SR 520 Trail: Improving bicycle and pedestrian connections throughout the SR 520 corridor

The Washington State Department of Transportation is committed to improving connectivity, access and safety for all users in the SR 520 corridor, including bicyclists and pedestrians. The SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program is building a safer and more reliable SR 520 from I-5 in Seattle to I-405 on the Eastside. As part of these improvements, we are building a dedicated path for bicyclists and pedestrians. The SR 520 Trail, which stretches across Lake Washington, provides access to existing local and regional trails.

Toll-free travel between Seattle and Eastside

The new SR 520 Trail is 14 feet wide, separated from highway traffic by a concrete barrier. Along the way you’ll find scenic viewpoints and resting areas for taking in the views of Lake Washington. Bicyclists and pedestrians don’t pay a toll to cross the new floating bridge.

Bicyclists may notice steel plates covering the floating bridge expansion joints. These plates are necessary for the safety of path users and the structural integrity of the bridge. WSDOT plans to replace the plates this summer with thinner joint covers, which should provide a smoother ride.

A scenic, nonmotorized way across Lake Washington

In late 2017, WSDOT extended the SR 520 Trail across Lake Washington, creating the first ever cross-lake connection for bicyclists and pedestrians on the SR 520 corridor. In 2018, more than 328,000 bicyclists and pedestrians crossed an electronic counter at the trail’s western end.

“Where the I-90 Bridge feels like a means to get across the lake, the 520 Bridge is also a destination of its own.”
- Tom Fucoloro, The Seattle Bike Blog, 1/3/18

Partnerships

A variety of local stakeholder groups worked with WSDOT to determine the best way to connect the SR 520 Trail to local trails and, in time, extend the path to I-5. These groups included:

- Cascade Bicycle Club
- Seattle Neighborhood Greenways
- Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board
- Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board
Eastside trail connections

On the Eastside, the SR 520 Trail has access points at lids at Evergreen Point Road, 84th Avenue Northeast and 92nd Avenue Northeast.

In Bellevue, the SR 520 Trail connects to new, separated bicycle and pedestrian lanes along Northup Way, east of the Bellevue Way intersection. The Northup Way lanes connect the new SR 520 Trail to the west and the old SR 520 Trail to the east. If you’re headed east along Northup Way, take a left on 24th Avenue Northeast. After a quarter mile, the entrance to the old SR 520 Trail will be on your right. The old trail extends to Redmond.

West-side trail connections

Headed to the SR 520 Trail from the University District? Travel south on Montlake Boulevard and turn left on East Hamlin Street. The trail will be on your right at the end of the block. From the south, you can access the trail using the 24th Avenue East Bridge, located off Lake Washington Boulevard. Please be aware that the 24th Avenue East overpass connection will close in 2019 while crews reconstruct SR 520 in the Montlake area.

The Bill Dawson Trail also connects to the SR 520 Trail. Use the traffic signal and crosswalk at East Shelby Street to cross Montlake Boulevard to connect to and from the SR 520 Trail and Bill Dawson Trail. This connection will close periodically during construction.

Future trail extensions

In future SR 520 construction, we’ll extend the trail across Portage Bay and build an improved nonmotorized crossing at I-5 that will provide a better connection to Seattle’s local bicycle and pedestrian network. In the Montlake area, a lid over SR 520 will connect to the Bill Dawson trail, and a pedestrian/bicycle land bridge over SR 520 will connect the Washington Arboretum and East Montlake Park. When construction is finished, the trail will stretch 12 miles between Seattle and Redmond.