

99 AURORA CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Summary of Outreach Activities



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Background

Aurora Avenue North is one of the most heavily used transportation corridors in King County. It connects neighborhoods and serves as a major thoroughfare for commuters traveling daily to and from work.

Because of its importance to effective transportation in Seattle, Aurora Avenue North has been designated a Priority Bus Corridor. The primary bus line serving this corridor is King County Metro Route 358, whose ridership is among the top five of all Seattle routes. The 358 is scheduled to be replaced by Metro's RapidRide E Line bus service in February 2014.

In an effort to increase transit speed and reliability while ensuring efficient movement for all traffic, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is recommending improvements to Aurora Avenue North, specifically:

- Retime traffic signals for all lanes to keep vehicles moving.
- Allow traffic signals to detect approaching transit and extend a green light or end the red light early.
- Implement peak period Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes in both directions between N. 38th and N. 115th Street. The peak periods are: AM (6-9 a.m.) and PM (3-7 p.m.).

A recommendation concerning the southbound PM BAT lane between N. 77th Street and N. 72nd Street is pending evaluation of on-street parking options in this particular section of Aurora.

Following the release of these recommendations, SDOT launched a proactive, broad-based outreach and engagement effort in the summer of 2013 to inform and solicit input from Aurora Corridor stakeholders. This effort included a door-to-door survey of residents and businesses along Aurora as well as an online survey for the general public on the SDOT website. The objective of the outreach effort was to raise awareness of the recommendations and learn more about:

- The effects of SDOT's recommendations on all stakeholders
- What concerns stakeholders might have
- What the City could do to lessen those concerns

The feedback the project team received while conducting outreach will help inform SDOT engineers' decision making.

This document summarizes feedback received during the summer 2013 outreach effort.

Outreach Summary

Beginning in June 2013, a number of tools were developed and steps taken to disseminate information about the project recommendations and to solicit public feedback.

Disseminating Information

Door-to-Door Outreach

Outreach staff conducted door-to-door outreach in mid-June along Aurora Ave. N. between N. 38th and N. 145th streets. Business owners/managers and residents successfully contacted were apprised of the recommendations and invited to participate in a survey. Staff visited 410 businesses/residences and briefed 263 about the project.

Community Presentations

To help disseminate information about the recommendations and collect feedback, SDOT and King County Metro staff made presentations at the regularly scheduled meetings of district councils and community groups in neighborhoods affected by the recommendations. Fifteen groups were contacted, of which nine requested presentations. A total of approximately 165 individuals attended the presentations. SDOT and Metro staff presented the project recommendations before taking questions and comments. The meetings occurred between June 11 and July 10, 2013:

Organization	Presentation Date
Aurora Avenue Merchants Association	June 11, 2013
Seattle Freight Advisory Board	June 18, 2013
Licton Springs Community Council	June 19, 2013
Fremont Neighborhood Council	June 24, 2013
Northwest District Council	June 26, 2013
Lake Union District Council	July 1, 2013
Phinney Ridge Community Council	July 2, 2013
Green Lake Community Council	July 10, 2013
Fremont Chamber of Commerce	July 10, 2013

Aurora Corridor Improvement Project Web Page

The Aurora Corridor Improvement Project web pages acted as a project resource center, linked to the online version of the project survey, and included an FAQ about BAT lanes to address questions that came up at community presentations and during door-to-door outreach. An associated page covered planned pedestrian improvements to support RapidRide E Line implementation and linked to Metro's RapidRide web page.

Fact Sheet

A two-sided fact sheet summarized the recommendations, detailed the project schedule, and supplied travel time data and other information related to BAT lane implementation. The fact sheet was reviewed with stakeholders during door-to-door outreach prior to administering the survey. It was also handed out at community meetings and available on SDOT's Aurora Corridor Improvement Project web page.

Mailer

A two-sided mailer with information about the recommendations and a link to the survey on the project website was mailed to more than 29,000 Aurora Corridor addresses. Mailing area boundaries were N. 38th Street on the south, N. 145th Street on the north, Greenwood Ave. N. on the west, and Meridian Ave. N. on the east. (See map on p. 25.)

Media

King 5 TV News aired an interview about the recommendations with SDOT staff on June 21, 2013.

