

Bailey Gatzert Elementary Pedestrian Improvements

The intersections associated with Bailey Gatzert Elementary School (14th Ave & E Yesler Way; E Yesler Way & 12th Ave S; 12th Ave S & Boren Ave; 14th Ave S & S Washington St).

Applicant Problem

The addition of the First Hill Street Car line near Bailey Gatzert Elementary School has increased congestion experienced between rail, vehicle and pedestrian (adult and elementary-age children) foot traffic. Accordingly, improvements around the school are necessary to give greater protection for pedestrians in the forms of increased signage, vision, and general overall safety.

The pedestrian problems that surround Bailey Gatzert Elementary School are outlined in the following separate categories: (1) 14th Ave S Corridor; (2) Yesler & 12th Ave; and (3) Boren & 12th Ave S.

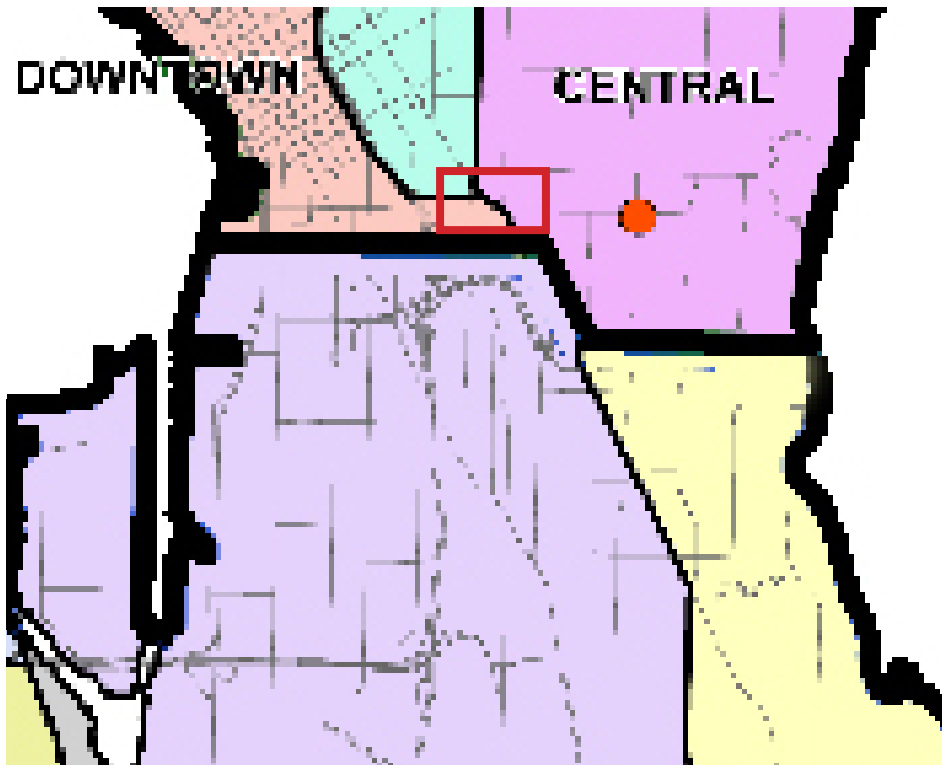
PROJECT TYPE

Safe Routes to School

COST ESTIMATE

\$130,000

- SDOT NSF - \$30,000
- SDOT SRTS - \$100,000



1) 14TH AVE S. CORRIDOR

Problem 1: Intersection of 14th Ave S & Yesler.

Eastbound Cars on Yesler turning right onto 14th Ave S in violation of restricted signage. Here, an east-bound Street Car has a free right turn. The Street Car right of way restricts east bound cars from turning right onto 14th Ave S. Yet, cars are still turning south onto 14th Ave S, using the space allowed only for the Street Car. This, of course, is a problem for pedestrians as the Pedestrian Walk Signals are timed with the underlying assumption that Drivers are not turning into this space, and therefore, increasing risk to pedestrians waiting to cross the street headed north or east. A frequent occasion is when a car takes a right onto 14th Ave S and then realizes half-way down the street that they have made a mistake--and their efforts to correct their mistake cause only more problems in the Street Car-only area of the corridor. (Possible Solution: Better signage blocking drivers from right hand turn into restricted area.)

