



RapidRide Roosevelt

Background, Status, and Frequently Asked Questions

Updated July 15, 2019

Background

- In July 2017, the Seattle City Council adopted the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the RapidRide Roosevelt (formerly Roosevelt RapidRide) project (Resolution 31761)
- In December 2017, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) launched the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the RapidRide Roosevelt Project that included a scoping public comment period. SDOT is developing a draft NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA) to be published later this year.
- In summer 2018, SDOT conducted an assessment of the Levy to Move Seattle, which includes partial funding for the RapidRide Roosevelt project. The assessment included a review of cost, funding and timeline opportunities for multiple transportation investments, including the RapidRide Roosevelt project.
- In response to community concerns in fall 2018, SDOT published a thorough review of how bicycle facility options in Eastlake could best meet the project purpose and need, how curb space and parking are managed, and tools and options that may help better manage future vehicle access for residents and businesses

Key 2019 schedule milestones for RapidRide Roosevelt

- Jan. 2019: Launch parking outreach for the Eastlake neighborhood
- May 2019: Submit draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Summer 2019: Conduct preliminary design and associated outreach
- Fall 2019: Publish EA for public review and comment



Current project status

SDOT is currently:

- Advancing design on the project and developing an EA, with a draft scheduled to be published this fall
- Actively seeking additional funding to deliver the project:
 - Over the past year, SDOT has secured partial grant funds for portions of the project
 - SDOT has applied for a Small Starts grant through the FTA in the fiscal year 2020 budget. In 2018, the FTA rated the project “High”, the highest rating a project can receive in the Small Starts program
 - SDOT is also seeking additional funding for project elements through regional grant competitions
- Developing a project-specific partnership with King County Metro
- Regularly reviewing progress towards securing Small Starts funding with the Levy Oversight Committee

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the RapidRide Roosevelt project?

- RapidRide Roosevelt will provide high-quality bus rapid transit service connecting Downtown Seattle with the neighborhoods of Belltown, South Lake Union, Eastlake, University District, and Roosevelt
- SDOT is partnering with King County Metro to enhance transit connections and upgrade existing bus routes to RapidRide service
- The 6-mile corridor connects the Roosevelt neighborhood with Downtown Seattle via the University District, Eastlake South Lake Union and Belltown, as well as connects to Link light rail and other bus routes
- Service is expected to begin in 2024

Key project features

- Provides bus operations in a dedicated lane or in mixed traffic
- Provides faster, more reliable service for more people through a series of targeted investments along the corridor
- Proposed transit operations:
 - Operates 24 hours a day, with 7.5-minute or better headways during morning (7-9 AM) and afternoon (5-6 PM) peak periods
 - Includes enhanced signal systems with transit signal priority and queue jumps at 33 key locations
 - 2.3 miles of business access and transit (BAT) lanes or transit-only lanes



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- Electric trolley service
- Includes 26 new RapidRide stations (13 in each direction)
 - RapidRide stations could include real-time arrival information, off-board fare collection, benches, pedestrian-scale lighting, large bus shelters, and route information maps
 - RapidRide stations meet ADA requirements
- Improves bicycle and pedestrian access with transit
 - About 5 miles of protected bicycle lanes along 11th Ave NE, 12th Ave NE, Eastlake Ave E, and Fairview Ave N, with connections to existing bike facilities
 - Over 200 ADA-compliant curb ramps, pedestrian push buttons, and countdown pedestrian signals
 - Improved sidewalks and crosswalks
- New overhead contact system and traction power substation north of the University Bridge to provide power to trolley buses (zero-emission vehicles) for full 6-mile length of route
- Paving along Eastlake Ave E and 11th and 12th avenues NE to NE 65th St, totaling 3.1 miles of paving improvements

What is the project purpose?

- The purpose of the RapidRide Roosevelt project is to improve transit travel times, reliability, and capacity to increase high-frequency, all-day transit service and enhance transit connections between Downtown Seattle and the Belltown, South Lake Union, Eastlake, University District, and Roosevelt neighborhoods, in order to:
 - Address current and future mobility needs for residents, workers, and students
 - Address capacity constraints in the transportation network along this north-south corridor
 - Provide equitable transportation access to major institutions, employers, and neighborhoods

What are the project needs?

