 mph winds, the floating portion must be completely replaced.

The fixed structures of the Portage Bay and Evergreen Point bridges do not meet current seismic design standards because the bridge is supported on hollow-core piles. These hollow-core piles were not designed to withstand a large earthquake. They are difficult and cost prohibitive to retrofit to current seismic standards.

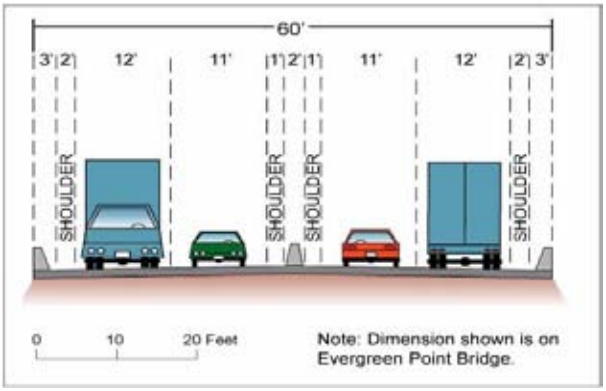

Exhibit 2. No Build Alternative

If nothing is done to replace the Portage Bay and Evergreen Point bridges, there is a high probability that both structures could fail and become unusable to the public before 2030. WSDOT cannot predict when or how these structures would fail, so it is difficult to determine the actual consequences of doing nothing. To illustrate what could happen, two scenarios representing the extremes of what is possible are evaluated as part of the No Build Alternative. These are the Continued Operation and Catastrophic Failure scenarios.

Under the Continued Operation Scenario, SR 520 would continue to operate as it does today as a 4-lane highway with nonstandard shoulders and without a bicycle/pedestrian path. No new facilities would be added and no existing facilities (including the unused R.H. Thompson Expressway Ramps near the Arboretum) would be removed. WSDOT would continue to maintain SR 520 as it does today. This scenario assumes the Portage Bay and Evergreen Point bridges would remain standing and functional through 2030. No catastrophic events (such as earthquakes or high winds) would be severe enough to cause major damage to the SR 520 bridges. This scenario is the baseline the EIS team used to compare the other alternatives.

In the Catastrophic Failure Scenario, both the Portage Bay and Evergreen Point bridges would be lost due to some type of catastrophic event. Although in a catastrophic event, one bridge might fail while the other stands, this Draft EIS assumes the worst-case scenario—that both bridges would fail. This scenario assumes that both bridges would be seriously damaged and would be unavailable for use by the public for an unspecified length of time.

What is the 4-Lane Alternative?

The 4-Lane Alternative would have four lanes (two general purpose lanes in each direction), the same number of lanes as today (Exhibit 3). SR 520 would be rebuilt from I-5 to Bellevue Way. Both the Portage Bay and Evergreen Point bridges would be replaced. The bridges over SR 520 would also be rebuilt. Roadway shoulders would meet current standards (4-foot inside shoulder and 10-foot outside shoulder). A 14-foot-wide bicycle/pedestrian path would be built along the north side of SR 520 through Montlake, across the Evergreen Point Bridge, and along the south side of SR 520 through Medina, Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, and Yarrow Point to 96th Avenue Northeast, connecting to Northeast Points Drive. Sound walls would be built along much of SR 520 in Seattle and the Eastside. This alternative also includes stormwater treatment and electronic toll collection.

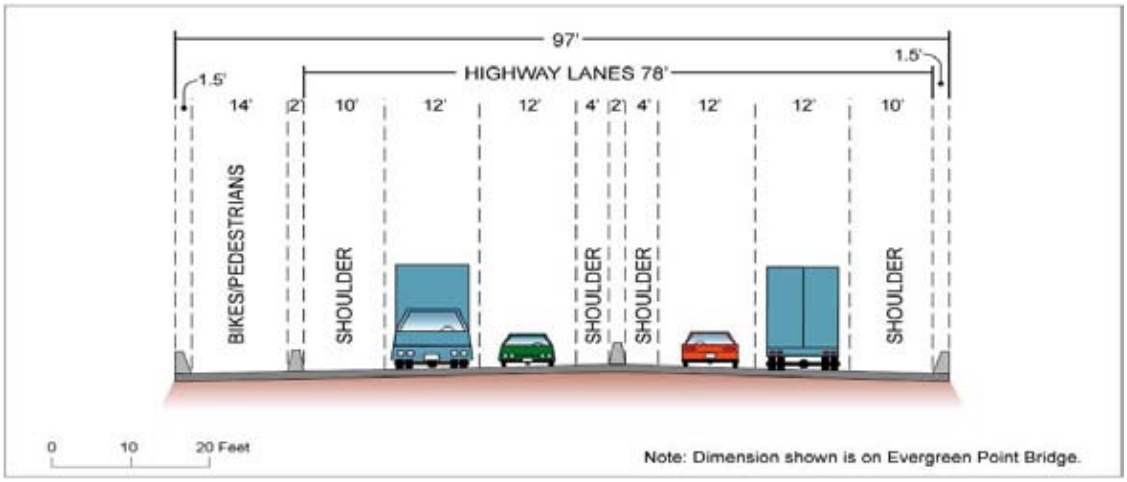

Exhibit 3. 4-Lane Alternative

The floating bridge pontoons of the Evergreen Point Bridge would be sized to carry future high-capacity transit. An option with smaller pontoons that could not carry future high-capacity transit is also analyzed. The alternative does not include high-capacity transit.

A bridge operations facility would be built underground beneath the east roadway approach to the bridge as part of the new bridge abutment. A dock to moor two boats for maintenance of the Evergreen Point Bridge would be located under the bridge on the east shore of Lake Washington.

A flexible transportation plan would promote alternative modes of travel and increase the efficiency of the system. Programs include

intelligent transportation and technology, traffic systems management, vanpools and transit, education and promotion, and land use as demand management.

What is the 6-Lane Alternative?

The 6-Lane Alternative would include six lanes (two outer general purpose lanes and one inside HOV lane in each direction; Exhibit 4). SR 520 would be rebuilt from I-5 to 108th Avenue Northeast in Bellevue, with an auxiliary lane added on SR 520 eastbound east of I-405 to 124th Avenue Northeast. Both the Portage Bay and Evergreen Point bridges would be replaced. Bridges over SR 520 would also be rebuilt. Roadway shoulders would meet current standards (10-foot-wide inside shoulder and 10-foot-wide outside shoulder). A 14-foot-wide bicycle/pedestrian path would be built along the north side of SR 520 through Montlake, across the Evergreen Point Bridge, and along the south side of SR 520 through the Eastside to 96th Avenue Northeast, connecting to Northeast Points Drive. Sound walls would be built along much of SR 520 in Seattle and the Eastside. This alternative would also include stormwater treatment and electronic toll collection.

