

TO: Members of the R-BCA Board
FROM: Jorgen Bader
DATE: December 31, 2008
RE: City Council hearing on SR 520

On Tuesday, January 6th, 2009, at 5:30 P.M., the Seattle City Council will hold a public hearing on the design of State Route 520 (the Evergreen-Montlake Bridge) at its chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 600 - 4th Avenue, Seattle. **We urge you to attend or send in e-mails in support of Option A. After the hearing, the City Council will adopt a resolution stating its preference, if any.** The Montlakers are rousing their supporters for Option K and we need to balance them out. This is a primer for your e-mails if you can't attend and speak in person.

All plans build a six lane bridge with bicycle lines and shoulders. The designs differ only as to the segment between Madison Point and Portage Bay. Mainline travel times on SR 520 from the Eastside to I-5 and transit travel times are equivalent.

Option A keeps the new SR 520 within its existing corridor and uses the current ramps to Montlake Boulevard East south of the Lake Washington Ship Canal and builds more capacity by constructing a parallel bridge over the Montlake Cut. Option A is at the natural crossroads, uses ground contours, and spreads on and off ramps at multiple sites and on both sides of the street so that motorists have space on Montlake Boulevard East to sort themselves on a surface street at slower speeds at grade. It is estimated to cost is \$ 4.526 billion dollars.

The other two design options are called K and L. Option K builds an interchange at McCurdy/East Montlake Cut, another interchange at the intersection of Montlake Boulevard North East and North East Pacific Street by University Hospital and connects the two with two sickle-shaped tunnels. All motorists using the tunnel go from surface grade down fifty feet and up again. The tunnel combines sharp curves, and grades steeper than state and federal standards, and for most motorists 90° turns at the portals. A traffic signal controls the approach ramps. Option K will cost \$ 6.574 Billion -- over Two Billion more (2.2 times that of Option A in the Montlake segment).

Option L builds the two interchanges like Option L but connects the two interchanges with a long drawbridge at the east end of the Montlake Cut and slices through the Husky Stadium parking lot with a four lane surface roadway that widens to a six lane delta. Option L costs \$ 5.066 Billion

In order to detour traffic around the Shelby-Hamlin area of Montlake, Options K and L funnel motorists to two new "single point intersection, one on the south taking up McCurdy/East Montlake Park Park where the Museum of History and Industry now sits and another on the north, which slices through the Husky Stadium south parking lot. Option K and L require our residents going west or coming from the west to overshoot and backtrack to Montlake Boulevard. To get to the tunnel portal, motorists from

the north take a **left** at the intersection of N.E. Pacific St. and motorists from the west going north have to take a left turn under the mainline freeway in a forest of columns like that under the West Seattle Bridge to Delridge. All north-south vehicles using Montlake Boulevard North East (whether headed for SR 520 or not) go into a 10'-15' dip to cross under a pedestrian overpass at the intersection by University Hospital and up again just north of the Montlake Bridge. The design precludes motorists from crossing the the canal by tunnel when the bridge is up. Concentrating traffic at "single point" intersections allows an accident, a stalled vehicle, ponds in the roadway or icing, etc. to cause instant delays.

Options K and L would add 4,200 to 4,700 vehicles per hour to the intersection of N.E. Pacific Street and Montlake Boulevard N.E. by Univeristy Hospital, increasing noise levels there. The Washington State Department estimates Options K and L will increase evening rush hour traffic from 4050 per hour now to 6040 in 2030 at the intersection on Montlake Boulevard N.E. and 25th Avenue N.E.-- 51.3% more; Option A will increase it to 4690 -- 16% more. The added traffic volumes will overload 25th Avenue N.E. and make congestion much worse in our neighborhood. To handle the large volumes K and L would bring, parking on 25th Ave. N.E. will probably be prohibited and 25th Avenue N.E. will resemble 23rd Avneue n.E. on Capitol Hill.

Option A does the least environmental damage and has significant mitigation measures that the other options do not have. It takes the southerly third of McCurdy Park; the other options take more than two-thirds of it. Option A returns the area of the "ramps to nowhere" for Arboretum use; the others keep it as highway. Options K and L make Lake Washington Boulevard through the Arboretum into the main south freeway access. Traffic will increase greatly and be **double** the volumes of Option A. Option K excavates for its tunnel approaches from Marsh Island westward (47,000 truck loads) and harms the fragile wetlands. Both Options K and L impact the UW Waterfront activities Center and the Canoe House; Option A does not do so.

Please attend the City Council meeting, write or e-mail City officials to support Option A:

	Phone	E-mail
Mayor Greg Nickels	684-4800	www.seattle.gov/mayor
Councilmembers:		
Richard Conlin	684-8805	richard.conlin@seattle.gov
Tim Burgess	684-8806	tim.burgess@seattle.gov
Sally Clark	684-8802	sally.clark@seattle.gov
Jan Drago	684-8801	jan.drago@seattle.gov
Jean Godden	684-8807	jean.godden@seattle.gov
Bruce Harrell	684-8804	bruce.harrell@seattle.gov
Nick Licata	684-8803	nick.licata@seattle.gov
Richard McIver	684-8800	richard.mciver@seattle.gov
Tom Rasmussen	684-8808	tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov

The City Council mailing address is P.O. Box 34025, Seattle, WA 98124-4025.