Email Listserv

A King County Metro email listserv targeted to the project area and comprising approximately 3,750 email addresses was used to inform recipients of the recommendations and notify them of the opportunity to participate in the survey posted online.

Soliciting Feedback

Survey

Two surveys, one administered door-to-door along Aurora and the other online but largely similar in terms of content, were created to gather public feedback. The door-to-door survey contained ten questions; the online version included an additional three regarding the respondent's zip code, bus route, if any, and frequency of travel on Aurora. Some questions allowed respondents to select multiple answers.

Community Presentations

The community presentations listed above provided opportunities for attendees to get questions answered and to comment on the recommendations.

Project Email and Phone

An email address and phone line for communicating with the project was posted on the project website and included in the fact sheet and mailer.

Surveys: Overview

A total of 1,185 individuals completed the door-to-door and online surveys, apportioned as follows:

Survey Type	Number of Respondents
Online	1,083
Door-to-Door	102
Total	1,185

Online Survey

The online survey was posted on the Aurora Corridor Improvement Project web page and publicized on the project fact sheet, a mailer sent to Aurora Corridor households, via a King County Metro email listserv, and at community presentations. It was also mentioned during door-to-door outreach as an alternative way of providing feedback for those who did not have time or were unavailable to complete the survey in person.

A total of 1,083 individuals participated in the online survey.

Door-to-door Survey

To ensure that businesses and residents located on Aurora Ave. North were aware of the recommendations and given the opportunity to provide feedback, outreach staff went door-to-door along Aurora between N. 38th and N. 145th streets to distribute and discuss the fact sheet and administer the survey.

Each survey took 5-8 minutes to administer, on average. Door-to-door respondents—business owners, business managers, and residents—generally filled out the printed survey themselves. If the appropriate individual (the owner or manager, in the case of a business) was not present, project materials, including information about how to participate in the survey online, were left behind.

Outreach staff visited 410 businesses and residences and spoke directly with a business owner, manager or resident at 263 (65% of the time), all of whom were asked to participate in the survey. Approximately 95% of door-to-door survey respondents were business owners or managers. In total, 102 individuals participated in the door-to-door survey.

Survey results, while interesting and informative, should not be considered statistically valid. The surveys were administered differently, for example, and some Aurora Ave. businesses contacted during door-to-door outreach participated in the survey at that time, while others completed it later online. In addition, there was a notable difference in sample size (1,083 online respondents versus 102 door-to-door).

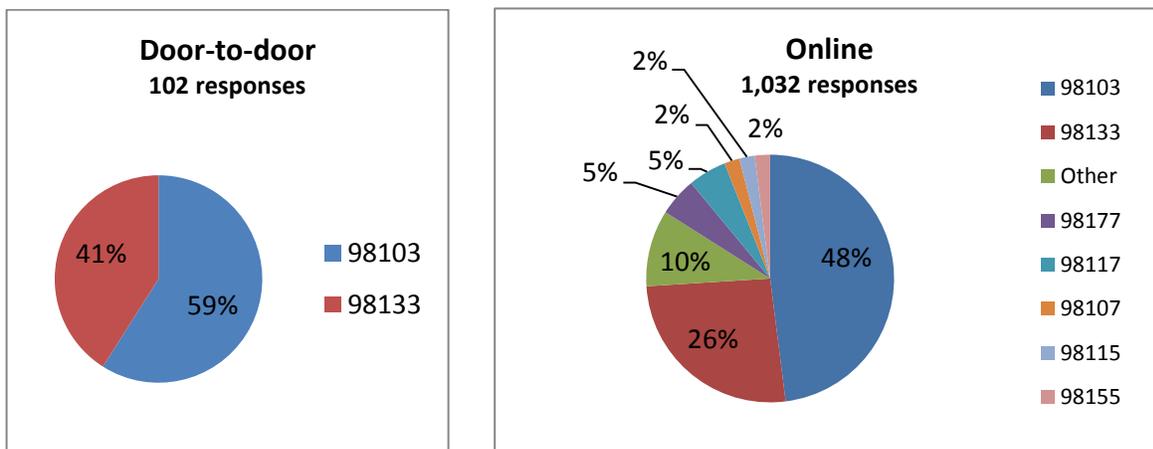
Survey Respondent Profiles

Door-to-door and online respondents shared some characteristics and differed in others, as summarized below:

Location

All respondents to the door-to-door survey live or work in one of two zip codes (98103 or 98133) along Aurora Avenue N.

