

Join the Coalition for a Sustainable SR 520



STOP the imminent \$9.3 billion SR 520 expansion plan

that

- Fails to solve our traffic problems;
- Fails to solve our transit problems;
- Impedes biking and walking;
- Creates a hideous hulk across Lake Washington;
- Increases noise and health impacts;
- Further divides the Arboretum;
- Breaks up our neighborhoods;
- Destroys a key part of Seattle's nature-based lifestyle.

**Let's make a better plan for 21st century transportation!
Protect beauty, mobility & livability for Seattle's future!**

What is the threat?

Today's SR 520 situation requires immediate action on three fronts:

State legislature and governor

This December, a subgroup of the state legislature chose to recommend a terrible 520 expansion plan, labeling it (ironically) "Option A+."

We need to convince the governor and the legislature to refuse to approve or fund this terrible plan.

We also need to raise awareness that the cost is not just the planned \$4.6 billion construction cost, but also some \$4.6 billion interest cost. The total cost of \$9.3 billion would soak up all the toll and tax money available, and more, without resolving the real issues.

City of Seattle

In January, the new Seattle mayor and city council will provide a response to the state on Option A+. We need to convince the city council and mayor to say NO, to insist on a better result for the city.

We also want the new mayor and city council to develop a strong city position on what the SR 520 corridor should be for the 21st century, and how it should impact Seattle.

WSDOT (Washington State Department of Transportation)

On January 19, 2010, WSDOT expects to publish a supplemental draft environmental impact statement (SDEIS). This SDEIS will not include adequate analysis of retrofit options or of the immersed tube tunnel option. Publishing this SDEIS gives WSDOT a clear path towards implementing its favored design... the terrible Option A+.

We need to prevent the publication of this pointless and divisive SDEIS if we can. And if we can not prevent its publication, we need to develop strong analysis to expose its flaws, and strong action to prevent implementation.

We need your help to stop the current plan for SR 520!

What do we propose?

Instead of committing to a bad plan it can't now afford, the state should promptly use available funds to fix SR 520's safety problems.

This will give everyone the time to agree on a design that really addresses 21st century needs and constraints. We can be ready to build when funding is actually available.

Put the highway in context

We know that population density is increasing and better transportation is needed both across Lake Washington and in Seattle. A successfully rebuilt SR 520 corridor must move more people—particularly on transit—more efficiently than Option A+ can promise. And it must do so without the excessive congestion, the harm to our precious Arboretum, waterways and open spaces, and the damage to our communities threatened by Option A+.

We would like to see the community-based design effort, already well on its way, move forward. We would like to work with a leader who is independent of WSDOT and free of highway-centric thinking, someone committed to putting the highway in the context of its surroundings.

What do we ask of you?

Right now we need to stop the state from committing to the harmful "Option A+." Then we must convince the decision makers to address the real issues of building a transportation corridor for the 21st century. You can help us with your contribution of funds and support.

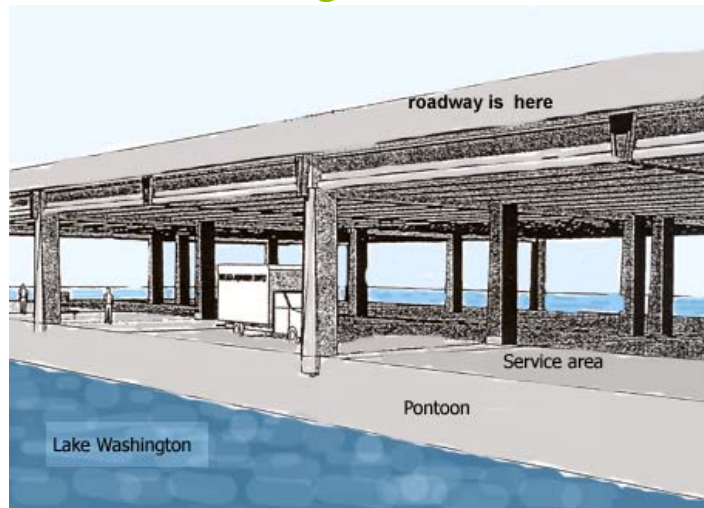
Please make your check to
Friends of the SR 520 Corridor

c/o MaryAnn Mundy
117 East Louisa St., # 205
Seattle, WA 98102-3203

Friends of the SR 520 Corridor is a nonprofit corporation which can receive and disburse funds. Donations are not tax exempt. Current officers of the corporation are Ted Lane, Fran Conley, and Mary Ann Mundy. The corporation has no offices and officers do not charge for their time.

What is the harm of WSDOT's current plan?

Pontoon Bridge across the Lake



Drawing from WSDOT bid documents; coalition added color and labels.

The roadway of the floating bridge across Lake Washington is 30 feet (3 stories) above the water. Above the pontoons is a service area, then columns holding up the main roadway. This hulking, overbuilt and overly expensive structure will permanently block views up and down the lake, from its swimming beaches, from tourist and recreational boats, from homes on both sides of the lake.

Westside: Option A+

Option A+ is just a bigger version of today's SR 520, with more lanes—even bigger than the Base-6 option our communities fought and defeated years ago.

Option A+ puts a mammoth interchange in Montlake, destroying homes, paving some front yards, isolating neighborhoods inside a 1950s-style highway.



Interchange Image from WSDOT Option A design simulation

Option A+ adds a second drawbridge over the Montlake Cut, immediately east of today's historic bridge. The current bridge is a national landmark and a treasured icon of the area.

