

Plans, permits and funding in place

SR 520's fully funded I-5 to Lake Washington Project – the Rest of the West – underwent environmental review and permitting as part of WSDOT's SR 520, I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Program. Consequently, most of the critical studies and permits needed to start construction on the west side already are in place, including:

- **Final environmental impact statement:** 2011
- **Federal Highway Administration record of decision:** 2011
- **Mitigation plans (e.g., cultural, wetland, aquatic):** 2011-2012
- **Key permits (e.g., shoreline, hydraulic, water quality, stormwater):** 2011-2012

Next steps: the path to a completed corridor

With funding for the Rest of the West now secured, WSDOT is aiming to begin construction on the corridor's westernmost segment as early as 2017. Key steps between now and the start of construction include:

- Continued coordination with the city of Seattle and other stakeholders
- Completion of mitigation agreements
- Preliminary utility work within the corridor
- Limited-access process and right of way acquisition
- Technical coordination
- Final design to reflect practical design goals and Seattle Community Design Process
- Development of contractor documents
- Issuance of request for proposals
- Award construction contract and begin construction



Rendering of community space on a new Montlake Boulevard lid.

For more information:

Web: www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr520bridge
Email: SR520Bridge@wsdot.wa.gov
Call: 206-770-3554
Mail: Washington State Department of Transportation SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program 999 3rd Avenue, Suite 2200 Seattle, WA 98104

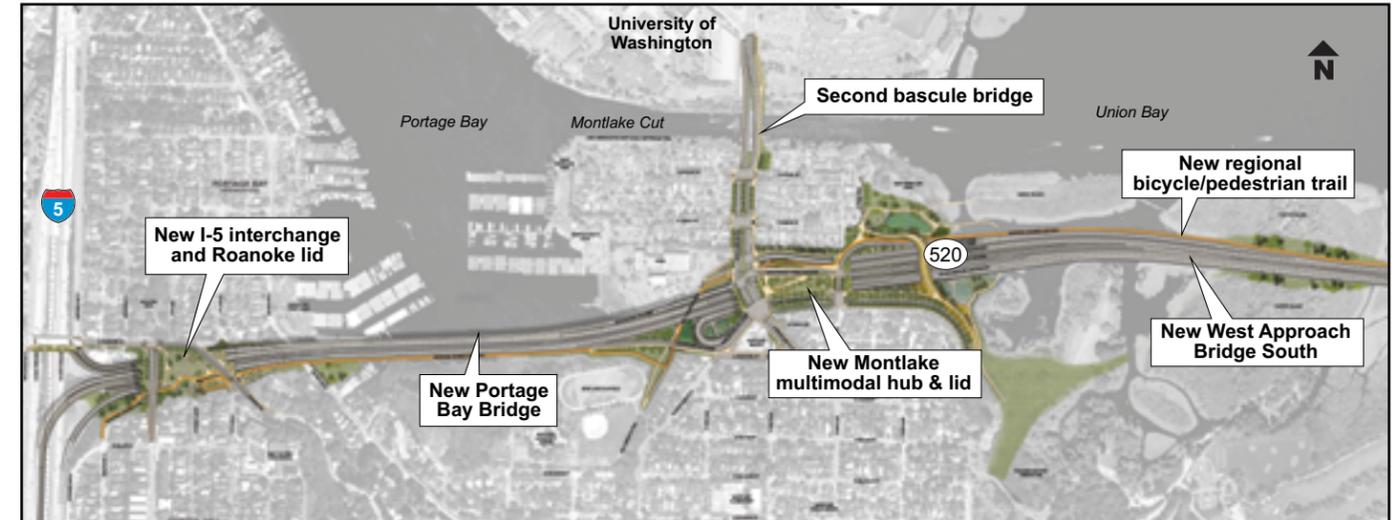
Construction Hotline: 206-708-4657

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November 2015

Practical solutions for the newly funded "Rest of the West"



Practical solutions: Maximizing benefit for the lowest cost

"The citizens of Washington expect the delivery of transportation services, programs and projects that are necessary, high quality, appropriately scoped and delivered efficiently at the right time and in the right location."

-- Transportation Secretary Lynn Peterson
Executive Order, J, 2015
2015-17 Agency Emphasis and Expectations

"Practical design offers targeted benefits to a state transportation system within available fiscal resources. This delivers value not just for individual projects, but for the entire system. Applying practical design standards will also preserve and enhance safety and mobility."

-- 2ESHB 1299
2015-17 state transportation budget bill

Major highway projects in Washington's largest city must address a diverse mix of public interests and demands. Transit supporters want greater bus, rail and carpool options. Businesses need reliable, efficient delivery of goods and services. Urban neighborhoods desire a smaller project footprint. Commuters want less congestion. Foot-power advocates seek more and safer bicycle and pedestrian routes. Taxpayers demand lower costs.

On the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) reached out to community stakeholders – over more than a decade – to solicit their views and look for common ground to improve the highway's vulnerable, west side segment in Seattle – the "Rest of the West."

A balanced solution to critical problems

The SR 520 plan balances the region's varied interests and needs with replacement of the highway's aging, vulnerable bridges, substantial transit and roadway-safety improvements throughout the corridor, greater nonmotorized travel options, and significant environmental enhancements. What's more, the plan meets these needs with a right-sized, least-cost design that minimizes construction impacts and materials.

With the 2015 Legislature's authorization of \$1.64 billion in additional funding for SR 520 construction, WSDOT is now ready to move forward on completing the highway's final leg, from I-5 to Lake Washington.

Community engagement key to design success



The public learns about the SR 520 “Rest of the West” project during an open house in Seattle.

