

SR 520 'Rest of the West'

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Shannon Loew, Chair

Ellen Sollod, Vice Chair

Brodie Bain

Lee Copeland

Thaddeus Egging

Rachel Gleeson

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Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair
Ellen Sollod, Vice Chair
Lee Copeland
Rachel Gleeson
Theo Lim
John Savo
Ross Tilghman

Commissioners Excused

Brodie Bain
Thaddeus Egging
Martin Regge

Project Description

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is redeveloping the Seattle segment of the State Route (SR) 520 corridor between I-5 and Lake Washington. The redevelopment will include new bridges that meet current seismic standards, HOV capacity, updated roadways, new pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improved transit connections, open spaces, and enhanced non-motorized connections. Although the entire project is fully funded, funding for design and construction is spread across several biennia, and construction is anticipated to occur in three phases:

- Phase I – Includes the corridor spanning from Lake Washington to Montlake Blvd. This phase will include the design and construction of the Montlake lid, land bridge, and West Approach Bridge South (WABS).
- Phase II – Includes the planning, design, and construction of the Portage Bay Bridge, 10th and Delmar lid, and I-5 interchange.
- Phase III – Includes a second bascule bridge over the Montlake Cut.

The Seattle Design Commission (SDC) is providing advice to WSDOT on final design concepts related to Phase I of the corridor. This final design work will assist WSDOT in developing the Request for Proposals (RFP) for construction of Phase 1.

Meeting Summary

On February 4, 2016, the SDC received an overview and update on the SR 520 Program, focusing on the Rest of the West, and a work plan for the next round of coordination with the SDC. . Because the SDC is providing WSDOT with advice on the extent to which design features are articulated and required in their RFP for this segment, the SDC did not take a formal action. These minutes document the review, discussion and recommendations to WSDOT.

