

TO: NCHNA
FROM: The Coalition for a Sustainable SR 520

April 24, 2010

Governor to choose a variation of A+ and 6 lanes with HOV

The Coalition for a Sustainable SR 520 heard today that the governor will on Thursday (4/29/10) announce her "preferred alternatives for SR 520". It will be a variation on A+. One less ramp near the Arboretum, one less lane over Portage Bay, but still HOV lanes, second Montlake bridge, one new lane at I-5, etc.

This doesn't resolve any of our basic issues.

We have been saying "**It doesn't work for transportation**". This will still be true. We will still have cars coming towards Seattle with no place to go once they get here, causing constant congestion in Montlake, the Arboretum area, North Capitol Hill, and I-5. We think that we need mass transit, on dedicated lanes, to accommodate the growth of the next 50-100 years and to minimize the impact on the area.

We have been saying "**It does too much damage.**" This will still be true. The highway will still eat up irreplaceable lands and waters that have been used for recreation for generations, and will spew emissions that will harm our health. The highway will still be too big and do too much harm to our neighborhoods and historic sites.

We have been saying "**The money isn't there; they are short by at least \$2 billion.**" This will still be true. And now the state plans to build the east side, which has no safety issues, leaving the bridge and west side short of the money that will be needed to complete the project.... and of course, postponing even the small lids that have been their only concession.

What does this decision mean for us?

It's not a big surprise, but it is a disappointment. Last week we asked the governor to read our comments on the SDEIS, and it appears that she didn't do so. It appears that she is refusing to talk, and intends to force us to go to court.

From WSDOT's point of view, the selection of the preferred alternative means they can proceed with final studies leading towards a final Environmental Impact Statement, towards the end of this year.

From our point of view, it means that we will soon decide whether to go to court to stop the whole thing. We have been trying to avoid the legal route, but the governor's stubborn refusal to address significant issues may leave us with little choice. We have several good grounds for lawsuit, as outlined in our SDEIS comments :

<http://sustainable520.org/index.php/sdeis-response/>

If we go to court, we will need more of your financial support, and we will need you to get more community members aware and contacting politicians. Of course we will be consulting with our lawyers and with the public officials who support us, but we'd like your opinion also: are you ready to step up to a court fight if it's needed? Please let your representative to the coalition know, or let me know your thoughts.

Fran
Coordinator
Coalition for a Sustainable SR 520

Coalition leaders: Ted Lane, President Roanoke Park /Portage Bay Community Council ; Jonathan Dubman, Rob Wilkinson and Robert Rosencrantz, Montlake Community Council; Maurice Cooper, Madison Park Community Council; Colleen McAleer and Jean Amick, Laurelhurst Community Club; Nancy Brainard, North Capitol Hill Neighborhood Association; Gary Stone, boating community. Fundraising chair Mabry DeBuys. Madison Park outreach Kathleen O'Connor. Treasurer Mary Ann Mundy