

SR 520 'Rest of the West'

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Director, OPCD

Shannon Loew, Chair

Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair

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Ben de Rubertis

Thaddeus Egging

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Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair
Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair
Brodie Bain
Lee Copeland
Laura Haddad
Theo Lim
John Savo

Commissioners Excused

Ben de Reubertis
Thaddeus Egging
Rachel Gleeson

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, updated roadways with HOV capacity and new pedestrian and bicycle facilities. In addition, the project will include a lid between Montlake Blvd E. and 24th Ave E, as well as a bicycle and pedestrian bridge over SR 520 to the east of the Montlake lid.. The lid will include improved transit connections, open spaces, and enhanced non-motorized connections. Although the entire project is fully funded, funding for design and construction is allocated over several biennia. 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, which will be constructed by a design-build contract. This final design work will assist WSDOT in developing the Request for Proposals (RFP) for construction of Phase 1. The concept designs developed in assistance with the SDC will be incorporated into the RFP and used by a future design-build contractor to complete final design and construct the project.

Meeting Summary

At this meeting, the SDC received an overview of the SR 520 Project, focusing on the refinement of the Montlake Lid design and proposed programming. Following the presentation, comment, and deliberation, the SDC agreed to endorse the Montlake Lid design and programming.

Recusals and Disclosures

Thaddeus Egging recused himself. His is an employee of KPFF, the engineering firm working on this project.

June 2, 2016

9:00 - 12:00 pm

Type

Major Project

Phase

Concept Design

Previous Reviews[04/07/16](#), [02/04/16](#)**Project Team Present****Brianna Holan**
LMN Architects**Kerry Pihlstrom**, WSDOT**Osama Quotah**
LMN Architects**Steven Van Dyck**
LMN Architects**Attendees****Adam Amrhein**
LMN Architects**Joe Basile**
WSDOT Consultant**Lyle Bicknell**
OPCD**Evan Chakroff**
LMN Architects**Calvin Chow**
Council Central Staff**Allan Davis**
Seattle Arch**Candace Goodrich**
WSDOT Consultant**David Graves**
SPR**Matt Gurrad**
HDR**Todd Harrison**
HDR**Steve Peer**
WSDOT**Matt Rochon**
WSDOT**Norie Sato**
Sato Services**John O'Neil**, Seattle Prep**Ghassan Sabboubeh**
WSDOT**Bernard Van de Kamp**
SDOT**Connie Zimmerman**
COS

June 2, 2016



Figure 1: Nature meets city diagram



Figure 2: Phase I plant communities

Summary of Presentation

Kerry Pihlstrom, of WSDOT, and Osama Quotah, Brianna Holan, and Steven Van Dyck, of LMN Architects, presented the project proposal. Kerry Pihlstrom provided an overview of the vision and values for the project as well as the history and development of the surrounding area. Although fully funded, the corridor will be built out in three phases. This presentation focused on refinement of the vision "Nature meets City" (see figure 1), and the design and programming of the Montlake Lid and surrounding area.

Transit corridors located within phase I of the project currently service 150,000 plus vehicles per day as well as 15 bus routes. When planning and designing the Montlake Lid, the design team envisioned creating a new element of "civic infrastructure" that will integrate transportation needs while restoring ecology (see figure 2) and local neighborhood connections in a way that will significantly draw users into the space. The lid and surrounding area will serve as the location where natural elements such as the shoreline, arboretum, and parklands will blend together with neighborhoods, roads, and pathways.

The project area will include pathways, nodes, transition spaces, outlooks, and open space, as well as interpretive elements located throughout in order to reflect the

