

Message from the SR 520 Program Administrator

Greetings,

I'm Julie Meredith. I lead the Washington State Department of Transportation team that is building a safer and more reliable State Route 520. I'm sending this newsletter to update you on the program – where we've been and where we're going. I hope you'll take a few minutes to review the progress made.

We kicked off construction four years ago when we began rebuilding the highway's Eastside segment from Medina to I-405. Not long after, in Aberdeen and Tacoma, we started constructing the concrete pontoons needed for the new SR 520 floating bridge. We've reached several major milestones since then. The Eastside's new six-lane corridor – with HOV lanes, landscaped highway lids, median transit stops, improved access ramps, and a regional bicycle and pedestrian path – is complete. So, too, are the new floating bridge's 77 pontoons – now all built, assembled, joined and anchored into place on Lake Washington.

With 2015 now history, I want to share some project highlights from the year, and also look ahead to what's in store for SR 520 in 2016 and beyond. As you'll see inside, we moved much closer last year to completing the world's newest and longest floating bridge. In fact, the public grand opening celebration is coming in April! Also, as you've likely learned, we received funding last summer to complete the "Rest of the West" – SR 520's remaining improvements from Lake Washington to I-5. We greatly appreciate the leadership of Gov. Inslee and the Legislature in providing the full funding that will allow us to complete this important corridor.

This mailer is one way of staying informed about this important transportation project in your community. Look on the flip side for other ways to stay in touch -- by Twitter, the Web, email or phone. We are happy to address any question you have.

We'll be sharing more news with you down the road. Until then ... Happy New Year ... and we hope to see you in April!

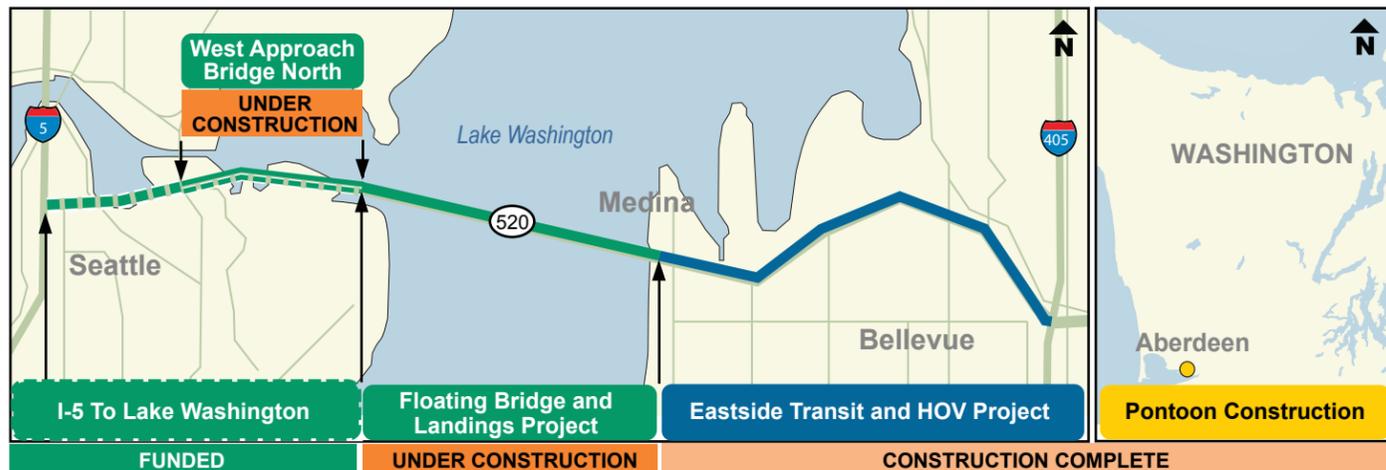
Julie Meredith



Julie Meredith P.E.
Program Administrator



JOIN US!





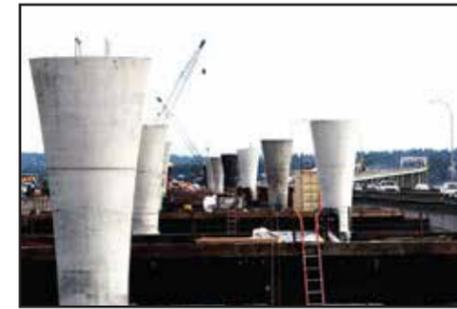
Bridge Replacement and HOV Program

2015 YEAR IN REVIEW





2015 Milestones



WINTER

JANUARY 2015:

- WSDOT releases "concept designs" and cost update for SR 520's unfunded west side improvements in Seattle (the "Rest of the West").

FEBRUARY 2015:

- Demolition begins on the old Museum of History and Industry building to make way for SR 520 construction in Montlake area.
- Drawspan on existing SR 520 floating bridge is permanently blocked by construction of new bridge; in place of a drawspan, new bridge will have 70-foot-high boat clearance on its east end.

SPRING

MARCH 2015:

- Pontoon construction in Aberdeen ends; all 77 pontoons for new bridge complete.
- WSDOT, the state Department of Natural Resources and Boeing complete a four-acre shoreline-mitigation project at the south end of Lake Washington that improves habitat for juvenile salmon in the lake.

APRIL 2015:

- Tugboats tow the new floating bridge's final three pontoons from Grays Harbor to Lake Washington.
- Twitter photo contest engages local photographers as final pontoons travel from Grays Harbor to Lake Washington.