98103 and 98133 were also reported by three-quarters of online survey respondents in response to the question, “What is your zip code?”:

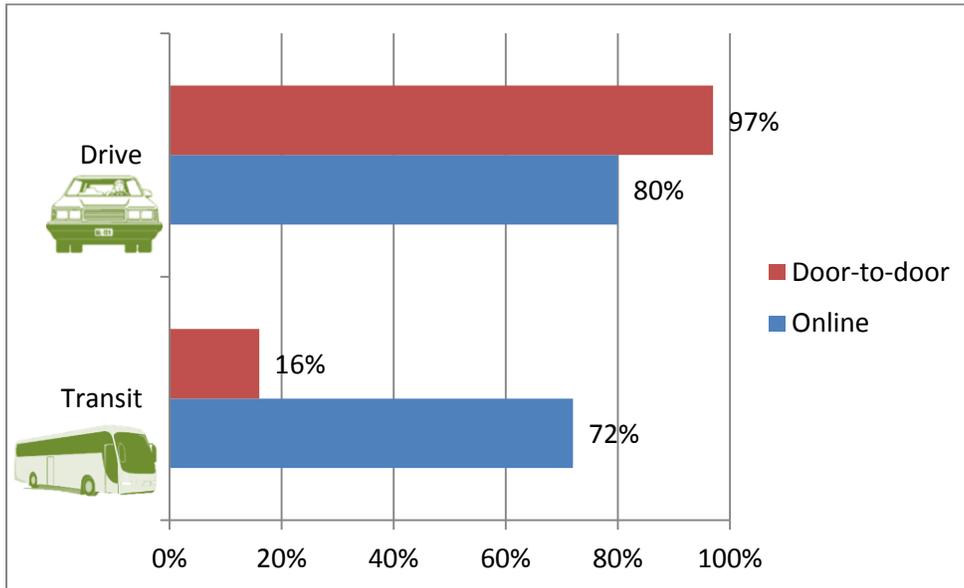


Zip codes reported by 5% or more of respondents, and the Seattle neighborhoods they include, are identified below:

Zip Code	Seattle Neighborhoods Comprised
98103	Fremont, Wallingford, Phinney Ridge, Green Lake, Greenwood, Licton Springs
98133	Bitter Lake, Haller Lake
98177	Broadview
98117	Ballard, Greenwood, Whittier Heights, Loyal Heights, Crown Hill, Sunset Hill, North Beach, Blue Ridge