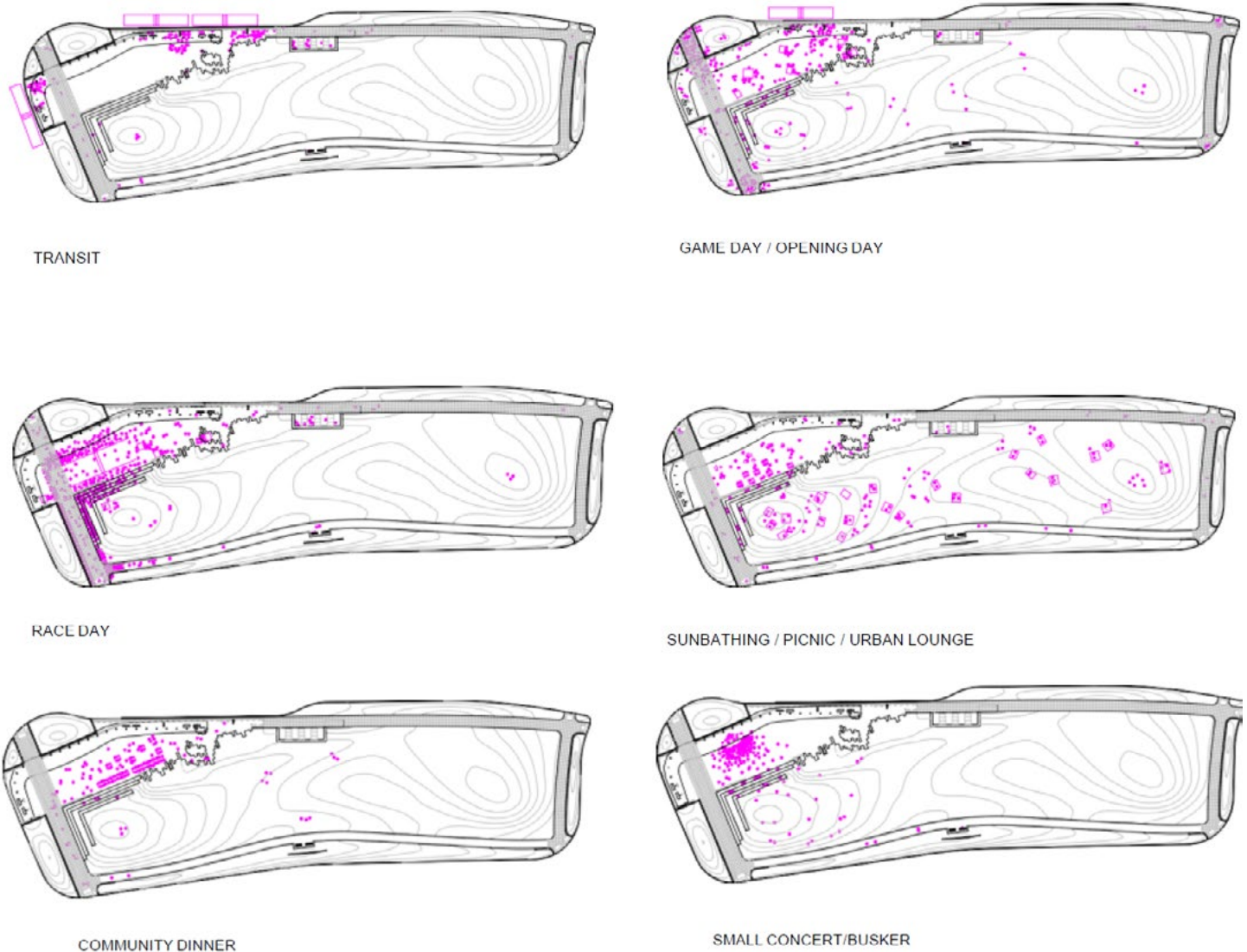


Figure 3: Examples of programming on proposed Montlake Lid

natural and cultural history of the area. The open space, located along Montlake Boulevard on the Montlake Lid will include a transit shelter that will serve as an urban trailhead for the users entering the area and then traveling elsewhere throughout the city.

The Montlake Lid and Landbridge are designed to attract a variety of user groups ranging from community members and daily transit users to citywide and regional user groups gathering for a special event. See *figure 3* for more detail. The user experience will vary based on location and will can accommodate activities such as walking, nature viewing, bike repair, picnicking, and waiting for transit.

The team then presented several design goals and next steps for the project proposal, which include developing a request for proposals (RFP) for project bidding as well as discussing program leadership, future operations, and maintenance.

