

# SR 520 Program

## Montlake Project Signage Meeting

*Todd Harrison*  
*SR 520 Director of Project*  
*Development*

*Dave Becher*  
*SR 520 Director of Construction*


*Angie Thomson*  
*Facilitator*

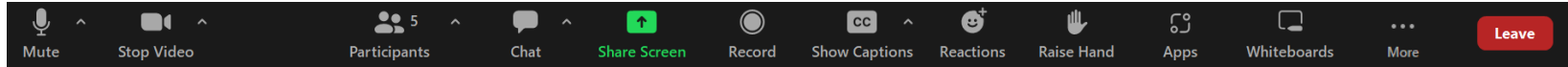
October 26, 2023

# Zoom participants

All attendees are initially muted. To adjust your audio, click **Audio Settings**.


If you prefer not to speak, please type your questions to the “Q&A moderator” in the **Chat** and we will read them out loud.

To ask a question, click **Raise Hand**   
You can unmute yourself once the host calls your name.



If your video is on, it is currently being displayed on a TV monitor in the room.

**Auto-captioning is enabled.**  
Click **More** then **Captions** to change settings.

To make a reaction click **Reactions** 

# Group guidelines

- Listen actively and contribute constructively
- Challenge ideas, not the person
- Take space and make space; allow opportunities for everyone to speak
- Respect the role of the facilitator to manage the conversation

# Community process: Montlake Signage

Date	Activity	Purpose
Oct. 26, 2023	<b>Meeting 1 (community input)</b>	Set context, understand feedback and gather community input and ideas
November – December 2023	Technical analysis (WSDOT)	Analyze feasibility of signage adjustments
January 2024	<b>Meeting 2 (community input)</b>	Share potential signage adjustments and get feedback on community preferences
February – April 2024	Implementation analysis	Analyze signage adjustments and implementation plan
May – June 2024	<b>Summary report</b>	Share summary of options, feedback considered, decision made, and implementation plan

# Agenda

- **PART 1: Signage context**
  - Safety, mobility and interchange operations
  - Design considerations & constraints
  - History of community engagement
  - Questions
- **PART 2: Signage survey results and feedback**
  - Sign bridge 1
  - Sign bridge 2
  - Sign bridge 3
- **PART 3: Community input & discussion**
- **Next steps**