Early and sustained engagement with the community is a key reason why WSDOT was able to complete a cost-effective, practical design concept for SR 520 improvements in Seattle. That engagement, dating from the 1990s, continues to the present as we work with the city of Seattle and other stakeholders toward a final, construction-ready design. Some of our key partners in this effort include:

- City of Seattle
- King County
- NOAA – Northwest Fisheries Science Center
- Sound Transit
- Tribal governments
- University of Washington
- 43rd, 46th, and 48th District state legislators
- Puget Sound Regional Council
- Other stakeholders:
 - Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee
 - Arboretum Foundation
 - Canal Reserve neighbors
 - Cascade Bicycle Club
 - Federal Highway Administration
 - Friends of Olmsted Parks
 - Lake Washington Boulevard neighbors
 - Local community councils
 - Microsoft
 - Montlake area businesses
 - National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 concurring parties
 - Queen City Yacht Club
 - Seattle Greenways
 - Seattle Yacht Club
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - U.S. Coast Guard
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Washington Department of Ecology
 - Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Practical design: A bigger bang for SR 520

From early planning sessions in the late 1990s to the myriad public forums of the 2000s to the latest design refinements of 2015, WSDOT worked closely with stakeholders to craft a practical vision for reconstructing SR 520’s west side corridor. Together, they produced a design plan that meets key public needs while limiting construction costs and maximizing transportation dollars. Below are a few examples.

A least-cost preferred alternative

In 2010, after more than a decade of public process, WSDOT screened out costly corridor options, such as an eight-lane bridge or a cross-lake tunnel that could have doubled the project’s cost. Instead, WSDOT opted for a much lower-cost design that still reflects community values and achieves key transportation goals.

Narrower lanes and shoulders

Through practical design, the general-purpose lanes and inside shoulders of the new floating bridge, Portage Bay Bridge, and west approach bridges were narrowed while improving traffic safety and mobility. This not only saves millions of dollars in costs for concrete, steel and other bridge materials, but reduces the bridges’ environmental effects.

Fewer bridge columns

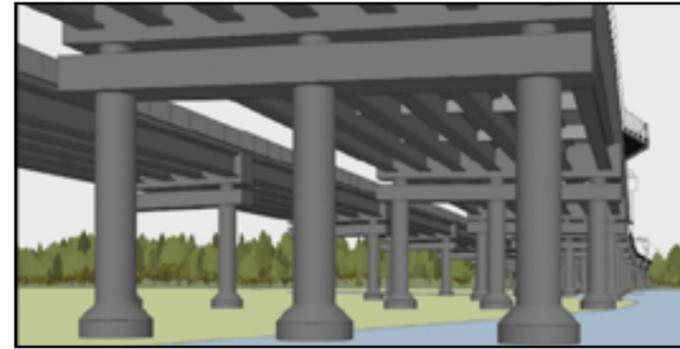
The refined design for the two side-by-side, 1.1-mile-long west approach bridges reduces the number of in-water columns the bridges need. This refinement cuts by 40 percent the amount of concrete needed — a cost savings as well as an aesthetic and environmental benefit.

Leaner Portage Bay Bridge

WSDOT worked with the community and Seattle Design Commission to select a lower-cost, box girder design rather than a higher-cost, cable stay design. The adopted design involves two narrower bridge structures for eastbound and westbound traffic, with cleaner lines more appropriate to the surrounding area, and a managed-lane shoulder that can convert to a fourth westbound traffic lane during peak periods.

Smarter Montlake lid

We redesigned the multimodal lid to work better for its users, which also eliminated costly ventilation and maintenance systems, and reduced construction, materials and long-term maintenance costs. The design change also retained the lid’s desired public space, removed unusable space, and improved its transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accessibility. This smarter lid better integrates with the Washington Park Arboretum and University of Washington, optimizing sight lines, safety, and comfort for all users.



The “Preferred Alternative” design of a new west approach bridge included three in-water columns.



The refined design reduced the number of in-water columns to two, cutting by 40 percent the amount of concrete needed.



The “Preferred Alternative” design of the Montlake lid was a structure approximately 1,400 feet from east to west.



Under the “Final Concept Design,” the Montlake lid is approximately 800 feet from east to west.

West side improvements ensure safer, more reliable travel for metro area

The newly funded improvements to SR 520’s west side segment, when completed, will give our state’s largest, most economically robust region the benefits of a fully reconstructed highway corridor – from one end to the other. The benefits include:

- Improved regional mobility with the completion of a dedicated HOV system across the entire length of SR 520, in both directions – saving up to 25 minutes in HOV travel time during peak periods.
- Seismically stronger Portage Bay and west approach bridges to replace the existing bridges, which are built on hollow columns and are vulnerable to earthquakes.
- A second bascule bridge across the Montlake Cut to provide dedicated transit/HOV access and improved pedestrian and bike travel on the often-congested Montlake Boulevard.
- More transportation options by continuing a regional, cross-lake bicycle/pedestrian path along the entire SR 520 corridor from Redmond to Seattle, with connections to the Burke-Gilman Trail and the Seattle bicycle trail network.
- A landscaped, 30-foot-wide shared-use crossing over I-5 for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Improved water quality from the creation of water-treatment systems for highway runoff.
- Highway mitigation projects that will improve local parks, natural areas and trails.
- Community-connecting highway lids in Seattle’s Montlake and Roanoke neighborhoods, with improved connections for transit, bicyclists and pedestrians.



Rendering of pedestrians and bicyclists on the “land bridge” across SR 520, east of the Montlake lid.