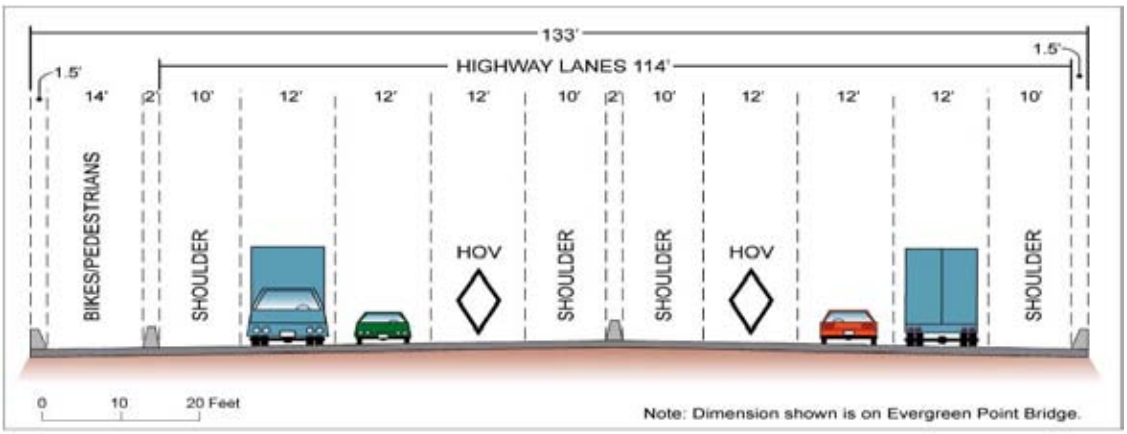

Exhibit 4. 6-Lane Alternative

This alternative would also add five 500-foot-long landscaped lids to be built across SR 520 to help reconnect communities. These communities are Roanoke, North Capitol Hill, Portage Bay, Montlake, Medina, Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, and Yarrow Point. The lids are located at 10th Avenue East and Delmar Drive East, Montlake Boulevard, Evergreen Point Road, 84th Avenue Northeast, and 92nd Avenue Northeast.

The floating bridge pontoons of the Evergreen Point Bridge would be sized to carry future high-capacity transit. The alternative does not include high-capacity transit.

A bridge operations facility would be built underground beneath the east roadway approach to the bridge as part of the new bridge abutment. A dock to moor two boats and maintain the Evergreen Point Bridge would be located under the bridge on the east shore of Lake Washington.

A flexible transportation plan would promote alternative modes of travel and increase the efficiency of the system. Programs would include intelligent transportation and technology, traffic systems management, vanpools and transit, education and promotion, and land use as demand management.

Affected Environment

How was the information for recreation facilities collected?

The recreation discipline team collected site-specific information about the type and function of each potentially affected recreational facility in the project area. We collected and reviewed current park plans and maps to identify plans for proposed property acquisitions, expansions, and improvements. The primary sources of this information were the cities of Seattle, Medina, Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, Yarrow Point, Kirkland, and Bellevue. We contacted staff from the parks and recreation departments of these cities to collect additional data.

Recreational facilities in the project area include those within 500 feet of the proposed highway footprint. The presumption is that any recreational facility within 500 feet could potentially be affected by an alternative, either through acquisition or other effects related to proximity to the project.

What are the recreational facilities and what are their characteristics?

In all, 17 recreational facilities were identified in the project area. Exhibit 5 lists these facilities grouped by geographical area, noting the size, type, function, facilities, and any unique features (i.e., historic

Exhibit 5. Recreational Facilities Located in the Project Area

Name of Resource	Size	Type and/or Function	Facilities	Unique Features	IAC Funds
Seattle					
Harvard-Miller/Roanoke Annex	0.1 acre	Street triangle	None	None	No
Roanoke Park 950 East Roanoke Street	2.2 acres	Neighborhood park	Trails, lawns, play area, picnic tables	Incorporated into the Olmsted Plan for Seattle's Parks, Boulevards, and Playgrounds; a significant and contributing resource in the Roanoke Park Historic District	No
Bagley Viewpoint 2548 Delmar Drive East	0.15 acre	Viewpoint park	Bench and parking	View of Portage Bay	No
Interlaken Park/Boulevard Interlaken Boulevard, 11th Avenue/Lake Washington Boulevard	51.7 acres	Regional park	Trails	Woods	No
Montlake Playfield 1618 East Calhoun Street	27.0 acres[a]	Neighborhood park	Play areas, trails, picnic tables, tennis courts, community center		No
Montlake Playfield Submerged Land	6.8 acres	NA	NA	Submerged land in Portage Bay that was part of the original playfield	NA
Bill Dawson Trail (Montlake Bike Path) From Montlake Playfield, under SR 520 to south side of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) facility		Connecting bike path	None	None	No
McCurdy Park 2161 East Hamlin Street	1.5 acres	Neighborhood park	Trails, waterfront, picnic tables	Includes southern half of the MOHAI building	No
East Montlake Park 2802 East Park Drive East	7.1 acres	Neighborhood waterfront park	Trails	Includes northern half of the MOHAI building	No
Washington Park Arboretum Between the Washington Park Playfield and East Madison Street on the south, and Union Bay and SR 520 on the north	193.3 acres	Arboretum	Trails, Japanese Garden, Graham Visitors Center, outdoor shelters, lookout gazebo, plant collection	Part of the Olmsted Plan for Seattle Parks, Boulevards, and Playgrounds; contains historic Wilcox footbridge; includes the Arboretum Waterfront Trail, which connects East Montlake Park to Washington Park Arboretum	No for park; yes for Arboretum Waterfront Trail
Lake Washington Boulevard From Montlake Boulevard to Seward Park	116.0 acres	Historic boulevard	Biking, trails, picnic tables along Lake Washington	Part of the Olmsted Plan for Seattle Parks, Boulevards, and Playgrounds	No

