



# **WEST MARGINAL WAY SW VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE REPORT BACK**



## **DATE AND TIME:**

**Thursday, February 18, 2021  
6 - 7:30 PM**

## **HOSTED BY:**

**Seattle Department of  
Transportation (SDOT)**





# SUMMARY

On February 18th, 2021, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) hosted a public open house on the online platform Zoom with 80-90 community members. During the virtual open house, SDOT discussed safety and mobility improvements around West Marginal Way SW, including the Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center signal, crossing and the west side sidewalk to access the Longhouse which will be implemented this year, and the proposed roadway changes project, and heard from the participants about their concerns, priorities, and hopes for the improvement projects.

## PROJECT CONTEXT AND COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Since the West Seattle High-Rise Bridge closure, West Marginal Way SW has become an even more essential connection to many businesses, community members and freight. This street is not only home to the Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center, but it serves as a major truck and heavy haul route. It also serves as a gap in the bicycle network between West Seattle, South Park, and Georgetown to connect the Duwamish River Trail to the West Seattle Bridge Trail. SDOT's goal is to increase safety for all travelers along West Marginal Way SW.



The West Marginal Way SW improvements will be taking place between the Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center and SW Marginal Place. This busy West Seattle corridor is used by multiple modes of transportation, serving as a major truck route, North peninsula vehicle route, and a major regional bike connection. SDOT has identified multiple opportunities for safety improvements along this busy route.

SDOT staff presented background information about West Marginal Way SW, as well as confirming approved projects that will be constructed:

- In 2021, SDOT will build an interim pedestrian signal and crosswalk to provide a safer crossing for people accessing the Duwamish Longhouse. We will also install a sidewalk on the west side of West Marginal Way SW between the Duwamish Longhouse and SW Idaho St.
- The permanent signal will be installed in 2022.

SDOT also presented on the potential for a proposed two-way protected bicycle lane in the southbound curb lane and other potential design options in the vicinity of the Duwamish Longhouse south of the proposed two-way bike lane:

1. Extending the proposed bike lane south from the Duwamish River Trail signal to the Longhouse.
2. Extending the existing on-street parking north from the Longhouse to the Duwamish River Trail signal.
3. Remove the existing lane drop and open southbound traffic up to two lanes.

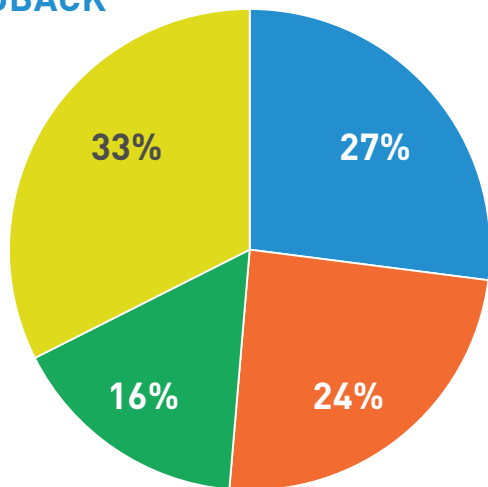
Other topics discussed included traffic volume mitigation on West Marginal Way SW with a focus on varying traffic volume data, impacts of lane drops and other improvements, and traffic crash data. The community weighed in with feedback during the Q & A portion of the event.

# FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS

Feedback received during the West Marginal Way SW open house was of mixed sentiments. An even number of participants supported the potential improvement projects (bike lane and parking), while advocating for the safety of bikers, pedestrians, and the Duwamish Longhouse. An equal number of participants noted opposition to the potential improvement projects, and voiced concerns about the reduction of speed and lanes on this busy street.

There were recurring questions regarding traffic mitigation. Community members were interested in how traffic would change once the West Seattle High Bridge reopens. Some shared concerns of the current conditions of the roads around West Marginal Way SW, suggesting that SDOT should focus on improving the existing road conditions, rather than making new modifications.

## VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK



■ Traffic Flow Revision    ■ Bike Lane Addition  
■ Lane Merger    ■ Fix Current Structures

*The chart above shows support and opposition from participants in the virtual open house. Another issue raised was the speed limit on West Marginal Way SW. Many participants were in favor of the newly reduced speed to 30 MPH as it provides much needed safety for pedestrians and bikers.*

### Comments in support of the proposed improvements (bike lane and parking)

- “Adding a bike lane between Chelan and Longhouse would be great. No loss of volume. Existing bike option is not safe and not really existent. Why is this being resisted?”

- “People want the option to speed and lane jockey to try to shave a few seconds off their trip. That doesn’t make it right. In fact the lane reduction makes everyone, driving, walking and biking safer.”
- “Yes, the City is GOING to do this, now is our chance to make it safe for all, and limit the changes to this .6 section. The City needs to complete the bike trail to make it safe for bikes / pedestrians, Since they are going to do this, Options B and C.”
- “More people would bike on the road if it was safer to do so. Safer streets generally results in an increase in bicycle commuting.”

### Comments in support of completing proposed improvements at a later date

- “How about now is not the right time and reserving opinion about doing it at a later time.”
- “Again, the trail already exists in this space! Improve it WHERE IT ALREADY EXISTS along 16th Ave, rather than moving cyclists out into West Marginal Way SW.”
- “Fix the Sidewalk, make a “wide” Sidewalk- Alki style, southbound from Chelan to the Longhouse, install the crosswalk, the City is going to do it anyway, vote or support option C, try to limit the City’s desire of closing the entire right lane!”
- “Wait until drivers can get in and out of West Seattle. Love the idea but this is the wrong timing. Road rage out there now is really bad!”

### Comments in opposition to the proposed improvements

- “One lane means the slowest car dictates the speed. Raise speed back up to where the cars have been running for the last 20 years.”
- “Wrong time for this project! Construction would further restrict traffic. The way to increase capacity is not to add a bottleneck! One lane means backups, and the slowest car makes the decision for everyone behind them.”
- “Traffic is only going to be worse with people continuing to use this .6 miles of lane and then jam back into the left lane at the long house.”
- “Why is this project on anyone’s radar when the only issue that really matters is fixing the upper bridge?”

# NEXT STEPS

Feedback received at the virtual open house has provided critical insight, and ideas for additional analysis, to inform decisions regarding West Marginal Way SW.

Insights will be utilized to refine our approach to West Marginal Way SW from the walker/biker-triggered signal south of SW Idaho St (Duwamish River Trail Signal) to W Marginal Pl (0.6 mile), with particular focus on

- Freight-designation of the corridor and ensuring negligible mobility impacts.
- Potential for an All Ages and Abilities (AAA) bike network connection.
- Potential to achieve safer travel speeds while not impacting travel times.
- Opportunities to collect additional data points and analyze to inform future decision.
- Conversations with adjacent property owners and further design details along the 0.6-mile segment
- Potential construction impacts along a critical detour route.
- Public input from local community members.

We will present a recommendations to SDOT leadership by late March/early April, with an official decision to be made in Q2 2021.

**To learn more, please visit our website at:**

[www.seattle.gov/transportation/West-Marginal-Way-SW-Improvements](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/West-Marginal-Way-SW-Improvements)



**Seattle**  
Department of  
Transportation