Agency Comments

Lyle Bicknell, OPCD, Stated that the project team continues to work collaboratively with other agencies and community members. Mr. Bicknell mentioned that the team would continue to reach out to a broad range of stakeholders. He stressed the importance of maintaining a high level of design quality while moving forward to the bidding process.

Public Comments

None

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Vision
- Circulation
- Landscape and programming
- Key nodes
- Materiality
- Sustainability (operations and maintenance)
- RFP and Unknowns

Vision

Although the SDC appreciated the level of detail provided by the project team, they are concerned the vision is not clearly articulated yet, nor being fully used in developing and supporting key design features. Commissioners recommended the project team specifically show how each design element fits within the overall vision and supports the "nature meets city" concept, the concept that the SDC fully supports. The commission also recommended the team continue to design the corridor to a standard that meets the Olmsted legacy envisioned for this area, specifically as it relates to connectivity. The SDC also recommended the selected design build team include a separate landscape architecture firm in order to effectively address and balance the "nature meets City" theme with the historic context.

Circulation

The SDC supported the fundamental circulation elements including the multitude of pathways, orientation of pedestrians to overlooks and nodes, and the form and location of the land bridge. Commissioners recommended the design team continue to establish and reinforce a visible hierarchy of pathways at the nodes (or knuckles) where the pathways intersect, Developing a hierarchy at these "knuckles" will help reinforce the identity of both the regional and local pathways.

Landscape and programming

The SDC continued to provide reasons as to why the selected design build team should include a landscape architect. Commissioners recommended the chosen landscape architect should understand how to effectively implement the "nature meets City" concept that blur edges between natural and built elements. In addition, the commission felt it was crucial for the landscape architect to spend time focusing on designs of pedestrian spaces next to vehicular areas, and be able to address detailed planting and material needs.

The Commission underscored all of the fundamental design elements presented in the landbridge, including its form, the mix of landscape and pathways, belvederes, etc. The commission believes that the concept designs presented in the landbridge are fundamental to the success of this feature.

The commission supports the idea of blending edges between pathways (City) and planting areas (nature) with features like the grass berms along the landbridge, the edges of the lid, adjacent to the roadways, and the overall open space. The SDC recommended the design team continue to include plant typologies that exist in other areas throughout the Olmsted corridor.

Key nodes

The Commission appreciated the location and design of nodes throughout the corridor, including mixing zones at either end of the landbridge, the plaza and transit mixing areas at the NW corner of the Lid, etc. Commissioners agreed nodes like this would allow users to have a unique experience. The SDC also appreciated the design team relocating the southbound Metro stop south of the proposed Lid along Montlake Boulevard as well as relocating the regional pathway to the north of the open space. The commission was concerned that the relocated transit stop south of the lid be better connected through pedestrian improvements or other wayfinding connections to the lid and its transit connections.

Materiality

The SDC commended the design team for providing a high level of detail for all users, from vehicles to cyclists and pedestrians. The Commission stressed the importance of providing a detailed explanation as to why specific material choices were selected and how they correspond with the overall vision for the project. This level of detail will be

important to communicate as part of the RFP for the design build contract. Commissioners would also like to provide more feedback regarding signage, lighting, and benches during future meetings.

Sustainability (operations and maintenance)

The SDC recommended the design team fully express how the project will incorporate stormwater strategies throughout the corridor. Commissioners agreed the project team has coordinated with a variety of agencies, organizations, and community groups and recommended WSDOT identify which agencies will have jurisdiction over specific design elements.

RFP and Unknowns

The Commission stressed the importance of including specific design element details within the RFP, including technical diagrams and lists that define criteria such as distances, sound maximums, views, and landscaping. Commissioners stated that the RFP should represent the base line design viewed to date and that the overall vision, included specific design materials and details, represented in the RFP should be delivered. The Commission also recommended the design team and associated agencies reconsider the necessity, quantity and location of bicycle lockers.

Action

The SDC endorses the revised Montlake Lid design and proposed programming, and design development of elements of continuity and distinction presented during today's meeting. The Commission will continue to provide feedback to WSDOT and related agencies as the design continues through the RFP process.