



**Interbay Working Group Meeting
March 8, 2013**

Attendees:

Betsy Blackstock, Blackstock Lumber & Interbay P-Patch
Bruce Wynn, Interbay Neighborhood Association
Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Association
Jeffrey Hummel, Hummel Architects, Interbay Urban Center
John Gaines, Freehold Group
Adam Iwaszuk, WA Army National Guard
John Coney, Queen Anne Community Council /Uptown Alliance
Joseph Gellings, Port of Seattle
Martin Kaplan, Queen Anne Community Council
Steve Gillespie, Foster Pepper
Pete Smith, HNTB Corp. (consultant for SDOT Magnolia Bridge EIS)

City Staff:

Patrice Carroll, Senior Planner, DPD
Geoff Wentlandt, Senior Planner/ Urban Designer, DPD
Michael James, SDOT – Ballard Transit Expansion Study
Sara Zora, SDOT – Bicycle Master Plan

At this meeting we discussed public realm concepts for the Interbay study area.

Updates

We are on schedule to have Draft proposal at the April 3 meeting. Outreach to stakeholders will continue through April and conclude with a community meeting in at the end of April.

Zoning Tools + Street Character

Seattle has a variety of zoning tools that influence the character of streets:

Base Zones

- Seattle Mixed (SM) and Neighborhood Commercial (NC) encourage more urban and pedestrian oriented streets by limiting setbacks and discouraging blank walls.
- Commercial (C) and industrial zoning (IG, IC) can be more auto-oriented allowing parking to be more prominent.

Other Zoning Designations to Encourage Design and Landscaping to Enhance Walkability

- Pedestrian-designated streets in NC zones – encourages active street level uses
- Class 1 and 2 pedestrian streets in SM zones - encourages active street level uses
- Streets within the Industrial Streets Landscaping Plan area – requires street trees and screening
- Streets where Green Factor landscaping requirements apply – encourages higher quality landscaping
- Neighborhood Green Streets – identified important pedestrian blocks for detailed streetscape planning and design

Street Type Designations

The City uses street type designations to define street character and establish design standards in the SDOT right-of-way improvement manual. Street Type is determined primarily by traffic classification (e.g. Principal, Minor and Collector Arterial streets type of arterial, non-arterial) and the adjacent land use. As sites are developed/redeveloped, the right-of-way street type designation is used to determine what improvements might be needed within the public right-of-way.

(See [website](#) for more detail about street types and classifications)

General Comments About Streets in the study area:

- Many of the streets in Interbay are in poor condition and need resurfacing.
- Stormwater is a problem in some locations (Armory Way)
- City doesn't maintain or improve industrial streets¹
- Don't want to talk about street character until zoning changes are set.
- Would like to review and provide comments on improvements proposed for the area in Pedestrian Master Plan. (A list of "Top Tier" projects from the Pedestrian Master Plan is attached)

¹ City does not repair local streets, except for safety issues. The City does improve arterial streets, for which there is overall insufficient funding. Several arterial streets within both Manufacturing and Industrial Centers (MIC) have been recently upgraded.

Character of Key Streets

This project is an opportunity to use the above zoning tools to encourage the desired street character in Interbay. As new development occurs, zoning can influence the design of the area between the roadway and the building.

W Dravus Street (west of 15th Avenue W)

- Current condition – 100' right-of-way; has wide sidewalks with planting strip, two travel lanes in each direction, eastbound parking lane, center lane widens/westbound parking lane narrows to provide an eastbound turning lane. Right-of-way pinches down to four lanes and very narrow protected sidewalk on bridge to Magnolia.
- Possible Proposal – Designate as a “pedestrian street” in zoning code and a mixed use street type to emphasize a pedestrian orientation. New development would be subject to additional development standards- active street level uses, transparency.
- Comments
 - Most active pedestrian street in area.
 - East west connection for pedestrians is very important.
 - Traffic often backs up to 17th Street.
 - The Dravus Street bridge over the rail tracks is a pinch point for pedestrians.

17th Avenue W/ W Thorndyke Street (north of W Dravus Street)

- Current condition – 86' right-of-way; mixed condition with sidewalks on eastside with parallel parking, and curbless on westside with perpendicular parking.
- Possible Proposal – Designate as an industrial access street to preserve flexible curbless condition, and the existing industrial character of the street.
- Comments
 - Safety concerns. Seattle Storm has complained about car campers with aggressive dogs intimidating employees.
 - The priority should be on improving the street to a more functional condition. It is currently very damaged.
 - Some would prefer a more traditional, urban street - sidewalks, curbs, street trees, parallel parking.
 - Interest in improvement of the street as a non-traditional curbless or shared street was limited.
 - Some prefer a configuration that prioritizes trucks access and industrial uses.