# Part I: Signage context

# Montlake project area: Before



2019 photo of Montlake Boulevard looking southeast



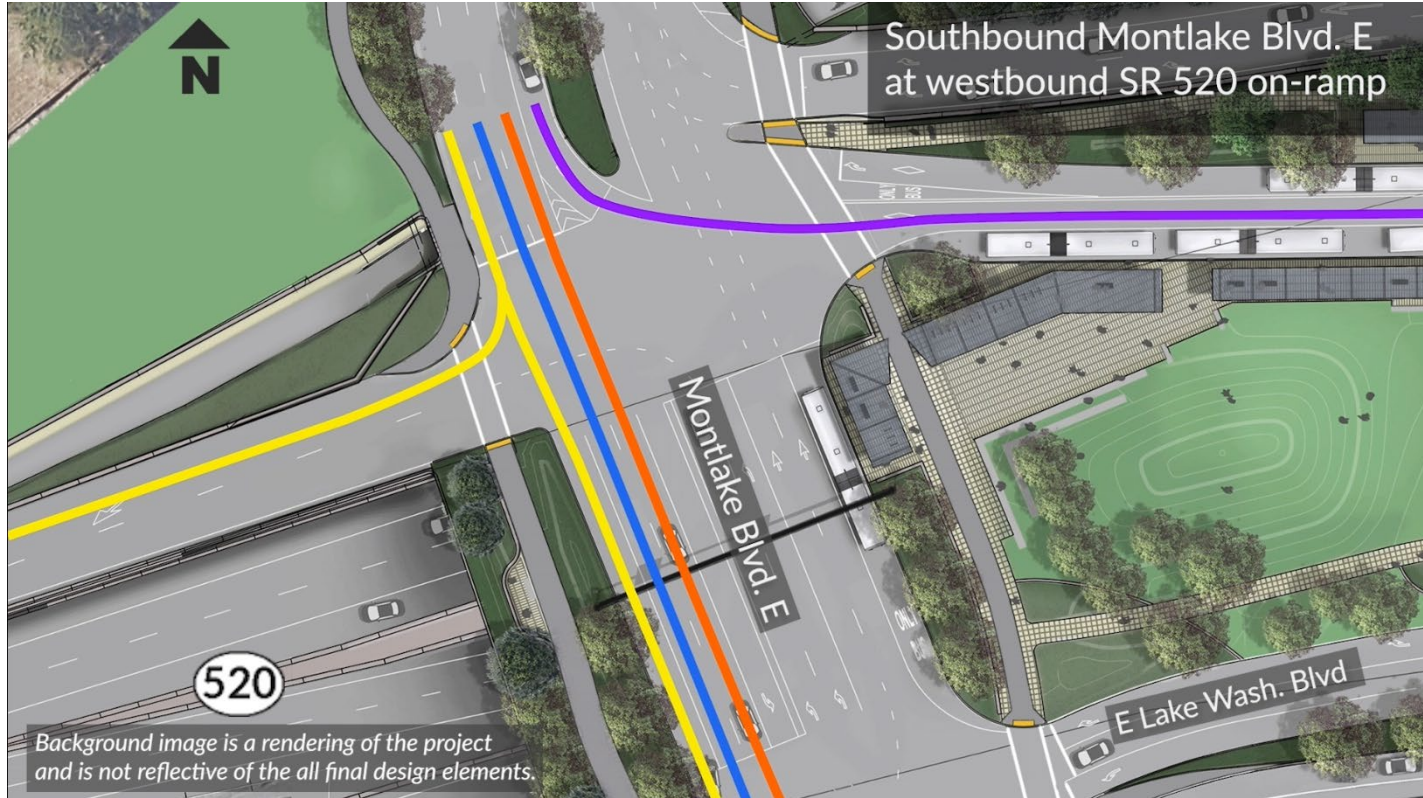
2015 photo of arboretum on- & off-ramps

