



CITY OF KIRKLAND

123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3000
www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

MEMORANDUM

To: Dave Ramsay, City Manager

From: Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director *DG*

Date: September 22, 2006

Subject: Council Actions on WADOT Draft EIS for SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project

On October 2nd, public comment period closes for the Draft EIS for the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project. City staff and councilmembers have attended and/or provided comment during the Open Houses held in late September. In addition, the City has submitted an Interest Statement regarding SR 520 for WADOT consideration.

The City has also been asked to participate in a Joint Interest Statement with Bellevue and Redmond. City of Kirkland Public Works staff met with staff from both cities in late September to develop a proposed statement. During that meeting we worked to have the Joint Statement reflect previous positions taken by the Council, as well as the Council Interest Statement as approved in November of 2005. The Joint Statement covers each of the points raised in the earlier City of Kirkland Interest Statement. Bellevue, Redmond and Kirkland staff also worked to have our position align as much as possible with the statement from the Points Communities. There is also an additional element urging the City of Seattle and the University of Washington to reach agreement on a regionally beneficial solution near the proposed interchanges on the west side of Lake Washington.

In addition to the Joint Interest Statement, staff is proposing that Council authorize the Mayor to send the attached letter from the City of Kirkland with additional comments. In our letter we reiterate the issues in our Interest Statement, and note an additional issue raised by staff during review of the DEIS. The SR 520 plan assumes the region will achieve a 30% transit mode split. Since current transit planning and operations do not support that level, we raise that as a potential issue. This can impact the operations both of SR 520 and local streets in the city of Kirkland.

The City of Kirkland has contacted WADOT to request an extension of the public comment period for a few days beyond October 2nd. Other cities have made that request as well. As of this memo, we are not certain of the status of our request. We are hopeful it will be granted. To that end, we recommend the Council approve the Joint Interest Statement and authorize the Mayor to sign the City of Kirkland response to the DEIS.

SR 520 Corridor and Bridge Replacement Improvements
CITIES OF REDMOND, KIRKLAND AND BELLEVUE
POLICY INTEREST STATEMENT

Updated: October 2006

- The Cities of Redmond, Kirkland and Bellevue support multi-modal transportation solutions for the SR 520 Bridge and Corridor that include general purpose, HOV, high-capacity transit (HCT), bus transit and non-motorized improvements;
- SR 520 Bridge and Corridor improvements and funding must be coordinated with other regional transportation efforts underway, including development of Sound Transit Phase 2 and the Regional Transportation Improvement District improvements, for a comprehensive system of multi-modal transportation improvements for the Eastside;
- The Cities of Redmond, Kirkland and Bellevue support the following options for the SR 520 Bridge and Corridor:
 - A 6-lane SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV option (two general purpose lanes and one new HOV lane in each direction)
 - A system of freeway-to-freeway HOV connections at SR 520/I-5, and SR 520/I-405
 - Direct transit access at 108th Avenue NE, provided that existing regional bus service levels are not impaired
 - A SR 520 Bridge and Corridor designed and sized to incorporate HCT, with adequate right-of-way to accommodate the required footprint of HCT and a re-constructed east high-rise that can structurally accommodate HCT
 - Bus transit flyer stops between the SR 520 Bridge and I-405 as long as HCT can be accommodated in the future
 - Bicycle/pedestrian path across the SR 520 Bridge and throughout the Corridor from I-5 to SR-202, providing a continuous, seamless bicycle/pedestrian path
- The Cities of Redmond, Kirkland and Bellevue encourage WSDOT, Sound Transit, the City of Seattle, the University of Washington and affected Seattle neighborhoods to reach agreement on design options and transit access that result in solutions that provide regional benefits and enable the design and construction of the SR 520 Bridge and Corridor improvements to proceed without delay;
- The Cities of Redmond, Kirkland and Bellevue urge the WSDOT to meet the current schedule for SR 520 Bridge and Corridor improvements, with the Final EIS issued in 2007, a Record of Decision in 2008 and bid for construction in 2009;
- The Cities of Redmond, Kirkland and Bellevue are committed to working with WSDOT to minimize neighborhood impacts of SR 520, including addressing Corridor bottlenecks and queuing of traffic onto local arterials;
- The Cities of Redmond, Kirkland and Bellevue will work with WSDOT to develop a construction mitigation plan that will minimize impacts to SR 520 users and affected neighborhoods; and
- The Cities of Redmond, Kirkland and Bellevue will actively assist in efforts to secure necessary funding for implementation of the SR 520 Bridge and Corridor improvements, and will continue to work together on planning for future HCT on the SR 520 Bridge.

October 3, 2006

DRAFT

Mr. Paul Krueger, Environmental Manager
SR 520 Project Office
414 Olive Way, Suite 400
Seattle, WA 98101

Subject: SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Krueger:

Thank you for the presentation on the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project. The City of Kirkland supports the multi-modal transportation solutions for the SR 520 Bridge and Corridor. The City believes that the following options will best meet the goals of the region.

- A 6-lane SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV option that includes two general purpose lanes and one HOV lane in each direction with a bicycle/pedestrian path across the bridge.
- The HOV lanes should connect I-5 with SR 520 and I-405.
- The SR 520 should be design to accommodate future High Capacity Transit (HCT) and a re-constructed east high-rise that can structurally accommodate light rail.
- Bus transit flyer stops between the SR 520 Bridge and I-405 as long as light rail can be accommodated in the future
- Enhancements and/or mitigation to minimize neighborhood impacts, including improvements that will address Corridor bottlenecks and alleviate queuing of traffic onto local arterials.
- Direct transit access to 108th Avenue NE to connect to the South Kirkland Park-and-Ride.
- Bicycle/pedestrian path across the SR 520 Bridge and throughout the Corridor from I-5 to SR-202, providing a continuous, seamless bicycle/pedestrian path.

These options would improve safety and reliability, increase mobility for people and goods, and avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate the project effects on neighborhoods and the environment.

Page 2 of 2
Paul Krueger
October 3, 2006

Page 2 of 2
Paul Krueger, SR 520 Project Office
October 3, 2006

The City understands that the forecast growth in traffic and change in mode split would increase transit demand by approximately 30% on SR 520. The current transit agency long term plans do not support increasing service to accommodate the estimated demand under the SR 520 Bridge Replacement project. The disconnect between the projected transit demand on SR 520 and the transit agency service plan will have a significant impacts to the efficiency of the corridor and its ability to mitigate the forecasted growth. This also has an implication of additional impacts to the local streets in Kirkland and Bellevue.

The City of Kirkland believes that the transit component is essential to the success of meeting the goals of the project. Thus, the City urges WSDOT to continue to work with transit agencies to provide a solution to accommodate the future transit demand on SR 520.

Thank you again for giving the City of Kirkland an opportunity to comment on the DEIS.

Sincerely,
Kirkland City Council

James L. Lauinger, Mayor

cc: Daryl Grigsby, Public Works
Thang T Nguyen, Public Works