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

February 4, 2016

2:00 - 4:30 pm

Type

Major Project

Phase

Concept Design

Previous Reviews

None

Project Team Present

Lyle Bicknell

OPCD

Brianna Holan

LMN Architects

Kerry Pihlstrom

WSDOT

Osama Quotah

LMN Architects

Elizabeth Umbanhower

Parametrix

Attendees

Joe Basile

WSDOT Consultant

Daniele Dunjic

WSDOT

Candace Goodrich

WSDOT Consultant

Todd Harrison

WSDOT Consultant

Ron Melnikoff

Seattle PBRP Resident

February 4, 2016

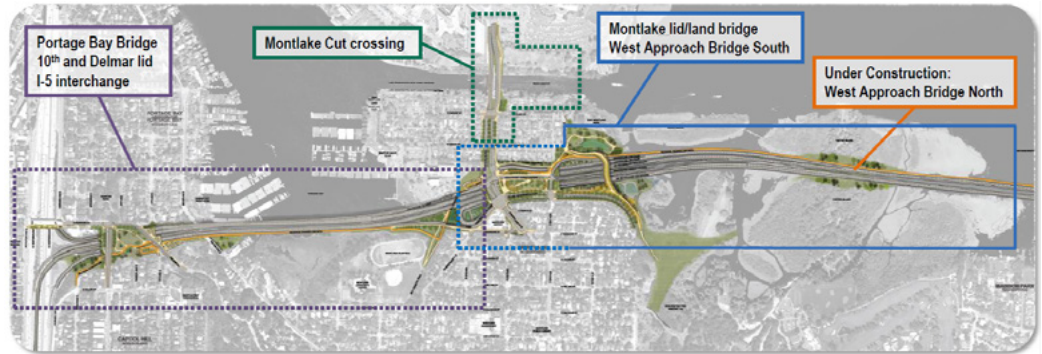


Figure 1: SR 520 'Rest of the West' Corridor

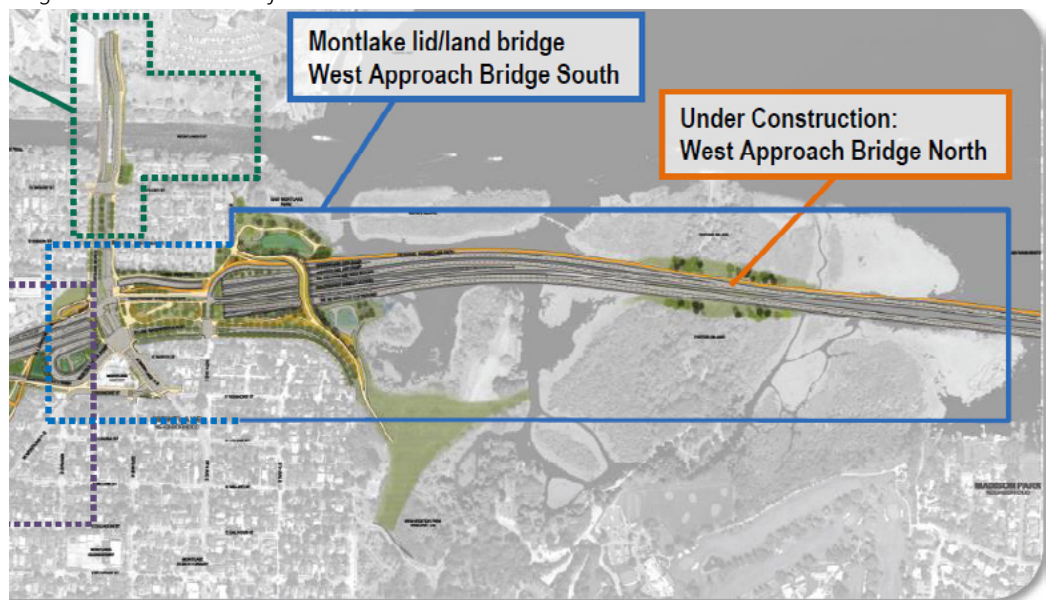


Figure 2: Phase I - outlined in blue

Summary of Presentation

The project was presented by Kerry Pihlstrom, of WSDOT, Elizabeth Umbanhowar, of Parametrix, and Osama Quotah and Brianna Holan, of LMN Architects. Ms. Pihlstrom provided an overview of the planning and design of the corridor. The project will provide safety and mobility improvements to the State Route (SR) 520 corridor from Lake Washington to Interstate 5 (see figure 1). Although it has received full funding from the Washington State Legislature, funding will occur incrementally over a several biennia, through 2029. As a result, the project is currently planned to be constructed in three phases. Today's presentation focused on the work plan for establishing a design criteria for the Seattle segment of the SR 520 corridor and an overview of the application of the work plan to date (relating to Phase 1), and specific design elements of WABS (see figure 2). Phase I of the project, includes:

- The south segment of the West Approach Bridge;
- A lid covering portions of the freeway east of Montlake Blvd;
- a proposed north-south land bridge providing pedestrian and bicycle linkages between Lake Washington Blvd and the Shelby-Hamlin neighborhood, and
- East-west pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The SR 520 Seattle segment passes through a variety of different neighborhoods, transportation networks, and ecology zones. The phase I proposal includes the design and construction of a lid and pedestrian land bridge over SR 520. The lid will connect to Montlake Ave E, running approximately 800 feet to the east. The lid will include bicycle/pedestrian paths, open space and transit facilities. Both the lid and land bridge will provide a network of multi-modal pathways, open spaces, sidewalks, wayfinding, and landscape elements that will enhance transportation connections