# Montlake project area: Current

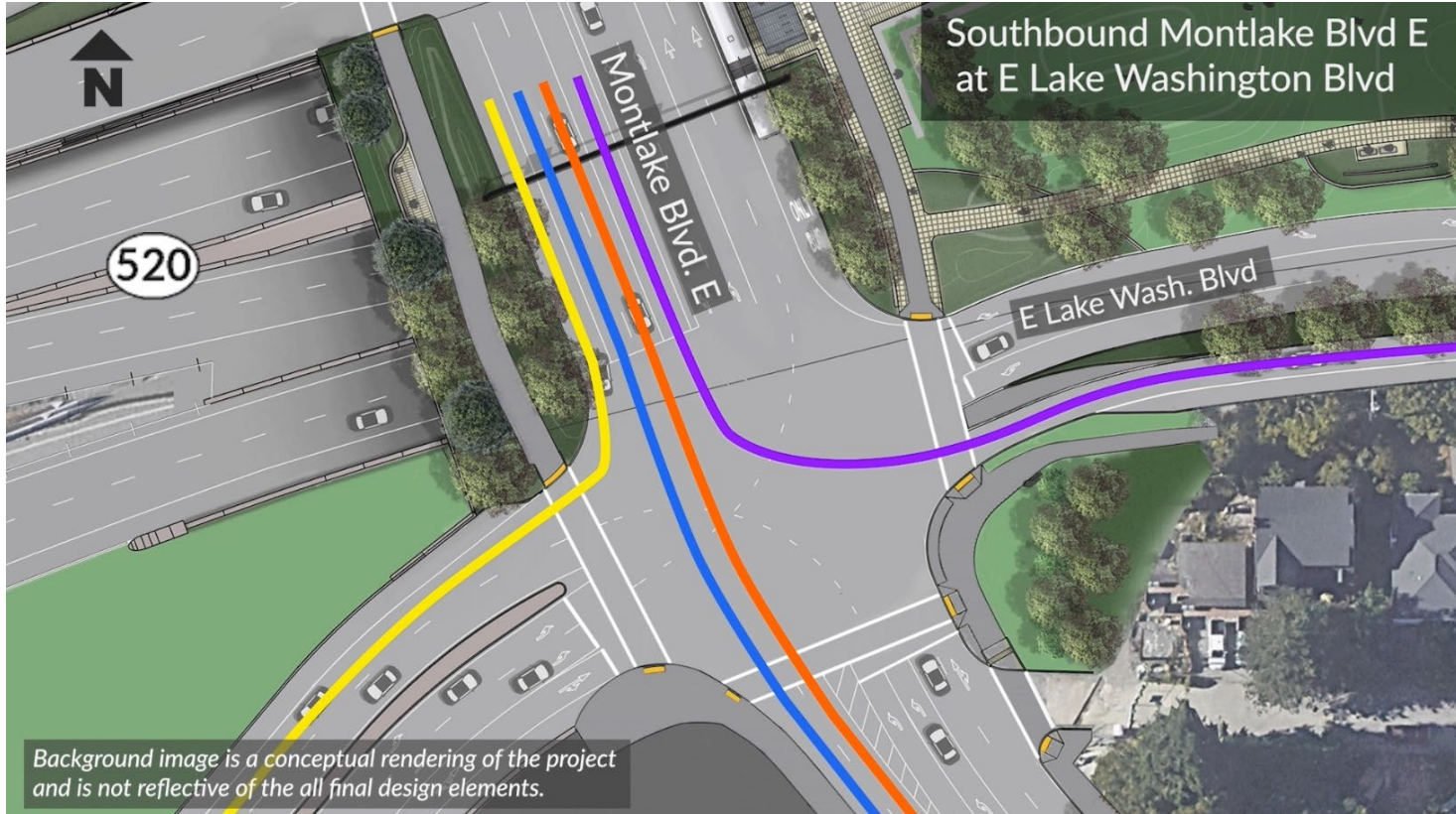




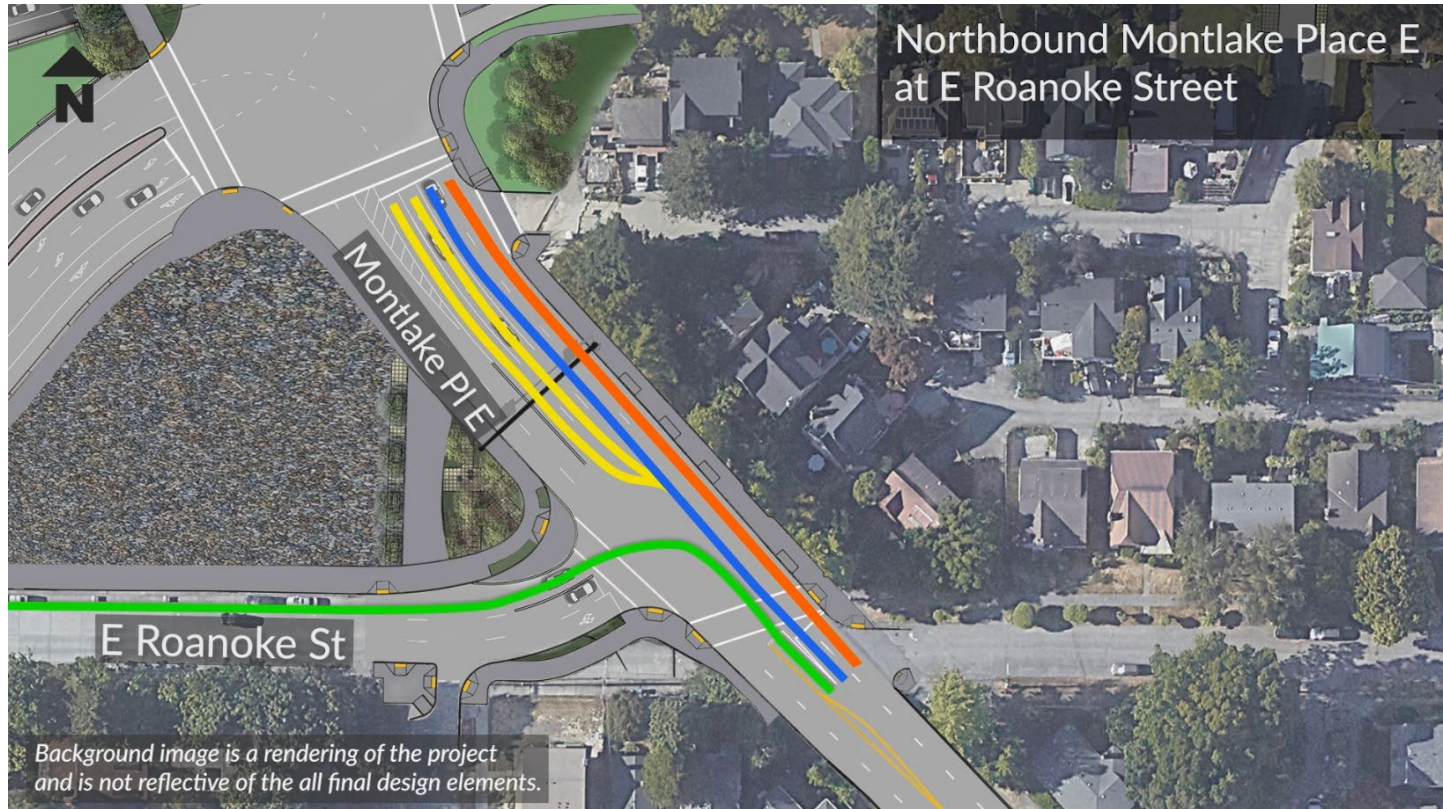
# Moving through Montlake Blvd - southbound