Problem 2: Intersection of 14th Ave S & Yesler. As an extension of Problem One, there is a disconnect between the pedestrian traffic signals that exist at NE corner of the school property. Here, there is a "center island" that pedestrians have to use in order to successfully cross the street. The disconnect is that there is no warning for pedestrians crossing to the north or east. If the sign indicates 'WALK,' it does not appropriately recognize a Street Car that may be turning right (south) onto 14th Ave S. Of course, while an attentive Street Car engineer will use his/her bell to announce its presence (note--bell not always easy to hear in traffic), the risk will remain for as long as there is a 'WALK' sign telling the pedestrian that they are free to cross the Street Car right-of-way to access the safety of the "center island." (Possible Solution: Coordinate Crosswalk to prevent "WALK" sign when Street Car is oncoming)

Problem 3: Intersection of 14th Ave S & Yesler. Cars stop at red lights too close to the "turning" Street Car rails, causing backups and further congestion when the Street Car is turning westbound off of 14th Ave S and onto Yesler. (Possible Solution: Heightened/improved signage on eastbound Yesler ON the street itself in form of clearly marked lines).

Problem 4: Intersection of 14th Ave S & Yesler.

The speed camera at 15th & Yesler (policing the intersection of 14th & Problem 4: Intersection of 14th Ave S & Yesler. The speed camera at 15th & Yesler (policing the intersection of 14th & Yesler) is not functioning. At such a sensitive school zone intersection, a functional speed camera would assist in reducing risk to pedestrians. (Possible Solution: Fix Speed Camera)

Problem 5: Intersection of 14th Ave S & Yesler. Too many cars running red lights. Neighbors & frequent pedestrians have witnessed too many vehicles running red lights. This intersection is prime for a Red light patrol camera. (Possible Solution: Install Red light patrol camera.)

Problem 6: Intersection of 14th Ave S & Washington Ave S (Street Car stop and platform). Northbound drivers on 14th Ave S do not stop at the stop sign. This creates a problem because this pedestrian crosswalk is used to access the Street Car platform. Bottom line: Cars need to stop at this intersection and pedestrian signage, lighting (perhaps curb lights) must be improved/implemented to make sure that northbound cars understand that (a) they are in a school zone, and (b) they are in a high pedestrian zone so that they will stop at the stop sign. (Possible solution: Install curb-lightbulbs to indicate to drivers that there is a pedestrian crosswalk; flashing lights; flood lights on the area for better night vision; improved signage.)

Problem 7: Too few school zone signs. Simply, more are needed in the blocks that lead up to the 14th Ave Corridor.

(Possible Solution: more school zone signs--or at least placed so as to be more visible.)

Problem 8: The signage between the school parking lot and the Street Car tracks is confusing. To an unfamiliar eye, it is very confusing and unclear. (Possible solution: Improve signage, make more clear; speed bumps(?))

2) E YESLER WAY & 12TH AVE

Problem 9: Westbound Right-Turn onto 12th Ave S. Background: Because drivers can no longer travel south on 14th beyond Yesler, many turn west onto Yesler and wait to turn left (south) onto 12th Ave S. This has increased back-ups on Yesler (even as far back as 14th). (Possible Solutions to this problem include: (a) adding a left-turn signal to help with traffic flow, or in the alternative (b) white signs with black arrows indicating permissible turning options for each west bound lane of traffic.)

Problem 10: Dangerous and Regular Traffic Violations at intersection of Yesler Ave & 12th Ave. Speeding, violations of No-Turn-On-Red Signs are frequent occurrences. (Possible Solutions: Installation of cameras could reduce frequency of these dangerous violations.)

Problem 11: Generally, poor flow of traffic at Yesler Ave & 12th Ave. Due to the backups resulting from re-route of south-bound traffic off of 14th Ave, increase of traffic from new buildings in the area, and preexisting foot and school drop off traffic, the lights of this intersection is ripe for a timing study to improve the flows. (Possible solution: In addition (or in conjunction) to a traffic study, this intersection would be a prime candidate for a comprehensive study that would scientifically identify problems of congestion and interrelation between foot traffic, bike traffic, vehicle traffic and the Street Car.)

3) BOREN AVE & 12TH AVE S.

Problem 12: Intersection of Boren & 12th Ave S. needs repainted crosswalks. They are faded and hard to see, even on a clear day (nearly non-existent on a gray, rainy day).(Possible Solution: Repaint crosswalks.)