Exhibit 5. Recreational Facilities Located in the Project Area

Name of Resource	Size	Type and/or Function	Facilities	Unique Features	IAC Funds
Montlake Boulevard From Lake Washington Boulevard across the Montlake Bridge	--	Historic boulevard, planting strip	None	Part of the Olmsted Plan for Seattle Parks, Boulevards, and Playgrounds	No
Ship Canal Waterside Trail Extends from East to West Montlake Parks along the Montlake Cut	--	National Scenic Trail	Benches	Scenic trail along the south side of the Montlake Cut	No
Eastside					
Points Loop Trail (Medina, Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, Yarrow Point); located in existing WSDOT right-of-way within the project area	5.6 miles	Trail	None	1.8 miles off-street trails, 1.4 miles street and sidewalks, 2.4 miles of trail along residential trails; passes along Fairweather Park, Wetherill Park, Clyde Hill Park, Medina Park	No
Fairweather Park Borders SR 520 between Evergreen Point Road and 80th Avenue Northeast (Medina)	11.0 acres	Nature park	Tennis courts, small open field, trail	Forested open space	No
Hunts Point Park/D.K. McDonald Park Off of 84th Avenue Northeast (Hunts Point)	1.75 to 2.0 acres	Community park	Tennis courts, children's play area, open sports area, benches	Points Loop Trail borders the southern portion of the park	No
Wetherill Park Between Cozy Cove and SR 520 (Hunts Point and Yarrow Point)	16.0 acres	Nature park	Benches	Park is shared by Hunts Point and Yarrow Point; an independent citizen board is responsible for maintenance and landscaping; the deed of gift restricts the park as a nature retreat	No
Yarrow Bay Wetland Lake Washington Boulevard and Northeast Points Drive (Kirkland)	66.0 acres	Wildlife Conservancy Area	Public pier	Designated flood hazard zone, identified as a conservancy environment; waterfront on Lake Washington	No

[a] This total does not include Montlake Playfield submerged land.

significance, special features, and environmentally critical areas). Exhibit 6 shows the locations of these facilities in the Seattle project area.

Seattle

This section describes recreational facilities in the Seattle project area that could be affected by the project alternatives.

Bagley Viewpoint

Bagley Viewpoint offers views of Portage Bay, Lake Washington, and the Cascade Mountains. The viewpoint was originally part of Interlaken Park in the early 1900s; however, with the construction of SR 520 in 1963, the viewpoint was effectively cut off from the remainder of the park. Bagley Viewpoint is identified in draft *Vegetation Management for Seattle Parks Viewpoints* (City of Seattle 2004), which proposes to restore slope stability, control erosion, and reclaim the views lost when SR 520 was built. This document also prescribes strategies to be developed to address restoration and long-term maintenance of this and other viewpoint parks in the city. As of September 2004, this document was still under review by the city of Seattle and has yet to be finalized. Bagley Viewpoint is also a SEPA viewpoint that has been specially designated by the city of Seattle as important.

Bagley Viewpoint

Montlake Playfield

Located on the shore of Portage Bay, Montlake Playfield was originally created in the 1920s to help solve the crime and juvenile delinquency problems in the neighborhood. The playfield and associated recreation/community center were dedicated in 1935. In the 1960s, substantial filling occurred as spoils from construction of SR 520 were deposited on the main park site and at the shoreline to allow for continued expansion of the facilities. However, in 1968, filling stopped when the Parks and Recreation Department decided to preserve the diverse shoreline environment.

Community Center at Montlake Playfield

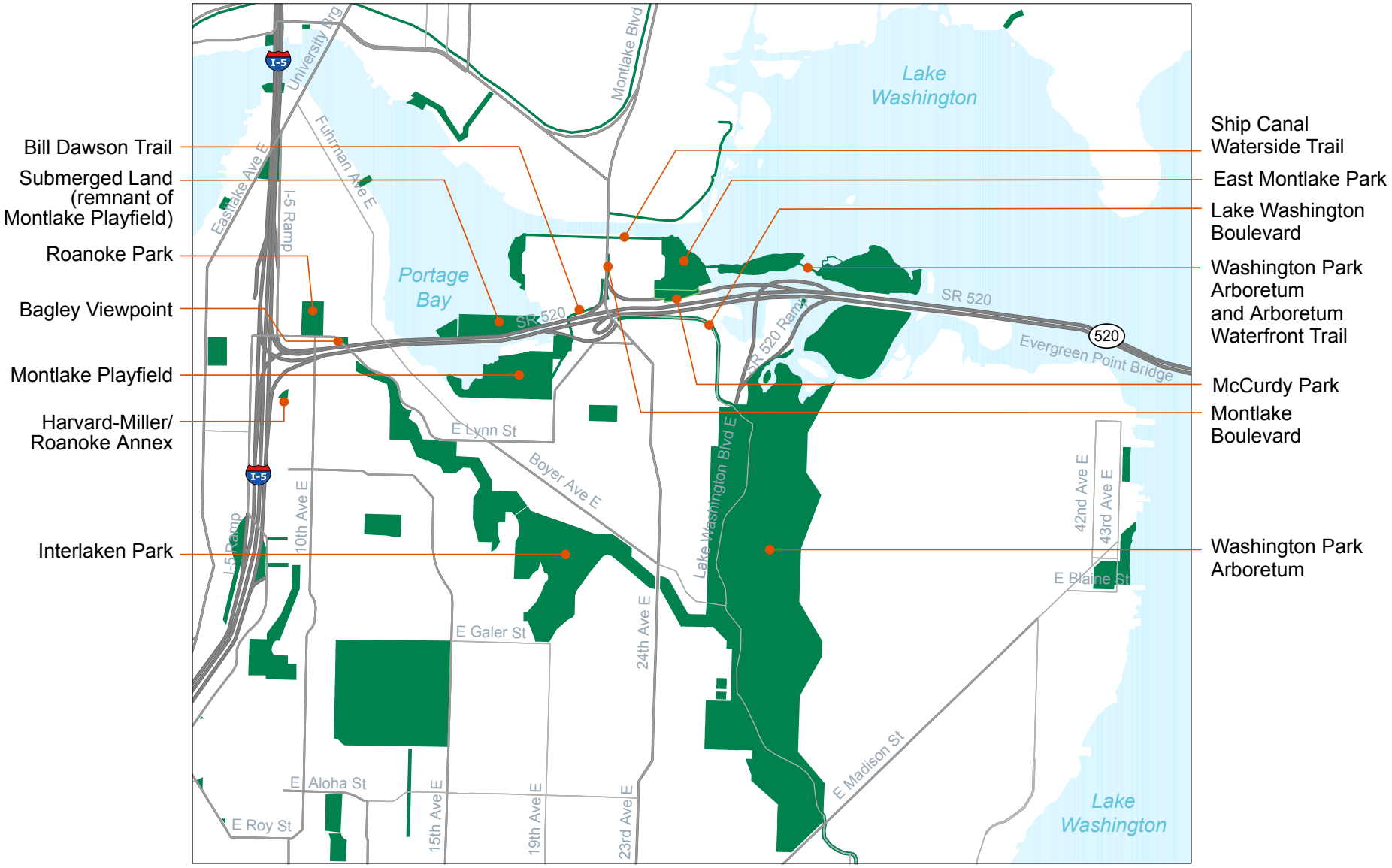

Exhibit 6. **Parks, Recreation Areas, and Open Spaces in the Seattle Project Area**