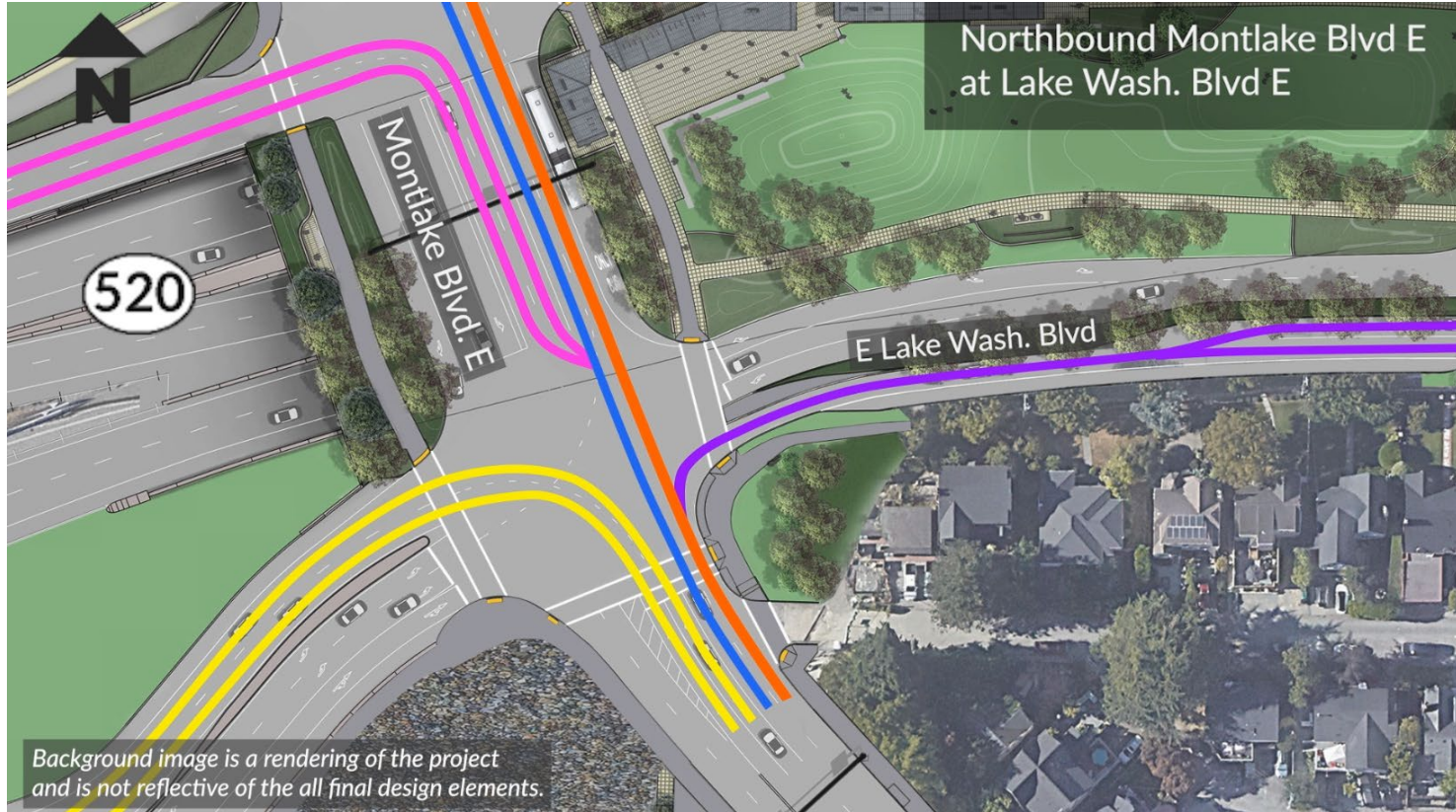
# Moving through Montlake Blvd - southbound



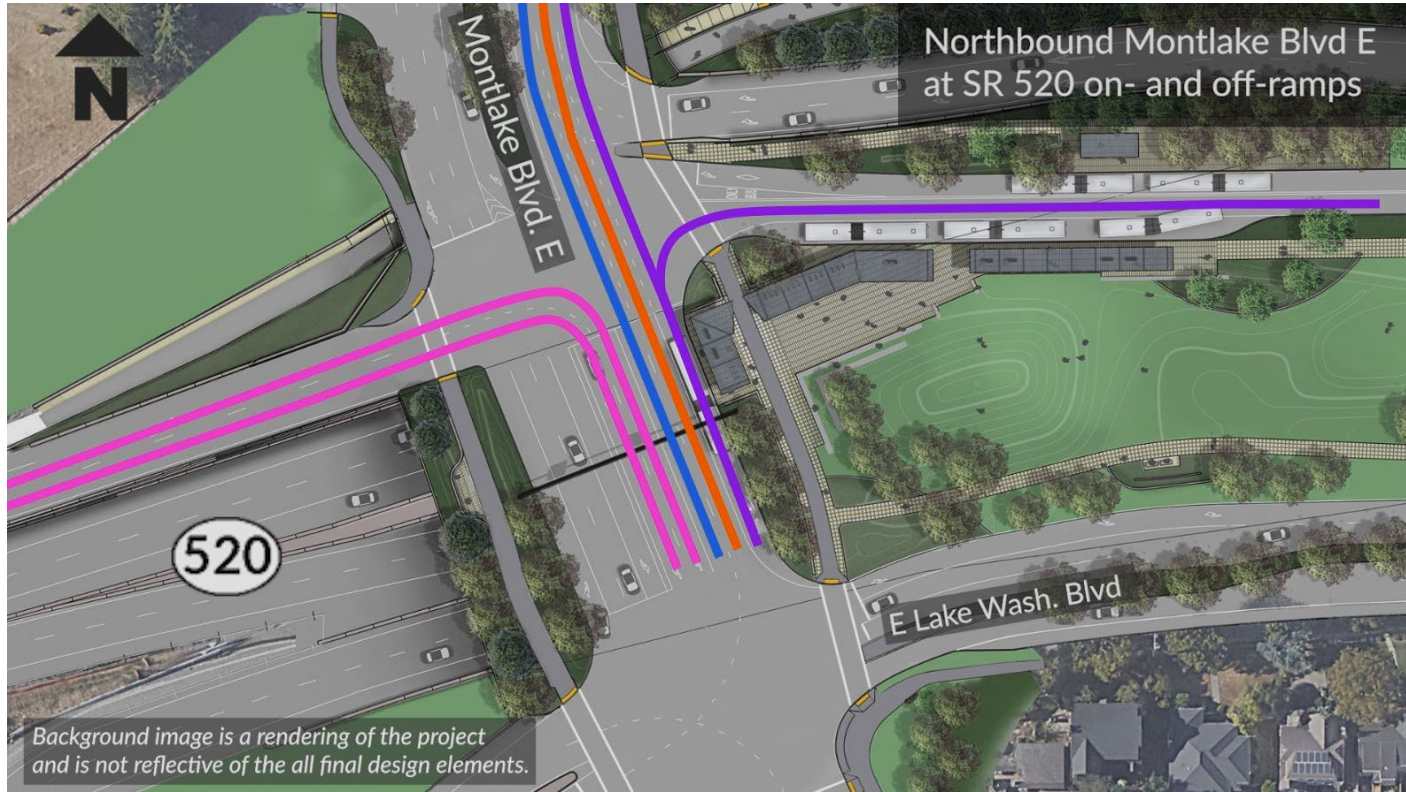
# Moving through Montlake Blvd - northbound