16th Avenue W (north of W Dravus Street)

- Current condition – 66' right-of-way, narrowest street, very comfortable pedestrian scale.

- Possible Proposal – Designate 16th as a neighborhood green street. This would prompt a unique streetscape design to encourage new development to make 16th Street the “front door”.
- Comments
 - Commercial uses will want to be oriented to 15th Street to take advantage of the visibility.
 - Property owners will want garage access from 16th to take advantage of the change in grade.
 - If grocery store site were redeveloped, a new building would orient to Dravus Street.
 - Some supported the idea of a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood type street on 16th that would complement the proposed routing of bicycles via 16th.

15th Avenue W (near W Dravus Street)

- Current conditions - 188’ right-of-way, highway condition- 3 express lanes in each direction, services roads/ slip ramps . Very wide configuration designed to move large volumes of traffic. Better sidewalks with new development. Challenging condition for pedestrians.
- Half block between 15th and 16th Street was used to expand the right-of-way when slip ramps were created.
- Possible Proposal - Remove any P designation from the NC zone. This would remove street level use restrictions for new development.
- Comments
 - Westside of 15th Avenue has potential for commercial. High traffic volumes provide lots of visibility. Sidewalks are needed to promote walking.
 - Lack of lines on 15th Avenue slip ramps near Bertona Street disrupts traffic flow.
 - Grade change limits access to properties on Westside, e.g. Chuck Read is unable to access his building from 15th Ave so space remains vacant.

15th AvenueW (near Whole Foods)

- Current condition – 100’ right of way, 3 lanes in each direction, plus a turning lane). Space is constrained. New developments are improving sidewalk conditions to be better for pedestrians.
- No changes proposed to street designations.
- Comments
 - BAT lanes used for parking in non-peak hours.
 - Pedestrian crossings are dangerous.
 - Unclear how “walkable” 15th Avenue could ever be with such high traffic volume.
 - Armory Way is in very poor condition. This is the only access to the Armory.

Other Comments

- Pedestrian connections near the Ballard Bridge are dangerous.
- There is a project to study the feasibility of a bike/ped connection from the westside of Ballard Bridge to the Ship Canal trail (contact is Connie Zimmerman at SDOT)

Bicycle Movement

Bicycle Master Plan Draft Network

Sara Zora presented highlights of the Draft Network Plan for the Bicycle Master Plan Update.

- Emphasis is routes/facilities that are comfortable for many, not just the fearless, hard core riders. The network plan identifies four different types of facilities:
 - Off-street (e.g. multi-use pathway)
 - In-street major separation (e.g. cycle track)
 - In-street minor separation (e.g. painted bike lane/buffered bike lanes)
 - Enhanced street (e.g. neighborhood greenway signage and shared lane pavement marking - sharrows)
- The plan also notes where there are “Multi-modal corridors” that must accommodate cars, trucks, transit as well as bicycles and pedestrians.
- Draft Network Plan (still being revised) reflects need for the following facilities in study area based on demand as well as vehicle traffic volumes and speeds within the right of way:
 - Multi-Modal Corridor & In Street Major Separation - 15th Avenue W (north of W Dravus Street)
 - In Street Major Separation - W Dravus Street (west of 15th Ave W)
 - In Street Minor Separation - W Dravus Street (east of 15th Ave W)
 - Enhanced Street – 16th Street W (north of Dravus)
 - Enhanced Street - 14th Ave W (between Nickerson and Gillman Streets)
 - Off Street Connection (between Thorndyke Street and Emerson Street)
- Sara noted some things likely to change in the draft plan:
 - It recommends a major separation is for 15th Avenue W due to high volume of traffic and the high demand to make a connection along this flat, fast route. However, the final plan is unlikely to recommend separated bike facility because it would take a travel lane which may not be acceptable due to high traffic volumes and transit/freight needs.
 - 14th Avenue is not a great alternative to 15th Avenue because the route veers uphill at Gilman while 15th Avenue remains flat.
- The City will allow the ‘fast and furious’ bicyclists to continue to use the BAT lanes because there is no alternative route. Some riders use the sidewalk which is legal.

Comments and Feedback on Draft Bicycle Network Plan:

- Don’t allow bicyclists in the BAT lanes on 15th Avenue because it slows buses down.
- Taking a travel lane on Dravus Street W to create a major separation is not acceptable.
- There is really no alternative to routing bicycles in a travel lane over the Dravus St. bridge.