- The Roosevelt corridor has been identified as a high-priority corridor for meeting the following transportation and community needs:
 - Provide transit service to support housing and employment growth
 - Provide neighborhood connections to future Link light rail stations
 - Improve transit travel time and reliability throughout the corridor
 - Reduce overcrowding of existing bus capacity
 - Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and connections to transit



What is the project history?

- From 2014 to 2016, SDOT and Metro explored options for high capacity transit along the corridor, including rail and bus.
- The 2014 Bicycle Master Plan recommended protected bicycle lanes on Fairview Ave N, Eastlake Ave E, and 11th/12th Avenues NE.
- The 2016 Metro Connects Long Range Plan includes RapidRide Roosevelt.
- The Roosevelt High Capacity Transit corridor is identified for priority implementation in the City of Seattle's 2016 Updated Transit Master Plan and is partially funded by the Levy to Move Seattle.
- The Seattle City Council adopted the Locally Preferred Alternative, defining the project elements, in July 2017.

How much does the project cost? Is the project funded? How is it funded?

- The total budget for the Transit-Plus Multimodal Corridor (TPMC) Project for RapidRide Roosevelt is \$85.7M
- The project will also construct paving of 11th and 12th Avenues NE (\$6.8M) and Eastlake Ave E (\$29.8M), with funding included in the Arterial Asphalt and Concrete (AAC) program and grant funding in addition to the TPMC budget.
- The project will be baselined at the 30% design milestone this fall and the breakdown of costs will be updated at that time. We entered the Small Starts Project Development in September 2017 and provided an updated submittal in September 2018 requesting a \$45M contribution from the FTA. The FTA process requires a NEPA EA, which we are currently drafting. We anticipate this being published for public comment later this year in the fall. We currently plan to initiate the FTA Small Starts grant request after the public comment period. Based on the schedule being developed with the FTA, we would be targeting award in late 2021 allowing us to secure funds and begin construction in 2022.

Why are protected bicycle lanes planned for Eastlake Ave E?

- Along with improving transit service, the RapidRide Roosevelt project purpose and need statement also includes improving safety conditions and access to transit for people biking and walking along the corridor
- While people walking and biking make up only 6.3% of all crashes in the city, they represent a much larger percentage of serious (47.4%) and fatal (39.7%) crashes [Source: City of Seattle Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Analysis, September 30, 2016]
- Between 2012 and 2017, there were 39 reported collisions involving bicyclists in the Eastlake neighborhood along Eastlake Ave E, with most of them resulting in



injury [Source: RapidRide Roosevelt Corridor: Eastlake Bicycle Facility Evaluation Memorandum, October 2018]

- Currently about 1,700 people bike per day cross the University Bridge, which is the second-highest in the city in terms of bicycle volumes
- The RapidRide Roosevelt project includes approximately 5 lane-miles of protected bicycle lanes connecting Roosevelt, the University District, Eastlake, South Lake Union, and Belltown neighborhoods
- Other bicycle facilities have been evaluated but the protected bicycle lane on Eastlake best meets evaluation criteria.

Bicycle facility analysis

- In response to community concerns from the impacts of bicycle facilities along Eastlake Ave E (changes to curb space, narrowing of general-purpose travel lanes), SDOT examined other bicycle facility and route options for the project
- Options included on- and off-corridor options, including the proposed Eastlake Ave E option as presented in the Locally Preferred Alternative. Several criteria were used to guide this analysis, including:
 - Project purpose and need
 - City plans and policies
 - Best practices and industry standards
- Of multiple options reviewed, the proposed protected bicycle facility along Eastlake Ave included in the Locally Preferred Alternative adopted by the Seattle City Council best met the criteria

What are the impacts to curb space along the corridor?

- In order to meet the project goals of improving bicycle safety and connections to transit, the project would remove on-street parking and vehicle loading zones in some areas of the corridor
- In Eastlake, the project would require removing all of the existing on-street parking and loading zones along Eastlake Ave E. Loading zones would be replaced, where feasible, in the corridor.
- SDOT has and will continue to work with the community to identify and implement potential strategies to better utilize remaining curb space and manage the effects of parking loss in the corridor.