# Moving through Montlake Blvd - northbound



# Moving through Montlake Blvd - northbound

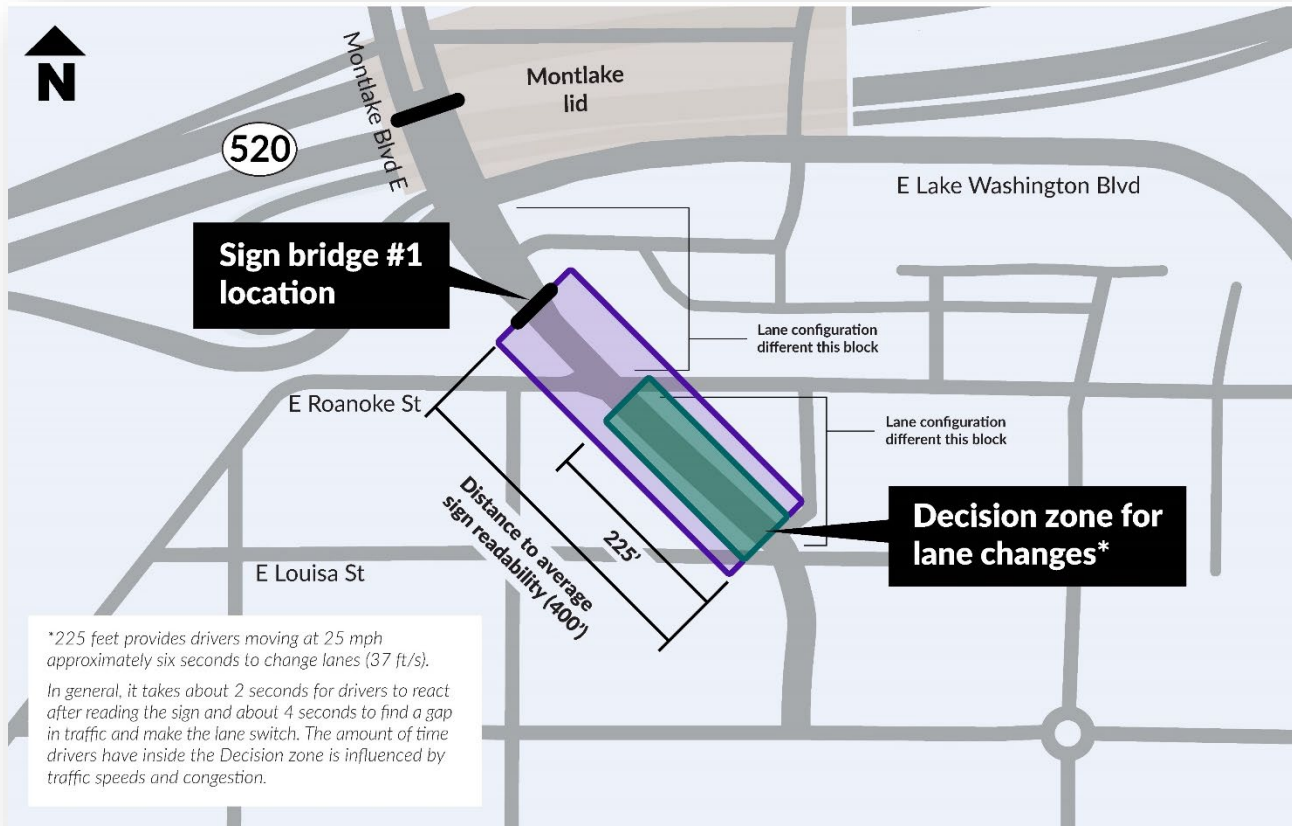


# Context: Signage design considerations

- Location
- Sign size
- Users



# Context: Sign visibility



# Context: Section 106 & community engagement

- **2010-2011:** Consultation to develop Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA).
- **Jan – Dec. 2016:** Worked with SDC and city of Seattle on Montlake lighting and signage. Discussed design graphics at March 2016 Section 106 meeting; held open house in June 2016
- **Jan 2017:** Began Montlake frontline neighbors meeting
- **March 2017:** Held follow up meeting with frontline neighbors; showed conceptual graphics of the sign bridge; received feedback from neighbors about the size and appearance of the sign bridges
- **March 2017 – Oct 2017:** Analyzed signage alternatives (cantilever, span wire, city streets)
- **Nov 2017:** Agreed with city of Seattle to include a span wire option in the Montlake contract
- **May 2019:** Montlake design-build contractor, Graham, held public open house; showed design visualization with sign bridge at the two north locations on open house boards
- **Sep 2019:** Shared updated design aerials at Section 106 meeting with monotube signs on lid and E Montlake PI E
- **Dec 2019:** Graham held open house; showed visualization with sign bridge on lid and E Montlake PI E