Problem 13: Southbound Driver back up. Intersection of Boren & 12th Ave S., needs signage that tells drivers it is permissible to turn left onto Boren Ave S from the middle turn lane. Presently, drivers think the only way to turn left is in the left lane, which is incorrect and creates backups. Left turns are permissible from middle lane, but a lack of signage fails to communicate this to south bound drivers. (Possible Solutions: Black and White metal signs below the traffic lights indicating such permissible turns could be a quick fix (or similar signage.)

Problem 14: Generally, Bailey Gatzert Elementary School is poorly identifiable as a school. That is, traffic of all kinds does not recognize that the brick building that is encompassed by the above-mentioned intersections and boundaries, is in fact an elementary school. The trees hang too low shielding the school from the eye, and there is inadequate signage that indicates to the passer-by that it is a functioning elementary school. Creating clear lines of sight around the building will help to indicate to drivers that they are in a school zone and should, therefore, be aware of children-pedestrians. (Possible Solution: Trim Trees, cut bushes, hedges, Larger “BAILEY GATZERT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL” signage: Perhaps in the form of Murals on the chain link fences; installation of flags around the school grounds; anything to announce the presence of a school.)

Applicant Solution

See above “(Possible Solutions)” following each problem identified in Section 3, above.



Existing school zone signing on 12th Ave S



Looking north at 14th Ave S and S Washington St

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Review

Project Description

The applicant included a large number of concerns. SDOT will address a number of these concerns separately from the NSF fund utilizing other funding sources available to address immediate safety concerns. Changes to the intersection of 12th Ave and Yesler Way will be addressed through ongoing improvement to the First Hill Streetcar.

Three projects are included in this conceptual design:

- 1) Concrete curb bulb at 14th Ave S and S Washington St

14th Ave S is a minor arterial running north-south and is immediately adjacent to Bailey-Gatzert Elementary School. It has one northbound lane, a southbound lane for streetcar only, and a marked northbound bike lane. On the south leg of the intersection there is an island streetcar stop. S Washington St is a non-arterial street with a width of 32 feet. There is parking on both sides of the roadway. The intersection of 14th Ave S and S Washington St is controlled by an all-way stop with marked crosswalks and stop bars on all legs. The proposed improvement would construct a concrete curb bulb in place of the existing painted bulb on the southeast corner of the intersection of 14th Ave S and S Washington St. This bulb would improve pedestrian visibility, decrease crosswalk length, and increase visibility of the stop sign.

- 2) Addition of a mural or school sign along the school frontage along 12th Ave S between Boren Ave and Yesler Way. Design of this sign would require an input from the school and surrounding neighborhood.

- 3) Installation of a supplemental beacon on northbound 12th Ave S, just south of Boren Ave S to further inform motorists of the 20 MPH school speed limit.

Constructability

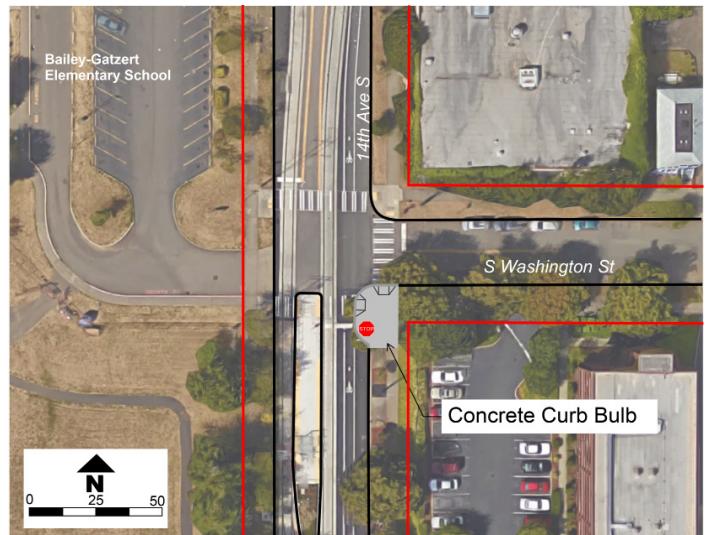
- Some minor re-grading may be necessary to ensure the new curb ramps are ADA-compliant.

Impacts

- No impacts identified.

Benefits

- Increased safety for pedestrians with shorter crossing distances and increased visibility.



Proposed Curb Bulb at 14th Ave S and S Washington St



Sign/mural mockup (legend/appearance to be determined through community process)