Figure 3: Proposed landbridge, open space, and mixing zone

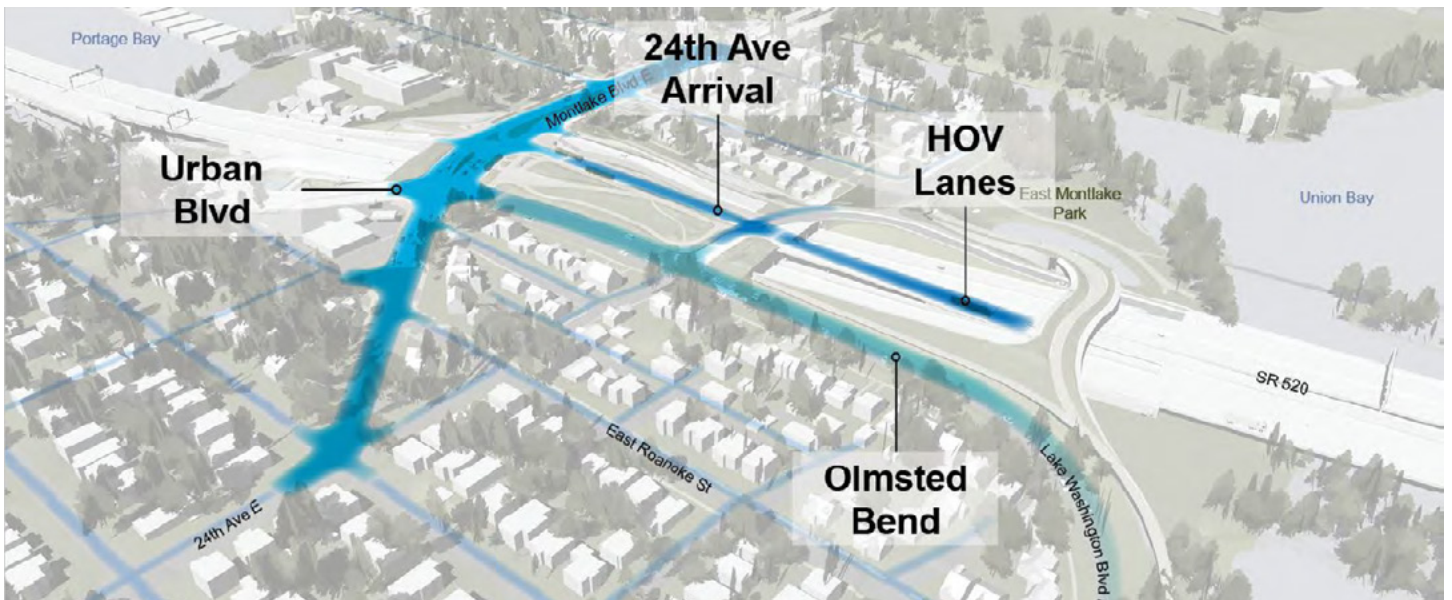


Figure 4: Street connections

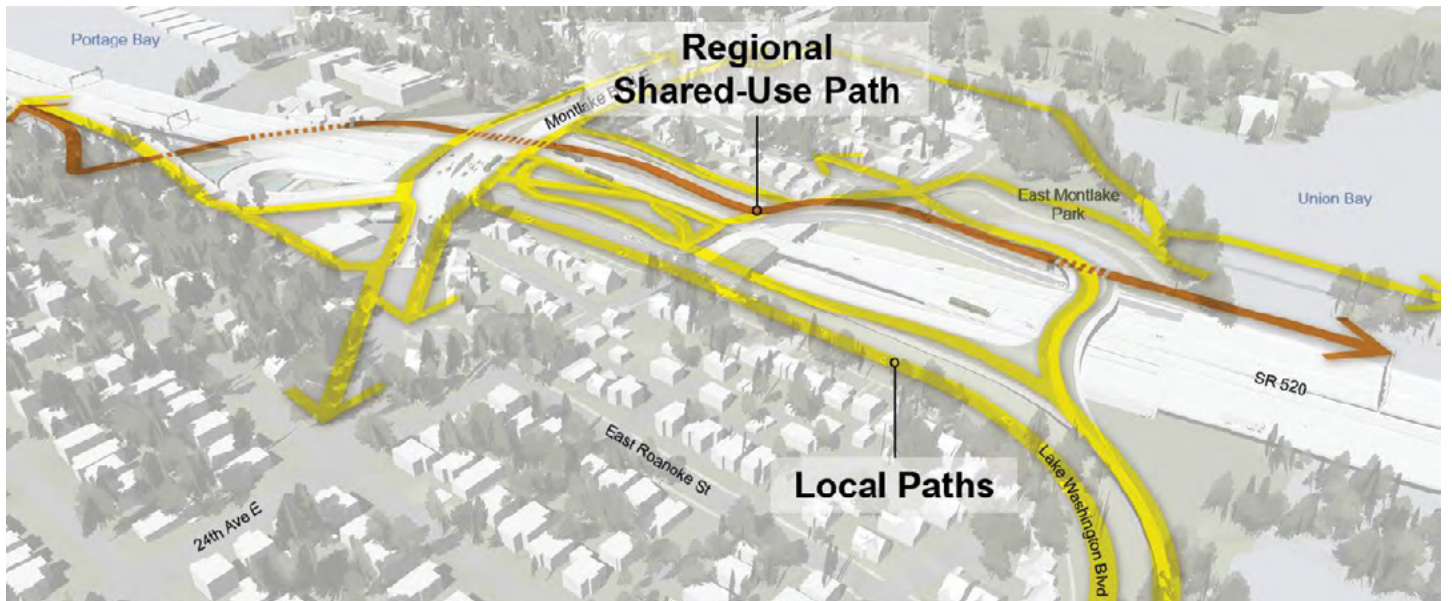


Figure 5: Pedestrian and cyclist connections

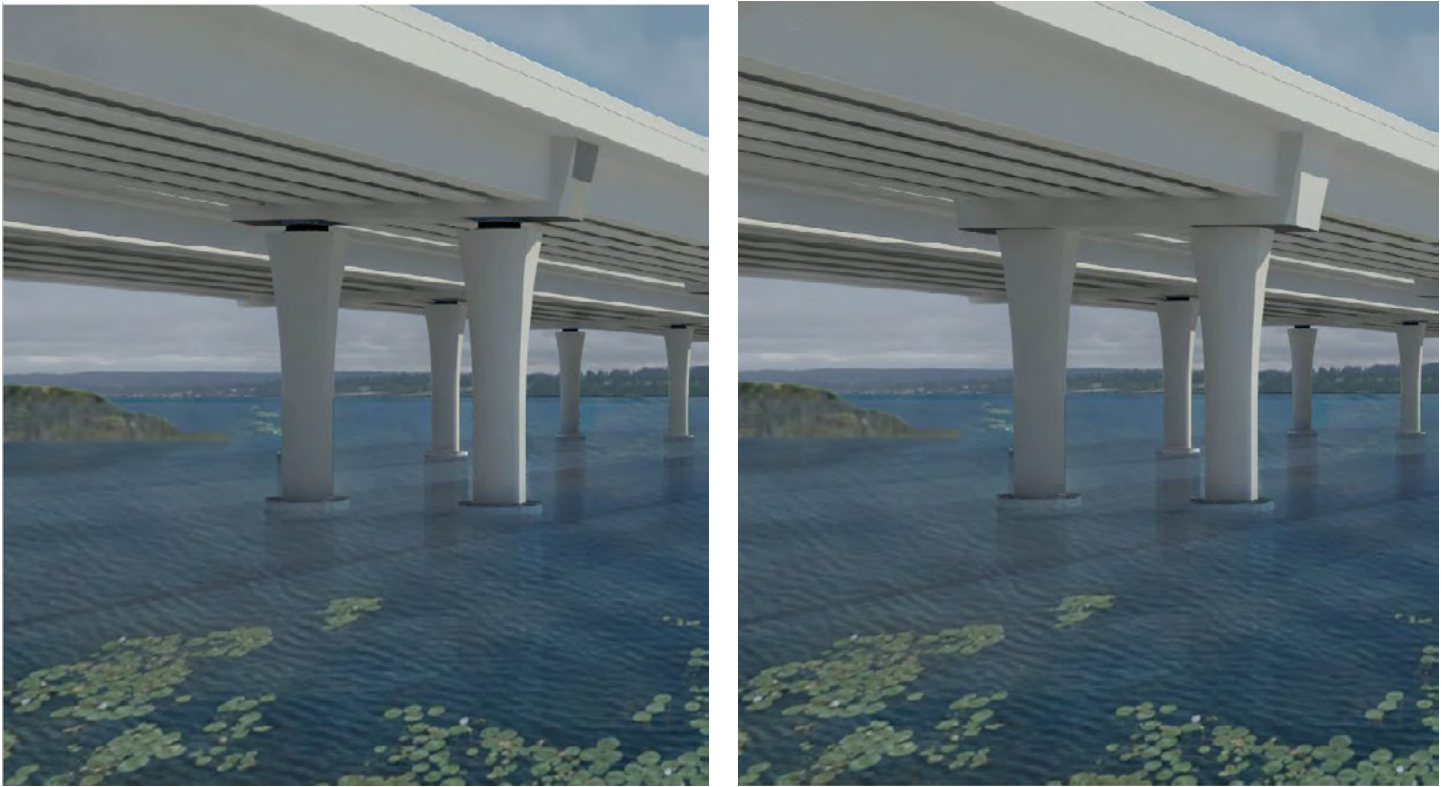


Figure 6: Base isolation bearing design (left) and non base isolation beam design (right)

while reconnecting adjacent neighborhoods severed as a result of the existing SR 520 corridor. The lid will also provide transit facilities and vehicle access to and from 520 corridor. Montlake Blvd E and 24th Ave will cross at the east and west end of the lid, connecting the Montlake Neighborhood with UW. The proposed land bridge will include areas for respite, overlooks, and pathways for pedestrians and cyclists that connect the UW arboretum with East Montlake Park. See *figure 3-5 for more detail*.