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project

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Currently, the draft *Vegetation Management for Seattle Parks Viewpoints* (City of Seattle 2004) identifies Montlake Playfield as "high priority" for restoring intended views because invasive species and overgrown vegetation obscure the views to a high degree.

A portion of Montlake Playfield (6.8 acres) north of SR 520 exists as submerged land that was part of the original northern extension of the playfield.

Bill Dawson Trail (Montlake Bike Path)

Bill Dawson Trail (Montlake Bike Path) extends under SR 520 between the northeast corner of the Montlake Playfield and the southern edge of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Northwest Fisheries Science Center (the NOAA facility). The trail receives considerable use because it connects to the larger citywide trail system.

Bill Dawson Trail (Montlake Bike Path)

East Montlake Park and McCurdy Park

East Montlake Park and McCurdy Park are located on the shore of Union Bay adjacent to a portion of the Montlake neighborhood.

East Montlake Park
Trail at north end of park with view of Union Bay.

East Montlake Park was created from land deeded to the city for park purposes in the 1909 plat of the Montlake neighborhood. The 7.1-acre park is jointly owned by the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department (western one-third of the park) and the Arboretum Foundation (eastern two-thirds of the park). While the split in ownership of the land is still in effect, the entire area is signed and recognized by the city and the public as East Montlake Park. Today, East Montlake Park provides trail connections to the Arboretum and the Montlake neighborhood, and contains trailheads for both the Arboretum Waterfront Trail and the Ship Canal Waterside Trail.

McCurdy Park is situated between the north side of SR 520 and the southern boundary of East Montlake Park. In the 1940s, the Port of Seattle deeded a portion of the old canal right-of-way (originally reserved for the Lake Washington Ship Canal) to the city for park use.

Currently, the draft *Vegetation Management for Seattle Parks Viewpoints* (City of Seattle 2004) rates McCurdy Park as "high priority" for restoring intended views because of the high degree of obstruction that has occurred at the park from invasive species and overgrown vegetation. McCurdy Park is also a SEPA viewpoint that has been specially designated by the city of Seattle as important because of its views of Marsh and Foster Islands and limited views of Lake Washington.

McCurdy Park
Vegetation in park separates SR 520 and MOHAI.

Museum of History and Industry

MOHAI straddles the property line between East Montlake Park and McCurdy Park. This structure was built by the Seattle-King County Historical Society (originally known as the Seattle Historical Society), completed in 1952, and then deeded to the city of Seattle. The MOHAI building is a contributing element to the Montlake historic district, which is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. See Appendix D, *Cultural Resources Discipline Report*, for more information about MOHAI and the Montlake historic district.

MOHAI is operated by the Seattle-King County Historical Society (a private nonprofit organization). The museum contains historical exhibits, provides interactive learning activities, and houses more than 1.5 million historic photos. Each year, roughly 60,000 people visit the museum collections. The museum is scheduled to move to a new location in 2009. However, museum storage and some exhibit space may remain in the current building.

In May 2001, the Seattle City Council approved the Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan (City of Seattle 2001). This plan identifies the need for an additional 4,000 square feet of floor area to accommodate an expansion of Arboretum staff, which is expected to occur when the plan is implemented. The plan suggests that these facility requirements could be accommodated in the MOHAI building once the museum moves from the building.

Washington Park Arboretum

Washington Park Arboretum was created as a public facility in 1902, when the city acquired private parkland. In 1907, the University of Washington decided to expand its own Arboretum facilities and to create a boulevard entry for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition and for the university. Through the assistance of local garden clubs, the university raised enough money for a master plan by the Olmsted

Brothers. Thus began years of intermittent planning for various aspects of the park, the results of which are enjoyed today. Currently, the University of Washington manages the Arboretum and its plant collections and owns Marsh Island. The city of Seattle owns the Arboretum's land and buildings, and Seattle's Department of Parks and Recreation maintains its park functions. The Arboretum Foundation manages fund raising, membership, and volunteer services.

Washington Park Arboretum

Foster Island, part of the Washington Park Arboretum, was purchased in 1917. The island grew considerably when the opening of the Ship Canal and the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks (Ballard Locks) lowered Lake Washington's water level by 9 feet. Foster Island consists of marshy areas, reeds, and cattails; the island was bisected in 1963 as a result of construction of SR 520. In 1967, the sensitive areas of the island were recognized as valuable resources and the Arboretum Waterfront Trail was established by the University of Washington, the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, the U.S. Department of Interior, and the city of Seattle. (Land and Water Conservation Act funds were used for the original development of the trail.)

Boardwalks through Foster Island

Although the land in the vicinity of the on- and off-ramps to Lake Washington Boulevard East is perceived by the public to be part of Washington Park Arboretum, this area is owned by WSDOT. The city of Seattle and WSDOT (formerly the Washington State Highway Commission) entered into an agreement in April 1966 that divided maintenance responsibilities between the city and the state for the land encompassing the Roanoke Expressway (SR 520) and the Arboretum interchange. This agreement holds that while the state allows the city to use, and therefore maintain, portions of the property for its own park-oriented use, the property remains within WSDOT limited access and the city must adhere to a 90-day relinquishment clause.

Lake Washington

While numerous recreational activities occur on Lake Washington, there are no formally designated parks or recreational facilities in the Lake Washington project area.

Eastside

This section describes the recreational facilities in the Eastside project area that could be affected by the project alternatives. Exhibit 7 shows the locations of these facilities.

Points Loop Trail

The Points Loop Trail lies within the jurisdictions of Medina, Hunts Point, Clyde Hill, and Yarrow Point. It is situated within the WSDOT right-of-way in the project area and along the south side of Fairweather Park, Hunts Point Park, and Wetherill Park.

