

SR 520 UPDATE—OCTOBER 2010

STATUS OF STATE'S PLANS

The state has chosen its “Preferred” Alternative

- Six lanes with shoulders (between Montlake & I-5 the north shoulder becomes a 7th lane)
- Exits and entrances only at Montlake (no Arboretum ramps)
- 2nd drawbridge across the cut, just to the east of today's Montlake Bridge.
- East and west center lanes will be HOV/transit lanes
- Same ramps to I-5 as today for SOVs. One-way single lane HOV ramp will connect with I-5 express lanes, running west in the mornings and east in the evenings.
- Lids at Montlake and at Roanoke/Delmar

Our Concerns

- Added width: More than twice as wide as today's 520.
- Added height: Much higher over the lake and somewhat higher over Portage Bay, affecting views and increasing noise.
- Increased local traffic, for example on 10th Ave. (more cars exiting and entering): No traffic studies have been done for the impact on local streets.
- Destruction green buffer between us and 520: some trees more than 50 years old.
- Height of HOV ramp to I-5: Visible from homes on Harvard.
- Design and maintenance of 10th/Delmar lid: basic design needs detail work to retain trees and as much of the current contour of the hill as possible.
- Construction: Construction in North Capitol Hill is expected to last at least six years, once it starts.
- Finances: Sources have been found for only \$2.37 billion of the \$4.65 billion budget.

Current Schedule

Expected Spring 2011

- Publication of the Final Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- Record of Decision (sets the plan in stone)
- Tolling begins
- Work on pontoons, floating bridge and the Eastside begins

Construction in North Capitol Hill begins—who knows when. (Floating bridge expected to be complete 2014.)

NCHNA's RECENT WORK

Coalition for a Sustainable SR 520

For the past couple of years, we have been a part of this coalition, along with the Community Councils of Madison Park, Montlake, Laurelhurst, Roanoke Park/Portage Bay and the boating community (Queen City and Seattle Yacht Clubs).

A summary of the Coalition's current position can be found in our SR 520 Update July 2010 on nchna.com

- The Coalition submitted many pages of comments on the SDEIS last spring. (These will provide basis for lawsuit, if a suit becomes advisable.)
- The Coalition will only support a plan that is financially feasible. Since funds are short, we should spend what money we do have on fixing safety problems with the bridge itself. Wait for a larger plan until we can actually fund it.
- Urges any larger plan put priority on adequate lids and noise protection.
- Agrees to a six-lane 520 across the lake, but wants to dedicate its center lanes to transit only, wants these transit only lanes to exit at Montlake. (55% of traffic to and from the eastside exits or enters at Montlake.) This plan would benefit North Capitol, because it would allow 520 to shrink to four lanes between Montlake and I-5 and eliminate the need for any HOV ramp to the I-5 express lanes.
- Coalition allies: Speaker of the House Frank Chopp, Senator Ed Murray, Representative Jamie Pedersen, Mayor Mike McGinn.

For more on the Coalition visit its Website: www.sustainable520.org (Financial contributions to the Coalition would also be welcome.)

Historical Properties

This fall we were notified that eight North Capitol Hill properties in the area of potential 520 effects have been declared historical by the Federal Highway Administration. These properties are thus eligible for 520 mitigation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

NCHNA has been invited to participate in the process of evaluating effects and recommending mitigations. Mitigations we win for these properties can benefit the whole neighborhood.

- We have submitted both our list of potential effects and our list of proposed mitigations. Both are posted under October 2010 SR 520 Updates at www.nchna.com
- Later this month we will get a draft back of mitigations proposed by all the neighborhoods and entities like the UW who are participating in this process.
- Later this fall we will meet with WSDOT to negotiate for as much as we can.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Check www.nchna.com for updates. E-mail nancy@nchna.com , if you would like to be involved in our 520 efforts. Vote for candidates that support your views about 520. Send your thoughts to your elected representatives.