How has SDOT involved the community?

- Phase 1: Mode Analysis and Existing Conditions (November 2014 - June 2015)



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- Included stakeholder interviews and first round of public open houses (May 2015).
 - Public reviewed project goals, timeline, existing conditions, and transit modes being considered.
- Phase 2: Characteristics of BRT and Multimodal Components (June 2015 - March 2016)
 - Focused on incorporating BRT design and operational elements in the Roosevelt to Downtown Corridor.
 - Key stakeholder forums and community partners provided early input, along with a second round of public open houses (December 2015).
 - Three levels of potential corridor investments were shared:
 - RapidRide Station and Service Upgrades
 - RapidRide Station and Service Upgrades + Targeted BRT Investments
 - Full BRT Improvements
 - The targeted BRT investments approach was chosen for RapidRide Roosevelt and includes all existing Metro RapidRide design elements, incorporates full BRT design elements at select locations to improve speed and reliability, and includes multimodal elements like bike facilities.
 - A business access survey was also completed in March of 2016 along Eastlake Ave E and 11th Ave NE/12th Ave NE in the corridor to address loading needs.
- Phase 3: Recommended Corridor Concept (May 2016 - Present)
 - Solicited feedback on the corridor concept, which included a mix of targeted transit improvements, protected bicycle lanes, and signal and roadway operational changes. Public open houses were hosted in June 2016.
 - Submittal of Locally Preferred Alternative to Seattle City Council (approved in July 2017);
 - Prepared submittal for FTA Small Starts grant in September 2017.
 - Environmental scoping meeting in December 2017. Completed NEPA scoping in January 2018 to inform development of NEPA Environmental Assessment.
 - SDOT is currently coordinating with the Eastlake community on parking management tools that could be incorporated to manage access to the corridor after the project is complete.
- The next milestone is the environmental assessment process which will compare the impacts of the no build condition (not proceeding with the project) to the LPA. We are coordinating with the FTA, Metro and other agencies on our environmental process.



Who approved this project? When was the decision made?

- The Seattle City Council adopted the project's Locally Preferred Alternative in 2017. That's the approval to proceed with the project as currently defined.

How will removing bus stops enhance public transit service?

- Optimizing bus stops, by removing or consolidating some of the stops, helps to improve the customer experience with faster trip times and less dwell time
- Our goal is to prioritize bus stop locations for enhanced features by removing or consolidating underutilized bus stops or stops close to other stops, while also considering how far riders must walk to access stops
- The proposed stop spacing is consistent with the desired RapidRide stop spacing based on King County Metro standards

Why is SDOT preparing an Environmental Assessment and not an Environmental Impact Statement for the Eastlake corridor?

- The RapidRide Roosevelt project is seeking funding from the FTA's Small Starts program and must comply with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements
- SDOT performed an environmental screening and provided FTA with the project's preliminary potential impacts and mitigation. Based on the preliminary screening, the FTA determined that the appropriate NEPA documentation for the project is an Environmental Assessment (EA). To begin the environmental process and inform stakeholders about the Project, SDOT and FTA conducted public and agency scoping in December 2017.
- SDOT is coordinating with FTA and other regulatory agencies regarding the types of probable impacts on environmental resources (built and natural) and potential mitigation measures to reduce impacts
- The EA will be made available for public and agency review in fall 2019
- SDOT expects to adopt the EA to satisfy State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements and provide for public and agency review on a determination of non-significance (DNS). If there are no significant impacts identified as part of the EA, then a Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) will be issued for the RapidRide Roosevelt project following the preparation of responses to public and agency comments and an EIS would not be required.

How does this project address/ promote equity?

- SDOT has developed an outreach plan that is guided by the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) for racial equity and includes methods, both in-person and online, to engage, inform, and solicit feedback from stakeholders



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- SDOT will prepare a separate Environmental Justice report as part of the Environmental Assessment
- To address concerns related to language barriers during outreach, mailers have included information in Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic on how to receive translated meeting materials
- The RapidRide Roosevelt project would result in several benefits, including improved transit speed and reliability, expanding connections to neighborhoods and transit, and bicycle safety. These benefits would apply to a greater degree to low-income populations and others who depend on transit.
- Throughout design and construction SDOT will continue to reach out to engage and solicit feedback consistent with the Outreach Plan

Will SDOT seek public input on project aesthetics?