Points Loop Trail
Trail connects Medina and Hunts Point.

Fairweather Park

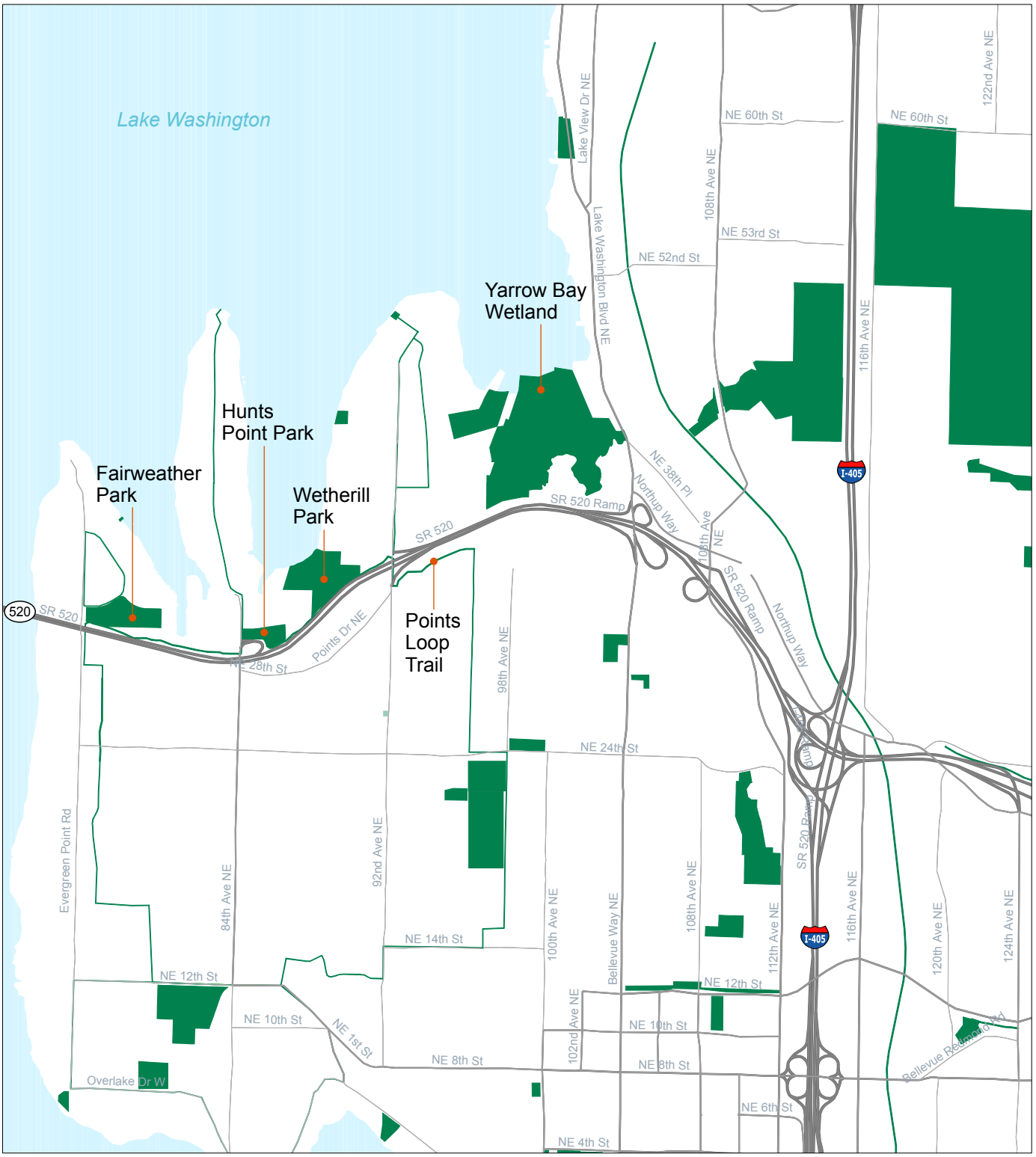
Fairweather Park consists of 11 acres of woods, streams, and wetlands in the heart of Medina. This unique component of the Medina community has an ecological diversity remarkable in a suburban setting, with over 53 species of plants, 6 species of mammals, and 20 species of birds. The terrain ranges from upland forest to wetland, and the park is bisected by a spring-fed stream. The Points Loop Trail is located immediately south of the park within WSDOT right-of-way.

Fairweather Park

Hunts Point Park

Hunts Point Park, also known as D.K. McDonald Park, encompasses roughly 2.5 acres in the south part of town. The parkland was originally acquired from the Bellevue School District and named after long-time resident D. K. McDonald, who purchased enough bonds to finance the construction of the park. The park also contains the Town Hall. The Points Loop Trail is located

Hunts Point Park



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0 2,500 5,000 Feet

Exhibit 7. **Parks, Recreation Areas, and Open Spaces in the Eastside Project Area**

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project

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immediately adjacent to the south side of the park within WSDOT right-of-way.

Wetherill Park

The 16-acre Wetherill Park was given to the towns of Hunts Point and Yarrow Point in 1988 by Didonia Wetherill Foley and Marjorie Wetherill Baird, descendants of an early Seattle pioneer family. Many trees and shrubs in the park are labeled, and extensive plant and animal lists are provided at the entrance kiosk. Although conifers grow in the higher parts of the park, only deciduous trees grow in the damp soil near the lake, which was under water until 1916. The land is privately maintained through volunteer efforts and contributions. The Points Loop Trail is located immediately adjacent to the south side of the park within WSDOT right-of-way.

Wetherill Park

Yarrow Bay Wetland

The Yarrow Bay wetland is located at the south end of Kirkland. The Kirkland Comprehensive Plan (City of Kirkland 2001) identifies this wetland as a wildlife conservancy area, which can only be explored by nonmotorized craft such as canoes and kayaks.

Yarrow Bay Wetland

Potential Effects of the Project

What methods were used to evaluate the project's potential effects?

This section assesses the potential effects of the proposed alternatives on recreational facilities. To identify the potential effects in the project area, the recreation discipline team reviewed the project's GIS database, had conversations with project design team members and relevant parks and recreation department staff, reviewed other technical discipline reports, and visited the sites.

What types of effects were evaluated?