Alternative Bicycle Route Through Interbay

Jeff Hummel presented an alternative, mostly off-street, bicycle route through Interbay. General route (north to south) would include the following segments:

- Emerson Street to 16th Street W (where there is an informal trail across Chuck Read's property).
- South on 16th Avenue to Barrett Street
- West on Barrett Street to King County right-of-way along BSNF RR
- South on King County right of way past the golf course to Amory Way
- Armory Way east to Interbay Urban Center
- South through Interbay Urban Center and across the Amory's Pedestrian Bridge (once connected military housing and recreation areas) where it connects to the Waterfront Trail.



Comments about this alternative

- Would require permission from a variety of public and private owners.
- The Army has no interest in the pedestrian bridge and could potentially move the fence line. However they do need to preserve its use of the adjacent driving track for training. The trail could not interfere with that use.
- There is homeless camping along rail line.

- Commuters do like to use the Waterfront Trail, so this would be an attractive connection.
- There is a plan for a Queen Anne Bicycle Beltway, but it's hard to connect to the Interbay Urban Center.
- This might help to connect to the new park near Pier 91.
- Connecting the Waterfront Trail and the Ship Canal Trail is key. This could help make that connection.
- SDOT will investigate this alternative further.

Other Comments on Public Realm Issues

- There is a plan to have a trail connection through Lower Kinnear Park to the Amgen Bridge and the Waterfront. An off-leash dog area has opened, and there is more fundraising for a trail project. The project was submitted for park levy funds, but there are concerns about the feasibility of a trail through this high risk slide area.
- Property owners at Port 106 are negotiating with SDOT to improve Armory Way which is in terrible shape and the only point of access to the Armory.
- Connections to Uptown from Elliot Avenue near Mercer Street are very important.

Pedestrian Master Plan Projects within the Interbay Study Area

The Pedestrian Master Plan was adopted by City Council resolution in September 2009. DPD supports the implementation of projects identified through the [Pedestrian Master Plan](#) process as funding is available. Note that additional projects are included in the Pedestrian Master Plan– these represent the top tier. A full list of improvements is available on the plan website. As of March 2013, none of the projects on this list have been implemented. However, planning for two “across the roadway” projects is underway:

- Intersection of 17th Avenue W and W Dravus Street
- Intersection of 15th Avenue W and W Boston Street

DRAFT Top Tier Across the Roadway Projects in High Priority Areas

The projects represented are approximately 20% of the Across the Roadway projects within the High Priority Areas. The improvements recommended at each location vary, and additional field analysis is needed in many cases.

Vicinity of 15 th and Emerson/ Nickerson	1	15 th Avenue W Northbound Off Ramp and Emerson Ramp
	2	15 th Avenue W Off Ramp and W Nickerson Street
	3	15 th Avenue W On Ramp and Emerson Ramp
	4	Emerson Nickerson Ramp and W Nickerson Street
	5	West Emerson Street Ramp and Nickerson Turn Ramp
Vicinity of 15 th and Dravus	6	15 th Avenue W Northbound Off Ramp and W Dravus Street
	7	15 th Avenue W Southbound Off Ramp and W Dravus Street
Other Locations	8	15 th Avenue W and W Boston Street
	9	15 th Avenue W and W Ruffner Street

DRAFT Top Tier Along the Roadway Projects in High Priority Areas

The projects represented are approximately 20% of the Along the Roadway projects within the High Priority Areas. All of the project locations are missing a sidewalk.

Vicinity of 15 th and Emerson/ Nickerson	10	15 th Avenue W (between W Ruffner Street and On Ramp and Emerson Turn Road)
	11	15 th Emerson Ramp (between 15 th Avenue W On Ramp and Emerson Turn Road)
	12	Emerson Nickerson Ramp (between 15 th Emerson Ramp and W Nickerson Street)
	13	15 th Avenue W (between 15 th Avenue W Ramp and Emerson Ramp)
	14	W Ruffner (between 14 th Avenue W and 15 th Avenue W)

Vicinity of 15 th and Dravus	15	15 th Avenue W Northbound Off Ramp (between 15 th Avenue and W Dravus Street)
	16	15 th Avenue W Northbound On Ramp (between W Dravus Street and 15 th Avenue)
	17	15 th Avenue W Southbound Off Ramp (between W Bertona Street and W Dravus Street)
	18	15 th Avenue W Southbound On Ramp (between W Dravus Street and 15 th Avenue)
	19	15 th Avenue W (between 15 th Avenue W Northbound Off Ramp and W Bertona Street)
	20	17 th Avenue (between W Dravus and W Bertona St)
Other	21	Gilman Drive W (between 15 th Avenue W and 11 th Avenue W)
	22	Gilman Upper Drive W (between 15 th Avenue W and 11 th Avenue W)
	23	W Wheeler St (between 15 th Avenue and deadend)
	24	W Armory Way (between 15 th Avenue and deadend)
	25	W Armour St (between deadend and 15 th Avenue W)
	26	W Raye St (between dead end and 15 th Avenue W)