- SDOT expects to ask for community input on aesthetics as soon as summer 2019
- Elements for feedback could include landscaping, green infrastructure, and architectural treatments

How many cars travel across the University Bridge?

- According to 2018 data, approximately 28,700 vehicles cross the University Bridge every day in both directions
- During peak hours, approximately 3,000 vehicles cross per hour

Does SDOT have any “after” data on Roosevelt Way after a projected bicycle lane was installed? Is there data on business operations?

- SDOT did not collect any “after” data on Roosevelt Way NE after the protected bicycle lane was installed when the street was repaved. An “after” study was not requested by the community and is generally not something SDOT does after a project is completed
- Regarding business operations, there are multiple factors that can affect a business district. It would be difficult to determine what, if any, effect the Roosevelt Way NE protected bicycle lane had on local business operations.

What are the parking inventory numbers in the 10 PM to 6 AM range?

- SDOT is performing a study this summer and expects to have analyzed results to share with the community during the preliminary design outreach targeted for early fall



Will accessible parking be affected by this project?

- The RapidRide Roosevelt project would not remove signed accessible parking spaces, but there would be an increased demand for the remaining parking, potentially resulting in longer distances to access destinations
- Displaced passenger loading zones would be relocated nearby, where feasible, to minimize impacts. There would be pedestrian safety improvements to crosswalks and sidewalks and ADA-compliant curb ramps and bus stations.

What percentage of the spaces on Eastlake are paid parking?

- There is no paid on-street parking in the Eastlake business district. The closest paid street parking is in South Lake Union and in the U-District.

Have you looked at park and hide on the corridor?

- SDOT has completed parking data collection along Eastlake and the surrounding area. While some vehicles along Eastlake Ave E were parked all day, most were parked within or close to the time limit signs posted.
- The restricted parking zone (RPZ) rules against all-day parking without a permit would make hide and ride parking difficult in the area, although some parts of Eastlake still have unrestricted parking
- The improved transit connections to other buses and the upcoming Link light rail stations are expected to help reduce park and hide demand

Will SDOT install metered parking on Eastlake?

- SDOT has no current plan to install paid parking on Eastlake Ave E

Will SDOT limit the number of RPZ passes sold to each unit once the project starts?

- Currently, there is a limit of 4 permits per household (one permit for each vehicle, up to 4 in a household address)
- It is possible that the City would consider further reducing that permit limit, but there are not specific plans at this time

How might a program like the U-District Let's Go program help in Eastlake?

- SDOT is looking into how programs that promote and help increase access to transit to and from the Eastlake neighborhood could be implemented as part of the RapidRide Roosevelt investment



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- We are considering how elements of a recent Transportation Demand Management (TDM) pilot project in the U-District called 'Let's Go' might apply in Eastlake. TDM programs include customized programming designed to connect area employees, visitors, and residents to mobility resources, particularly bus, bike, and rideshare information and passes. TDM programs help reduce private vehicle use in the commercial district, reducing the demand for parking, while providing people with tangible information, route planning, and other mobility services. Delivery of these programs aligns well with physical or service changes to RapidRide corridors
- Starting in 2018, SDOT worked with the organizations University District Partnership and Transportation Choices Coalition to connect U-District employees and visitors to resources about transit and other transportation options. The focus was particularly on small businesses to help owners and their employees get access to pre-loaded ORCA passes, tax-free commuter benefits, individualized commute planning services, as well as tools to help get people to shops and restaurants by ways other than driving. The program successfully reached out to over 5,000 people and held over 15 events over the year to distribute ORCA LIFT (the low-income bus pass program)
- King County Metro Transit has also regularly used TDM programs (branded as King County "In-Motion") to provide resources and programming in areas during or in anticipation of major construction, transit restructures, or new transit service such as bus rapid transit or light rail. Since 2004, the "In-Motion" program has engaged 40 neighborhoods throughout King County (including many in Seattle) to encourage residents to use sustainable travel modes. Documented results show that over 3.2 million miles of drive alone trips have been reduced