MAY 2015:

- The SR 520 project design team receives an American Institute of Architecture design award for the conceptual designs developed for the highway's west side segment – the Rest of the West.

SUMMER

JUNE 2015:

- Removal of the R.H. Thomson "Ramps to Nowhere" continues; removal is expected to be finished by mid-2017.
- SR 520 Program holds an open house to promote contract opportunities for disadvantaged, women-owned and minority-owned businesses.

JULY 2015:

- The new floating bridge's final three pontoons are moved into their permanent position, completing the floating highway's concrete spine.

JULY 2015:

- Gov. Jay Inslee signs into law the "Connecting Washington" transportation package approved in special session by the state Legislature; the package fully funds the Rest of the West.

AUGUST 2015:

- Crews open a new westbound off-ramp to Montlake Boulevard in Seattle, an early milestone for the West Approach Bridge North Project.
- Crews place the last of 776 precast roadway deck sections on the new floating bridge.

FALL

SEPTEMBER 2015:

- The last of 11 "Sneak Peek" public tours of the floating bridge and West Approach Bridge North projects is held.

OCTOBER 2015:

- Crews on the West Approach Bridge North Project complete the structure's first two concrete columns in Union Bay.
- The Seattle City Council unanimously endorses a resolution stating the council's design preferences for SR 520's west side segment.
- Crews pour final concrete to complete the entire roadway deck for the new floating bridge.

NOVEMBER 2015:

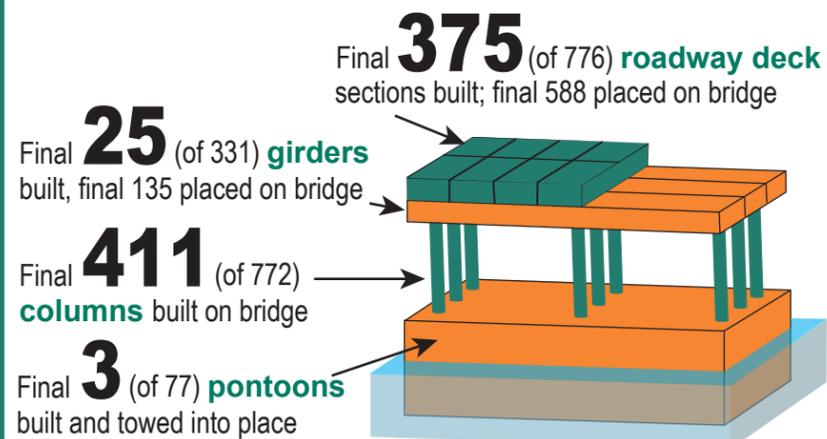
- Installation of new fluted concrete columns for West Approach Bridge North continues.

WINTER

- Completed the first 22 of 95 concrete columns for the new West Approach Bridge North.
- Reached thousands of interested community members throughout 2015, including:
 - 1,750 visitors to SR 520 fair and festival booths.
 - 280 participants in public "Sneak Peek" construction-site tours.
 - More than 2.1 million viewer "impressions" on our SR 520 Twitter account.
 - Regular SR 520 email news updates to more than 11,500 subscribers.

SR 520: By the numbers in 2015

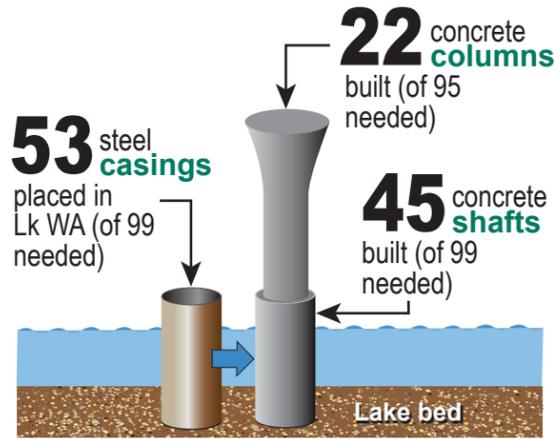
New SR 520 floating bridge



Installed over **6,575** feet of **safety railing** on the new floating bridge's bike/pedestrian path



West Approach Bridge North



Installed over **255** miles of **electrical wiring** on the new floating bridge, out of 300 total miles needed - enough to go from Seattle to Spokane!



What's next in 2016

Floating bridge construction: Crews on Lake Washington are putting the finishing touches on the world's longest (and newest!) floating bridge. Once all bridge systems are tested – expected this spring – traffic will be switched onto the new six-lane bridge. Crews then will work to dismantle and remove the old bridge from the lake by late 2016. Stay tuned for updates on the April 2-3 grand-opening celebration!

West Approach Bridge North construction: In 2015 construction crews built a work trestle and poured the first permanent support columns for this approach bridge across Union Bay to Montlake. In 2016, we'll install more columns and begin installation of girders and other bridge elements for the new fixed structure. Also, a new westbound off-ramp to Lake Washington Boulevard via 24th Avenue East opened in early 2016, replacing the existing off-ramp. Removal of the never-completed R.H. Thomson Ramps to Nowhere in the Arboretum will continue, and is expected to wrap up by mid-2017.

Rest of the West design: With full funding approved in mid-2015 for SR 520's Rest of the West elements, WSDOT is working in 2016 to develop contracts and prepare this corridor segment for construction. The first phase of construction for the Rest of the West could start by 2018.



September 2015 view of the new floating bridge on Lake Washington, looking west.