This report describes two general types of effects on parks and recreational facilities—long-term and short-term (temporary) effects. Long-term effects include the following:

- Acquisition or physical taking of all or a portion of property to accommodate additional right-of-way for highway improvements
- Relocation of or additional coverage over trails
- Effects related to the proximity of the park or recreational facility to the project; proximity effects analyzed in this report include increased levels of traffic noise or air pollution; changed, reduced, or lost access; degradation of the visual setting; or changes in the nature of the surrounding land use that could affect the continued viability, integrity, usage, or value of the recreational facility and that could degrade the overall recreational experience.

Long-term effects are generally considered adverse effects. This report also identifies long-term effects that are considered beneficial to the use of the parks and recreational facilities.

Short-term (temporary) effects occur during construction of a project. Construction-related effects may include the use of staging areas within or near recreational facilities, noise or air pollution, traffic detours that change access, and visual clutter.

An important factor considered in an EIS is increased traffic noise that could occur when a project is constructed near a park or other recreational resource. Mitigation for traffic noise effects is considered when the predicted noise levels approach, within 1 decibel (A-weighted scale) (dBA), the FHWA noise abatement criterion of 67 dBA for parks and recreational land uses. For more information about the effects of noise levels in the project area, see Appendix M, *Noise Discipline Report*.

WSDOT does not consider increases in noise levels of less than 10 decibels to be "substantial" (WSDOT Statewide Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Policy and Procedures).

Noise increases of 3 dBA or less are generally imperceptible to the human ear (WSDOT 1994-1995).

How would the project alternatives affect parklands?

Seattle

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative's Continued Operation Scenario would not result in land acquisition or other use of parks and recreational facilities in the Seattle project area. A long-term proximity effect that could occur

would be an increase in noise because of more traffic along the corridor. Peak-hour travel times would be longer because more vehicles would be traveling on the existing roadway. This would result in longer periods of time during which traffic would be present near parklands, thus resulting in longer durations of traffic noise experienced in those parks. Because the traffic would be traveling at reduced speeds, however, traffic noise levels are not expected to be high enough to interfere with continued use of the parks, and would be similar to existing conditions.

Under the Catastrophic Failure Scenario, there would be only local Seattle traffic adjacent to the recreational facilities, resulting in less noise and air pollution in the parks compared to existing levels. Existing elevated ramps and the mainline of SR 520 could collapse into portions of adjacent parklands, rendering those areas inaccessible for recreational use until the debris was removed.

4-Lane Alternative

The 4-Lane Alternative would affect six recreational facilities near or adjacent to the proposed highway improvements. Of the six facilities, five would require land acquisition and one would experience some level of long-term proximity effects. Exhibit 8 summarizes effects from the project resulting from land acquisition and long-term proximity effects. The parks that would require land acquisition are discussed in the following sections.

Bagley Viewpoint

Under the 4-Lane Alternative, the northern edge of the widened westbound lanes of SR 520 would intrude into the southern 45 feet of the viewpoint. The total area of acquisition would be 0.06 acre, or 40 percent of the total park area (Exhibit 9). Because of its small size, the remainder of the viewpoint may become unusable depending on whether access and parking can be provided in the remaining portion of the viewpoint.

Current noise levels within Bagley Viewpoint average approximately 75 dBA. Construction of the proposed sound walls would reduce 2030 noise levels in the vicinity of the viewpoint. A residence on the north side of East Roanoke Street immediately north of the viewpoint would experience a 2 dBA decrease in noise levels compared to existing conditions, and a 3 dBA decrease compared to the No Build Alternative (noise level

As part of the noise analysis for the proposed project, future traffic noise levels were modeled using peak-hour traffic volumes for the design year 2030. For more information about noise levels in the project area, see Appendix M, *Noise Discipline Report*.

Exhibit 8. Affected Parklands in the Seattle Project Area – 4-Lane Alternative

	Long-Term Effects		
	Adverse Effects		
Name	Acquisition or Other Direct Use	Proximity Effects	Beneficial Effects
Bagley Viewpoint	0.06 acre acquisition	See discussion page 20	See discussion page 20
Montlake Playfield	None anticipated in the main body of the playfield; 1.71 acre acquisition of submerged land	None anticipated	Because of the proposed sound walls, future noise levels are expected to range from 59 to 61 dBA, compared to current levels of approximately 69 to 70 dBA, depending on the proximity to SR 520 and the time of day. The northern shift of the highway would push the highway, on average, 25 feet farther away from the existing facilities.
Bill Dawson Trail (Montlake Bike Path)	No acquisition anticipated. The existing crossing under SR 520 would be maintained. However, a longer section of the path would be under SR 520 (140 feet, compared to roughly 85 feet currently).	A longer section of the path would experience shading under SR 520	The bike path (traveling under Montlake Boulevard north of SR 520) would have a direct connection east of Montlake Boulevard without having to use surface streets, as it is currently configured. Additionally, the path would be constructed behind a sound wall along the north side of the roadway, reducing the noise experienced by path users.
McCurdy Park	1.5 acres initial acquisition	See discussion page 23	See discussion page 23
East Montlake Park	3.25 acres initial acquisition	See discussion page 23	See discussion page 25
Washington Park Arboretum	1.7 acres initial acquisition	See discussion page 26	See discussion page 29