Due to constraints, the WABS continues to implement the vision set forth in the Seattle Community Design Process while continuing to consider refinements that allow flexibility in for the next construction contract. The design team has reintroduced using horizontal crossbeams for structural support between the pier (vertical columns used to support the bridge) and the supporting roadway. This design adjustment allows flexibility for the contractor in method of construction while also incorporating the vision by integrating the cross beam in to the superstructure. The updated bridge design includes a series of catch basins located on the southern face of the bridge, midway between each pier. The catch basins include an exposed pipe to drain excess runoff into Lake Washington during an emergency event. The bridge design will include a series of boxed downspouts and architectural features in order to conceal the drainage basin pipes from view and continue the conceptual design architectural treatments. See *figure 6 for more detail*.

Agency Comments

None

Public Comments

Ron Melnikoff, PBRP resident, stated that the proposed pedestrian path on the Portage Bay Bridge was added after the EIS statement. Because the project is being constructed in phases, Mr. Melnikoff assumes the design precedents established during phase I will be used in phases II & III of the project. Mr. Melnikoff is concerned because design decisions are being made for phase I, which will set a precedent for later designs, before communities located near phases II & II were asked to provide input. As a result, he is worried that communities located near Delmar Park and Portage Bay will have little to no opportunity to provide input.

Rainier Metzger, Seattle ARCH, Stated to have followed the project for a number of years and thinks it is headed in a great direction. Mr. Metzger said that the values of people who participated in the Seattle freeway revolts of the 1960's were symbolized in the "ramps to nowhere." He further said that these same values are being symbolized in the project proposal seen today. Mr. Metzger stated that Seattle ARCH is in favor of keeping a fragment of the ramps to nowhere along the WABS bridge.

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Continuity, circulation, overall connectivity
- Areas of distinction
- Urban environment
- Bridge
- Work plan

Continuity, circulation, connectivity

The SDC commended the project team for focusing on pedestrian circulation. Commissioners appreciated the ongoing commitment to the land bridge proposal, which will serve as an important connector for pedestrians and cyclists crossing SR 520. Commissioners encouraged the project team to continue discussing the idea of including a shoreline pedestrian pathway. The commission recommended the project team continue to design circulation and connectivity in a way that will enhance the pedestrian experience.

Areas of distinction

The SDC appreciated how the land bridge provides areas for movement through a sequence of spaces and overlooks. Commissioners encouraged the design team to further develop the project in a way that reflects the landscape of the surrounding urban neighborhoods, specifically as it relates to the Olmstead legacy. The SDC found the proposal to potentially retain a portion of the "ramps to nowhere" interesting. They recommended the project team consider the potential of retaining a portion of the ramps in a manner that complements the surrounding environment and the overall design of the project.

Urban environment

There were no specific comments on this topic.

Bridge

The SDC encouraged the design team to continue thinking about ways to minimize the appearance of the WABS. While they understand the difficulty in procuring specific construction materials, Commissioners recommended the project team continue to consider using a base isolation bearing design for structural support, similar to WABN. The Commission agreed the boxed downspout provides a positive alternative rather than exposing the downspout pipes. The SDC recommended the project team continue to work with the geometry of the boxed downspouts in a way that will provide continuity with the bridge piers.

Work plan

The SDC greatly appreciates WSDOT's willingness to collaborate with SDC as well as other city agencies, especially as it looks for ways to enhance the overall urban design elements of the project. The SDC commended the project team for providing extensive outreach opportunities and encouraged them to continue collaborating throughout the design process.

Action

The SDC did not take an action at this meeting and expressed support for WSDOT's work plan. The Commission provided feedback for initial design concepts related to phase I. WSDOT will continue working with the SDC past June during the procurement process.