# Montlake visualization: 2019 – present



**Questions?**

## **Part II: Signage feedback and survey results**

# Survey participants\*

Value	Percent	Responses
SR 520/Montlake Blvd driver	49.0%	216
Montlake resident (you live elsewhere in the Montlake neighborhood)	42.2%	186
SR 520/Montlake Blvd pedestrian or bike rider	41.7%	184
Resident of adjacent neighborhood (you live in Capitol Hill, Portage Bay, Roanoke, Madrona, Laurelhurst, University District, etc.)	32.4%	143
SR 520/Montlake Blvd transit user	21.1%	93
Montlake Boulevard neighbor (you live along Montlake Blvd between E Louisa Street and E Shelby Street)	15.9%	70
<u>Community group member (please describe).</u>	3.6%	16
<u>Other (please describe)</u>	2.3%	10
<u>Public/government organization or institution (please describe).</u>	1.6%	7

\*453 people completed the survey. Participants could select all that apply.

# Community considerations

*Question 2: As we review potential signage adjustments, please drag your top three considerations from the left column to the right.*

Concerns	Rank	Weighted Score	# of rankings
Visual appearance of signs & sign structures	1	1,754	336
Driver, bicycle & pedestrian safety	2	1,748	340
Flow of traffic to and from SR 520 & along Montlake Boulevard	3	1,588	328
Project completion schedule (impact to project construction & completion)	4	659	182
Cost to taxpayers (cost to design, purchase & install alternative signage/sign structures)	5	651	173
Other	6	222	57

# Overall feedback and comments

Question 12: Is there anything else you would like to share with us regarding the signs and sign structures?

Opposed to current sign design	# of comments
Sign structure is too big and belongs on a freeway	54
Sign structure is incompatible with historic neighborhood	50
WSDOT should have engaged community earlier	24
WSDOT should take sign structures down	20
Concerns about bike and pedestrian safety	8
Concerns about speeding and interchange safety	7

In support of current sign design	# of comments
Prioritize clear and safe signage	22
Prioritize project completion; don't waste time and money	20
The signs are helpful	15
No issues with the signs	15
Balance the needs of all users and prioritize equitable distribution of state funds	8

Other (sign-bridge related)	# of comments
Misc. project-related feedback or questions	17
Confusion about Montlake Boulevard roadway configuration and operations	14
Don't like the project and/or WSDOT	11
Thank you for listening	11

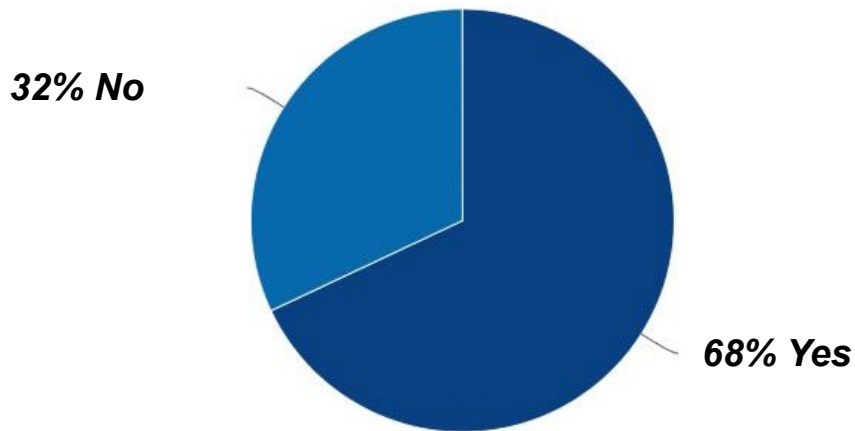
\* Total comments: 239

# Sign bridge #1



# Community response to sign bridge #1

*Do you have any concerns about sign bridge #1?*



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	68.0%	300
No	32.0%	141
		Totals: 441



# Community response to sign bridge #1

*Please rank your concerns in order of importance.  
(1 = most important; 4 = least important)*

Concerns	Rank	Weighted Score
Visual compatibility w/ historic neighborhood	1	987
Size (height & thickness of steel structure)	2	969
Location	3	587
Color	4	454