Drawbridge opening times will essentially double with boats having to pass under two bridges before both bridges close. Buses, cars, commercial and emergency vehicles bound north or south will just have to wait.

Option A+ forces light-rail riders at the new UW light rail station to walk 1200 feet to the nearest bus stop. At Montlake, the popular 520 bus stops are eliminated.

Option A+ raises the height of the highway as it passes Madison Park, increasing noise and forming a barrier in front of Madison Park, Laurelhurst, and people enjoying the waterways.

Option A+ adds concrete and noise to the much loved world class Arboretum. On the north, a much larger highway bisects Foster Island. Inside the Arboretum, the traffic congestion only worsens on Lake Washington Blvd.



Foster Island Image from WSDOT Option A design simulation

Option A+ widens the Portage Bay viaduct to 7 lanes, plus shoulders. This reduces the area for boating and hiking and the beauty of the Portage Bay, and adds noise and visual blight to the area.

Only one of the three additional lanes on the Portage Bay viaduct actually connects to I-5. It goes west in the morning and east in the afternoon because it connects to the express lanes. This benefits only commuters from the east side, even though today's traffic is equal in both directions.

Option A+ makes no provision for noise abatement, although good technologies are available.

Who are we?

Coalition for a Sustainable SR 520



We represent all the communities contiguous to SR-520. We have worked for years seeking a way to rebuild the corridor without doing excessive damage to local mobility, open spaces and neighborhoods.

We developed the design now called Option M that puts a tunnel, not a second drawbridge, across the Montlake Cut. We believe many of Option M's features provide good solutions to real problems. But we need political leaders who are willing to talk and listen, and to re-frame the question to include regional mobility, local mobility, the health of nearby residents, and the preservation of this iconic natural beauty.

We are the appointed representatives of the boards and community councils of our communities. We report to them and take counsel from them. As a coalition of all the most-affected communities, we have considerable political power.

Our Leaders

Contact: Fran Conley, co-coordinator of the coalition 206-328-4444, fran@roanokecap.com

Ted Lane, President Roanoke Park Community Council; Jonathan Dubman, Rob Wilkinson and Robert Rosencrantz, Montlake Community Council; Maurice Cooper, Madison Park Community Council; Colleen McAleer, Laurelhurst Community Club; Nancy Brainard, North Capitol Hill Neighborhood Association; Gary Stone, representing the boating community including Seattle Yacht Club, Queen City Yacht Club, Recreational Boaters Association, maritime businesses. Fundraising chair Mabry DeBuys

Why do we need money now?

In the next few months, there will be efforts to push through the current bad plans.

WSDOT and some legislators want to release the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) in January and then, following a short 30-day period for public comment, select a preferred alternative and get a record of decision. Once they have a record of decision, what they build will be already decided, regardless of how long it takes to accumulate funding to build it.

To prevent a premature record of decision based on bad data, we need to

- Stop the release of the SDEIS if we can.
- Extend the public comment period.
- Challenge much of the design/decision process to date;
- Refute several of the scientific and other conclusions in the SDEIS

We have already hired an attorney (David Bricklin) to assist us with this effort. And although we have capable volunteer help with the technology responses, we will need to pay some consulting fees to experts to pinpoint and refute false conclusions. We will also need money to develop materials to communicate effectively and directly with the city officials and with citizens who can in turn influence them.

Our funding goal over the next few months is \$50,000 to \$70,000.

By giving now, you can help prevent the imminent threat that this iconic area, much loved and used by tourists and residents, will be overwhelmed by a highway. You can provide us the time we need to achieve a solution that addresses the real issues.

Please make your check to
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Please write your email on your check, and we will send you information on how it's going. You can also help by emailing and calling the mayor, the city council, our state representatives, and the governor.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q. People say that 12 years of discussion is enough; shouldn't we just do something?
A. Twelve years would certainly be enough if we were discussing the right questions. Unfortunately, the discussion has been led and controlled by WSDOT, whose viewpoint is very highway-centric. The questions of how to integrate a highway into an area of precious natural beauty and recreation and dense established neighborhoods, have not been addressed. Neither have questions of where in Seattle additional cars could fit.
- Q. Why was Option A+ chosen by the legislative subgroup? Was there a setup?
A. Option A+ was the cheapest plan on the table. That seemed to be the primary consideration for some legislators. And yes, we believe that data was chosen and arranged so that Option A+, which concentrates exclusively on the highway rather than its setting, would be chosen.
- Q. Is it true that the state doesn't have enough money to finish the project anyway?
A. Our analysis says that even if high tolls (\$6.50 each way in 2014) were put on both SR 520 and I-90, the state would still be more than a billion dollars short. Our experience also tells us there is little hope of building any highway for the amount budgeted.
- Q. What do you know about how the construction phase of the project will impact our communities?
A. Almost nothing. WSDOT has released almost no information about construction. We know that construction will have huge impacts on the area, and we want to negotiate a number of ways to reduce these impacts. We'd like to do this before the environmental assessment is published, rather than fight this battle afterwards.
- Q. Are you against funding the east side and starting its construction?
A. Yes, we are against funding and constructing the east side before the whole corridor is designed. It would be unfortunate to spend money on the east side and then find that the work had to be re-done soon afterwards. (Example: what if car lanes are built and then decision makers decide to use light rail instead?)

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For more information, please go to www.sustainable520.org

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