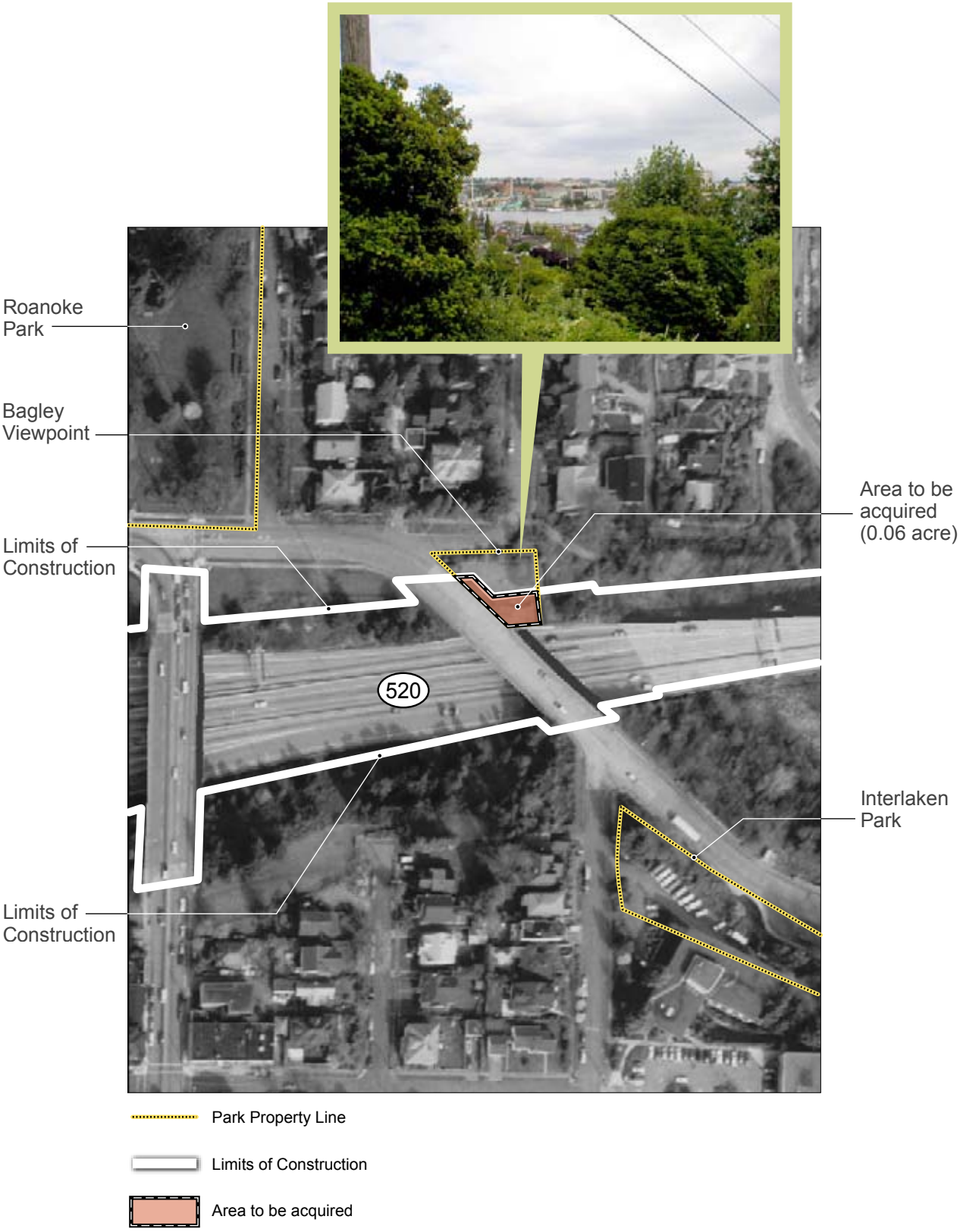

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Exhibit 9. **4-Lane Alternative, Bagley Viewpoint**

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project

changes of 3 dBA or less are generally not perceptible to the human ear). Despite a similar decrease, Bagley Viewpoint would remain a high noise location that exceeds the FHWA noise abatement criteria for parklands of 67 dBA.

The existing noise levels at Bagley Viewpoint adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the facility, which, if it were to continue to be used, would be similarly affected in the future. In addition, the 10-foot-high sound walls along the sides of the highway could obstruct views to the south from the viewpoint if still in use, and because of the wider Portage Bay Bridge, views to the east would change as well.

Montlake Playfield

Under the 4-Lane Alternative, 1.71 acres of Montlake Playfield submerged land in Portage Bay would be acquired to accommodate the northern shift of the SR 520 alignment. However, the submerged land is not currently used for recreational purposes, is not accessible to the public for recreational use, and there are no plans for recreational use in the future.

McCurdy Park and East Montlake Park

Under the 4-Lane Alternative, all of McCurdy Park (1.5 acres) would be acquired to accommodate the highway improvements (Exhibit 10). Once construction of the highway improvements is complete, however, approximately 41 percent of the initially acquired park area (0.62 acre) in the northwest corner of the park could be returned to park use. The resulting net loss would be 0.88 acre, or 59 percent of the existing park area.

Existing noise levels within McCurdy Park average approximately 75 dBA. Construction of the proposed sound walls would reduce 2030 noise levels within the portion of the park that could eventually be returned to recreational use. A residence across Park Drive East from the northwest corner of the returned park area would experience a 4 dBA decrease in noise levels compared to existing conditions, and a 5 dBA decrease compared to the No Build Alternative. The returned park area is expected to experience similar reductions.

The 4-Lane Alternative would require the acquisition of approximately 3.25 acres in the southern half of East Montlake Park to accommodate the proposed stormwater treatment wetland and new trails (Exhibit 10). Most of the stormwater treatment wetland would be within the footprint of the existing parking lot that currently serves MOHAI and the park (all 100 existing parking spaces would be lost). Of the area to