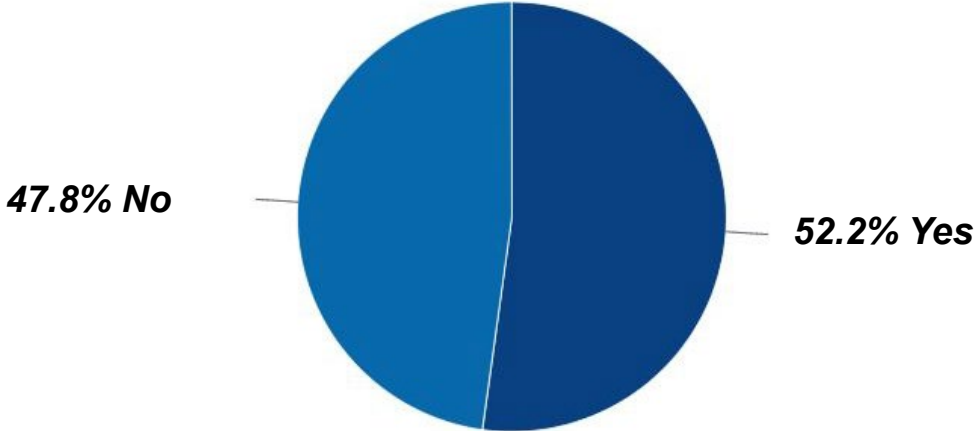
*\* 300 responses*

# Sign bridge #2



# Community response to sign bridge #2

Do you have any concerns about *sign bridge #2*?



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	52.2%	230
No	47.8%	211
Totals: 441		

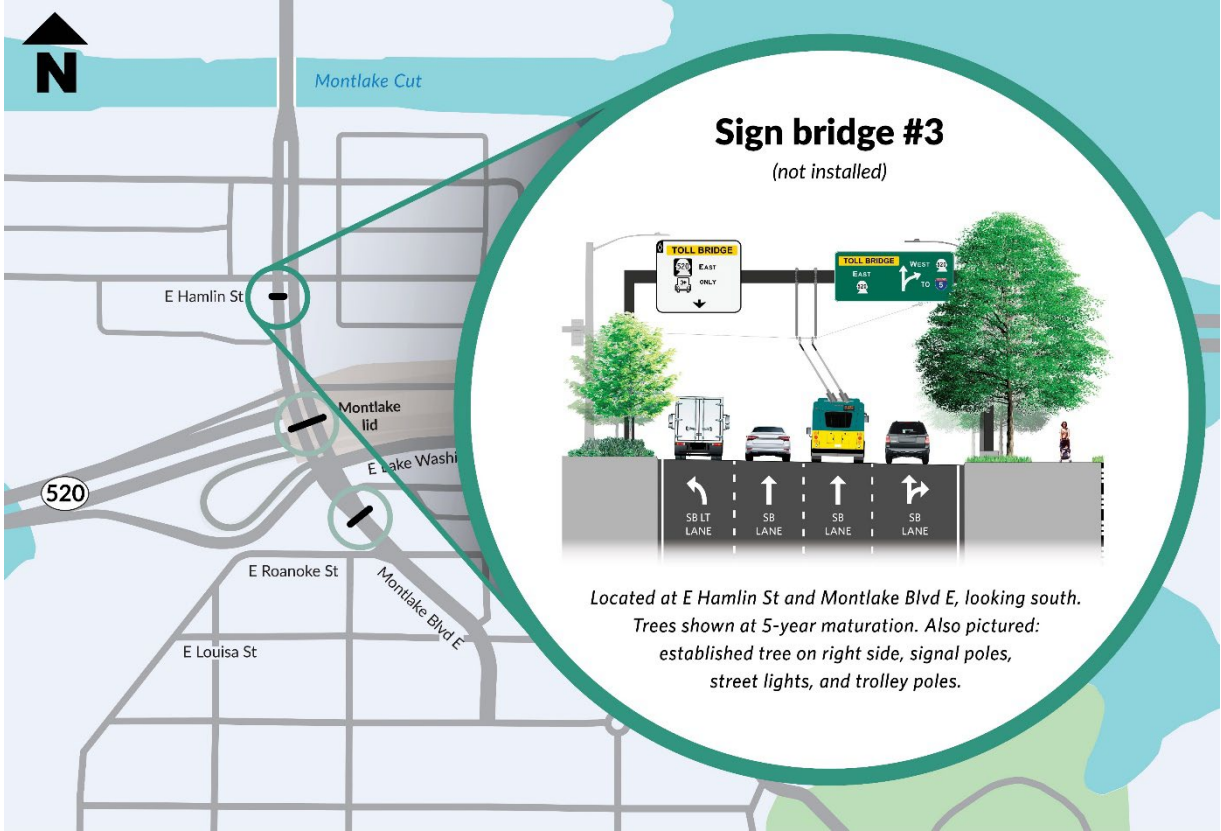
# Community response to sign bridge #2

*Please rank your concerns in order of importance.  
(1 = most important; 4 = least important)*

Concerns	Rank	Score
Size (height & thickness of steel structure)	1	759
Visual compatibility w/ historic neighborhood	2	744
Location	3	405
Color	4	392

