

Bill Dawson Trail FAQ

Q: What changes did you make to the Bill Dawson Trail?

We're updating the Bill Dawson Trail as part of the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program.

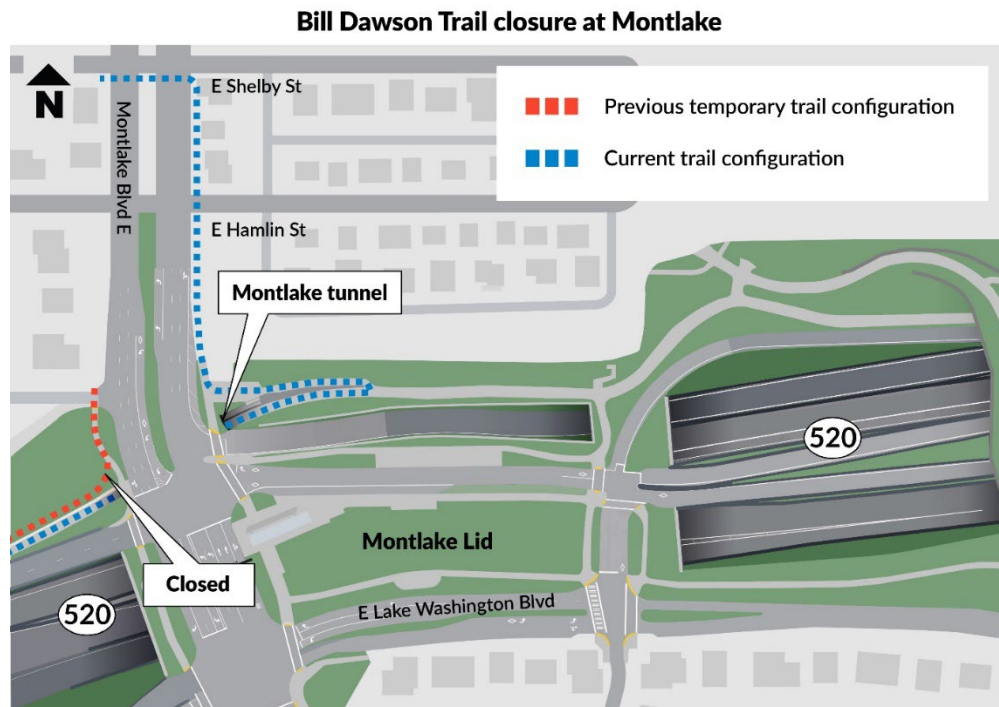
Before the Montlake Project construction, the Bill Dawson Trail ended on the west side of Montlake Boulevard. During construction, we moved the west connection from Montlake further north to make way for trail improvements. This included constructing a tunnel under Montlake Boulevard and a new east connection from Montlake to the Bill Dawson Trail. The east connection now links to Montlake and will soon link to the SR 520 Trail.

In October 2024, we closed the west connection from Montlake to the Bill Dawson Trail to make room for construction on the Portage Bay Bridge and Roanoke Lid Project.

Q: What does the trail look like now?

The east connection from Montlake to Bill Dawson Trail is now open. The trail setup includes:

- A new ramp and stairs on the east side of Montlake Boulevard connecting to the new Montlake tunnel.
- A crosswalk at East Shelby Street to safely cross to and from the west side of Montlake Boulevard.



Q: How long will the trail stay closed?

The west connection from Montlake to the Bill Dawson Trail will remain closed until 2030. In the spring of 2025, we will also close the east connection from Montlake to the Bill Dawson Trail and tunnel under Montlake Boulevard. The trail will remain closed for up to five years.

Q: Why are you closing the trail for so long and was this closure planned?

We closed the west connection from Montlake to the Bill Dawson Trail so we could begin construction on the [Portage Bay Bridge and Roanoke Lid Project](#). This phased trail closure will help keep trail users and construction crews safe. We need to fully close the east connection from Montlake to the Bill Dawson in spring 2025 so crews can access the work trestle to build the new Portage Bay bridge.

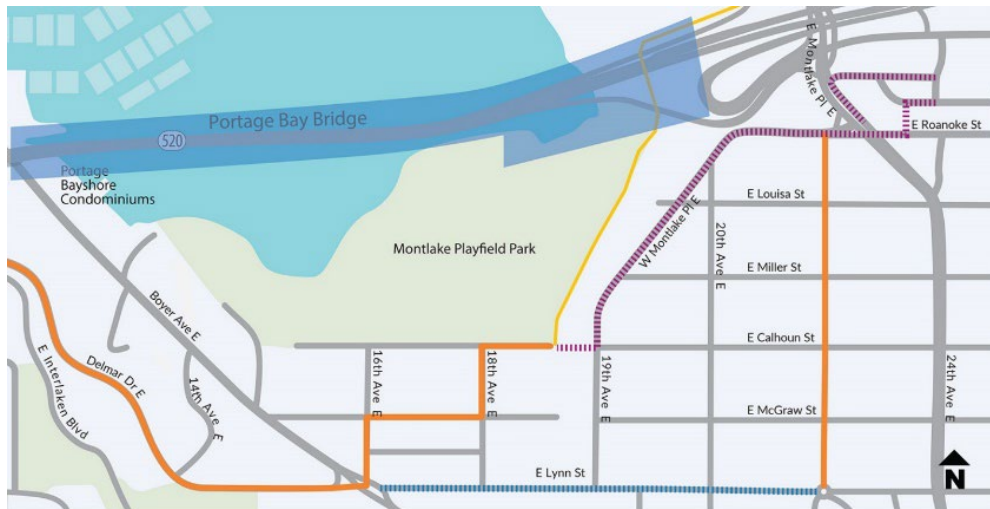
In 2011, we noted in the [SR 520 Program Final Environmental Impact Statement](#) that we would need to close the Bill Dawson Trail throughout most of the Portage Bay Bridge and Roanoke Lid Project construction for access and staging.

What will the final trail look like?

We'll add a new ramp and stairs on the west side of Montlake Boulevard to restore this connection when the Portage Bay Bridge and Roanoke Lid Project is complete in 2031. The Portage Bay Project will complete all the SR 520 planned bike and pedestrian improvements.

Will you offer detour routes when the trail is closed?

Yes, we are working with the city of Seattle to develop safe and clear routes for people biking, walking and rolling. Here are some of the potential routes we've identified. We will make sure to let you know when they are finalized.



Legend

- Existing Bike Routes
- Bill Dawson Trail
- ⋯ Potential bike detour route on East Lynn Street
- ⋯ Potential bike detour route on West Montlake Place East
- Work Zone

Q: How can I stay informed about trail closures and detour routes during the closure?

We understand this closure isn't ideal, especially for frequent trail users like University of Washington students and staff. We will notify the public as soon as we have finalized the detour routes. To stay up to date about project construction, please sign up for our weekly newsletter.

Q: Who can I contact for more information?

You can reach us by:

- Calling our 24-hour hotline: 206-319-4520
- Emailing: sr520bridge@wsdot.wa.gov