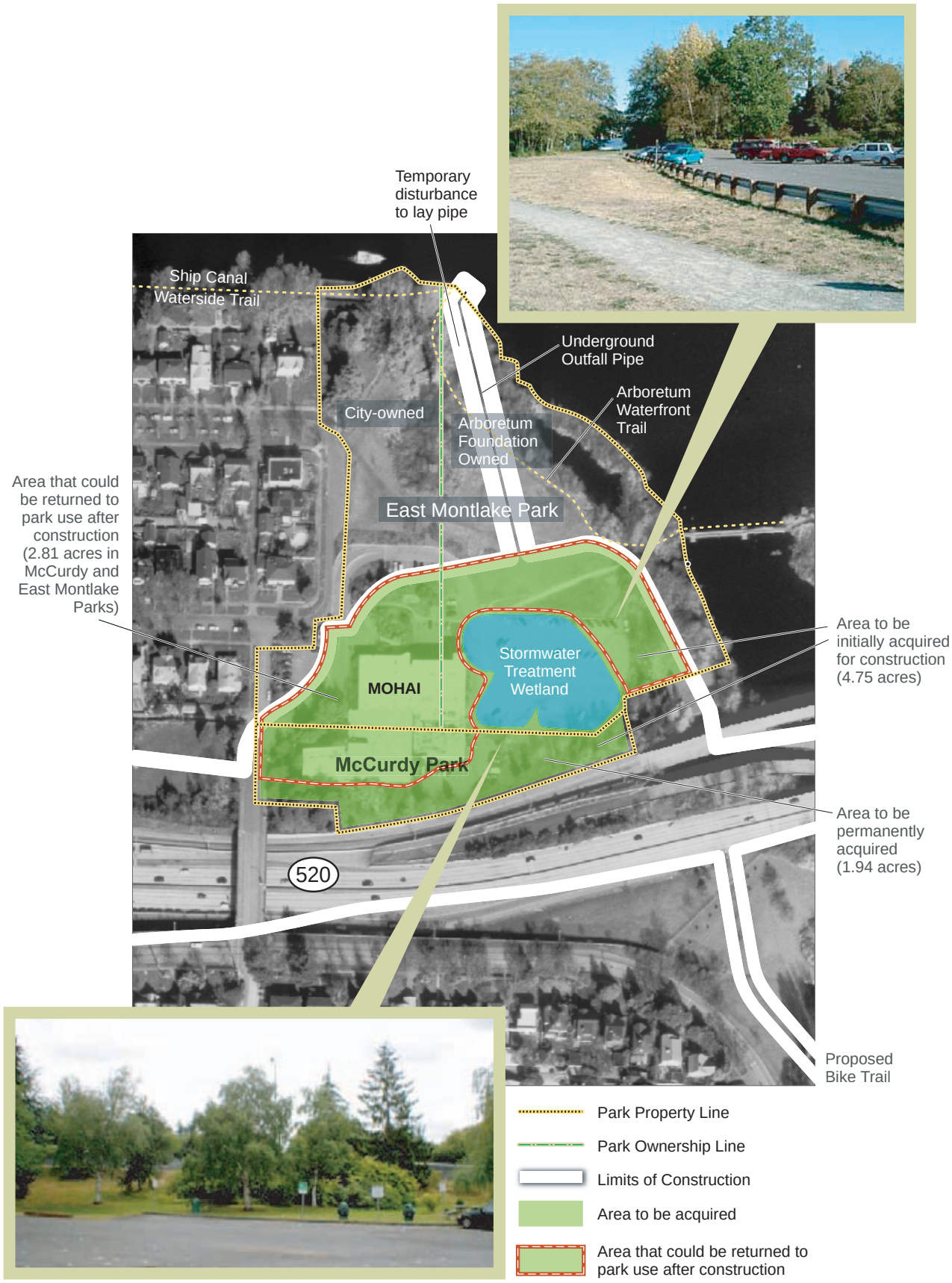

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Exhibit 10. **4-Lane Alternative, McCurdy and East Montlake Parks**

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be acquired, the Arboretum Foundation owns 2.25 acres in the eastern portion of the park; the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department owns the remaining acres to be acquired (1.0 acre).

After construction of the stormwater treatment wetland, approximately 67 percent of the initially acquired park area (2.19 acres, including 1.19 acres owned by the Arboretum Foundation and 1.0 acre owned by the city) could be returned to park use. The resulting net loss would be 1.06 acre, or 15 percent of the existing park area. To complete periodic maintenance of the stormwater treatment wetland, WSDOT would access the facility directly from the WSDOT right-of-way to the south.

Existing noise levels modeled at a single location within East Montlake Park average approximately 63 dBA. Construction of the proposed sound walls would reduce future (2030) noise levels by 3 dBA compared to existing conditions, and by 4 dBA compared to the No Build Alternative (even with the removal of the noise-blocking effect of the MOHAI building).

Currently, SR 520 cannot be seen from areas within East Montlake Park because the view to the south is blocked by the MOHAI building and trees in McCurdy Park. Removal of the building and the trees and other well-established vegetation could degrade the southward view for park users.

Beneficial effects would include the stormwater treatment wetland that is proposed to be built in East Montlake Park. Although this wetland would remain within the WSDOT right-of-way, it could become an amenity to the remaining park and provide a positive visual effect by replacing the existing parking lot with a more natural-appearing landscape that would blend in with the adjacent shoreline. Unlike a conventional stormwater retention/detention pond, the stormwater treatment wetland would not be contained within a fence or constructed of concrete materials. A conceptual drawing is shown in Appendix T, *Water Resources Discipline Report*.

Another beneficial effect of the project would be the redevelopment of the existing trail system within McCurdy Park and East Montlake Park. Currently, the Arboretum Waterfront Trail extends from the viewing platform at the eastern end of the Montlake Cut to a kiosk in East Montlake Park. The trail continues through Marsh and Foster Islands, into a tunnel under SR 520, and then into the main section of Washington Park Arboretum. The 4-Lane Alternative would construct

two new trail connections to the existing trail system. Exhibit 11 shows the existing and proposed trail system in this area. First, a new bicycle/pedestrian path would be constructed along the east side of the proposed stormwater treatment wetland; the path would proceed south under SR 520 and connect to other trails outlined in the Arboretum Master Plan. The second bicycle/pedestrian path would extend from the trail kiosk along the north edge of the stormwater treatment wetland to 24th Avenue East. Redevelopment and expansion of the trail system in this area would help complete the loop trail through the Washington Park Arboretum, and would provide additional linkage to areas north and south of SR 520.

Museum of History and Industry

The MOHAI building straddles both McCurdy Park and East Montlake Park. The 4-Lane Alternative would require its removal to accommodate the new SR 520 roadway and the stormwater treatment wetland. This would require the relocation of MOHAI, if the museum has not already relocated to another site. Additionally, MOHAI and other organizations considering use of the facility, such as the Arboretum, would lose that opportunity. WSDOT would need to identify replacement facilities.

Washington Park Arboretum

Under the 4-Lane Alternative, the westbound lanes of the proposed highway would intrude roughly 81 feet northward into Foster Island. The total area of acquisition would be 1.7 acres, or 5.5 percent of Foster Island, which is less than 1 percent of the total area of the Washington Park Arboretum (Exhibit 12). The highway mainline would be elevated approximately 43 feet above the Arboretum Waterfront Trail on Foster Island. Although the land underneath the footprint of the highway would be WSDOT right-of-way, it could be available for park use after construction, except for the area necessary for the columns to support the highway structure.

Because of the proposed northward shift of the highway, part of existing SR 520 footprint (roughly 0.64 acre) and the current right-of-way south of SR 520 (roughly 1.1 acres) could be returned to the city of Seattle for park use after construction of the project (1.74 acres total). The resulting net gain would be roughly 0.04 acre of parkland on Foster Island.

4-Lane Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Path Under Roadway

6-Lane Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Path Under Roadway

Existing Trail/Bicycle Path

Trail/Bicycle Path

Path Under Roadway

Parks

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0 250 500 Feet

Exhibit 11. **Existing and Proposed Trails in McCurdy Park, East Montlake Park, and Washington Park Arboretum**

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