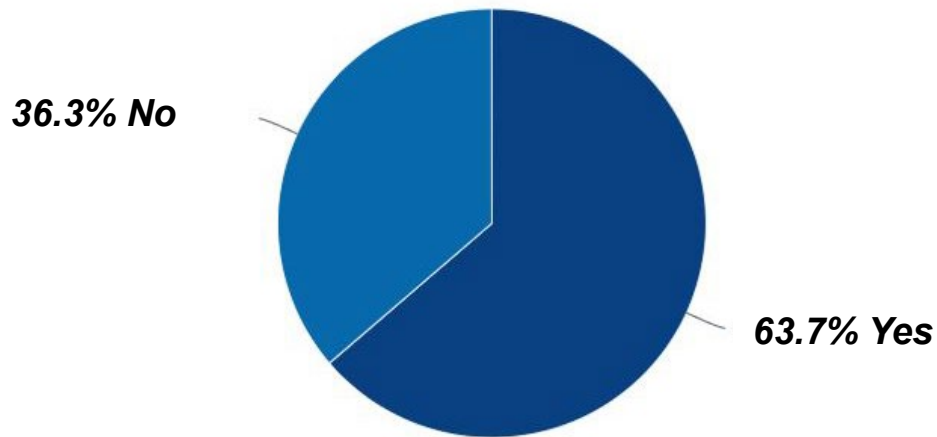
*\* 230 responses*

# Sign bridge #3



# Community response to sign bridge #3

*Do you have any concerns about sign bridge #3?*



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	63.7%	281
No	36.3%	160
Totals: 441		

# Community response to sign bridge #3

*Please rank your concerns in order of importance.  
(1 = most important; 4 = least important)*

Concerns	Rank	Weighted Score
Visual compatibility w/ historic neighborhood	1	932
Size (height & thickness of steel structure)	2	901
Location	3	532
Color	4	445

**\*281 responses**

# Summary of sign bridge comments

Concern themes	# of comments of sign bridge #1	# of comments of sign bridge #2	# of comments of sign bridge #3
Sign structure is too big and/or belongs on a freeway	136	102	71
Sign structure is incompatible with historic neighborhood	37	31	42
WSDOT should take the sign structure down	27	22	26
The sign structure is ugly	19	18	13
The sign encourages speeding & makes the interchange unsafe	18	11	8
The sign location is inappropriate	18	9	9
The sign structure color should be changed	13	13	9
The survey visualizations are confusing	13	16	12
Concerns about sidewalks/sidewalk safety	13	1	3
Concerns about bike and pedestrian safety	8	6	2
Concerns about outreach process	7	4	4
The sign is not necessary for drivers (people use GPS and/or know where to go)	6	8	8
<b>TOTAL UNIQUE COMMENTS RECEIVED</b>	221	156	179

*Note: Comments could be counted for multiple themes.*



## **Part III: Community input & discussion**

# Signage suggestions from survey comments



Signal mast arm on Mercer St in Seattle



Side-mounted sign (left) and cantilever truss support system (right) on Montlake Blvd in Seattle



Cantilever arm on NE 8th St in Bellevue



Span wire over E Roanoke St in Seattle

# Signage suggestions from survey comments (continued)



Decorative/more historic looking sign and trolley wire structure on the Montlake Bridge



Side-mounted sign on 84<sup>th</sup> Ave NE in Hunts Point



Painted directional shields on pavement on NE 8<sup>th</sup> St in Bellevue

# Alternative signage ideas (all sign bridges)

Suggestions or ideas	Total # of comments
Use smaller signs	82
Use side-mounted signs on side of the road	48
Decorate the sign structures	31
Paint directional shields on road/pavement	30
Other sign-specific ideas (e.g., move location or change sign text)	27
Install cantilever or signal mast arm sign structure	26
Consider eastside signage examples	16
Hang signs on span wires	13
Replace with previous signage	10
Add UW-specific signage	8

# Decorative ideas

**Add  
climbing  
wisteria**

**Match decorative and  
architectural  
elements to the  
Montlake Bridge**

**Decorative signage  
themes:**

- UW
- Indigenous history/homage
- Sports
- Portage Bay
- Community art

**Hide structure  
with more trees,  
shrubs and  
planters**

**Alternative structure colors:**

- Pale blue
- Light gray
- Tan
- Same color as Montlake Bridge
- Olmsted brown
- Artful camouflage
- Cover with artificial turf

**Hire an artist to  
create a decorative  
welcome sign:  
“Montlake  
neighborhood” or  
similar**

# Questions, comments and ideas

## Next steps

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# Contact information

## SR 520 Program Communications

Email: [sr520bridge@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:sr520bridge@wsdot.wa.gov)

Phone: 206-200-9484

## David Goldberg, Community Liaison & Ombudsman

Email: [David.Goldberg@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:David.Goldberg@wsdot.wa.gov)

Phone: 202-412-7930

**Montlake Project construction hotline: 206-775-8885**

### *Helpful links:*

- **SR 520 Program webpage:** [wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/major-projects/sr-520-bridge-replacement-and-hov-program](https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/major-projects/sr-520-bridge-replacement-and-hov-program)
- **SR 520 Construction Corner webpage:** [sr520construction.com](https://sr520construction.com)
- **Sign up for email updates:** [public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOT/subscriber/new?topic\\_id=WADOT\\_376](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOT/subscriber/new?topic_id=WADOT_376)



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