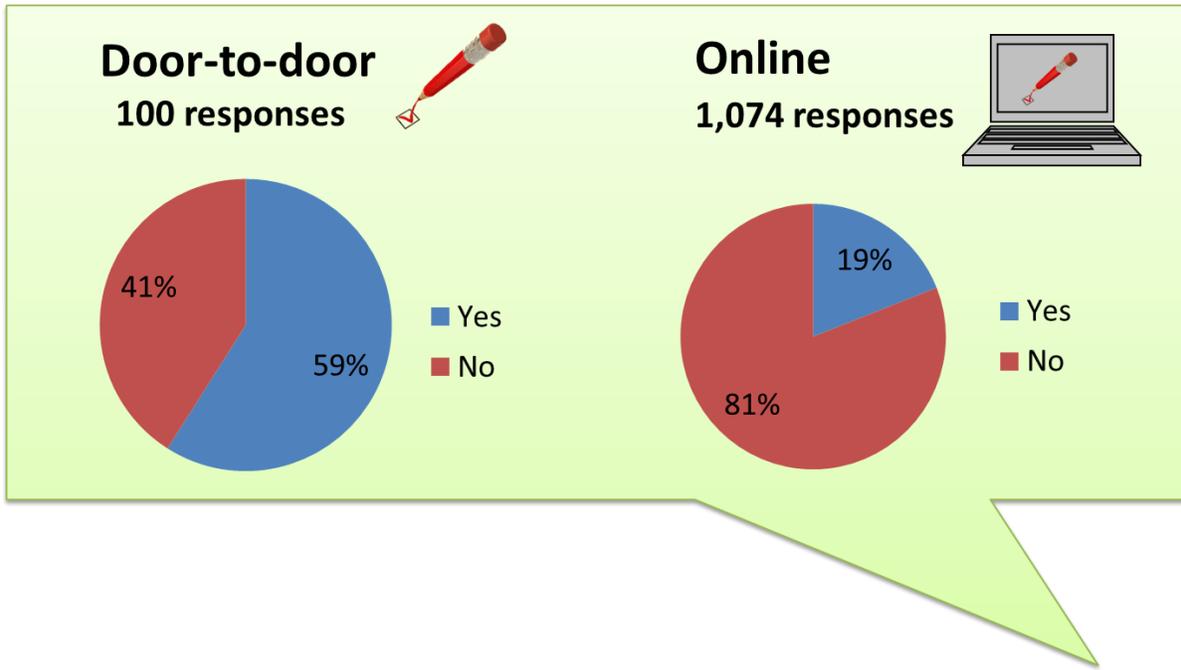
Use of Aurora

The vast majority of both door-to-door and online respondents drive on Aurora, but there is a large difference in transit use, which is higher among online respondents:



Use of parking/loading on Aurora

Similarly, there is a large difference between door-to-door and online respondents in their use of parking and loading on Aurora, which is significantly higher among the door-to-door group:

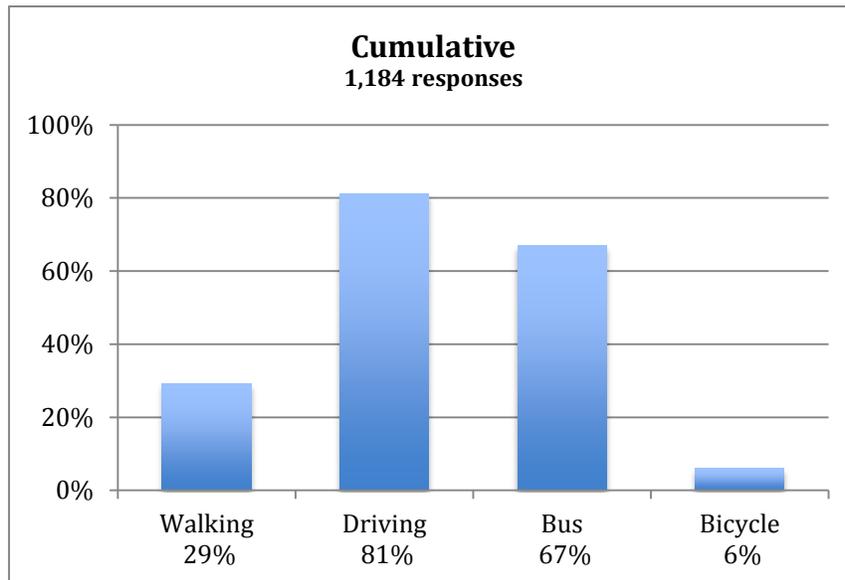
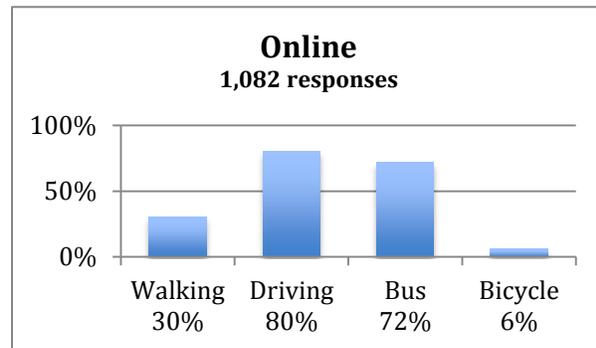
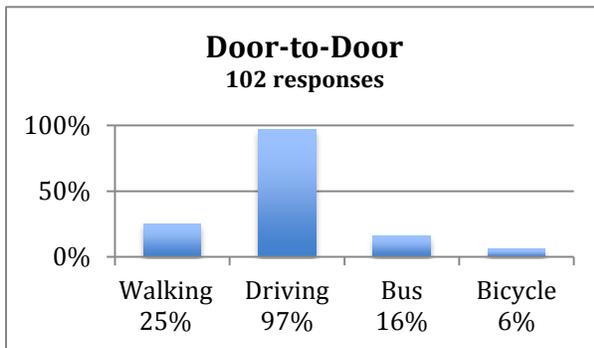


Full Survey Results

Broken down by question, full results for both surveys appear below:

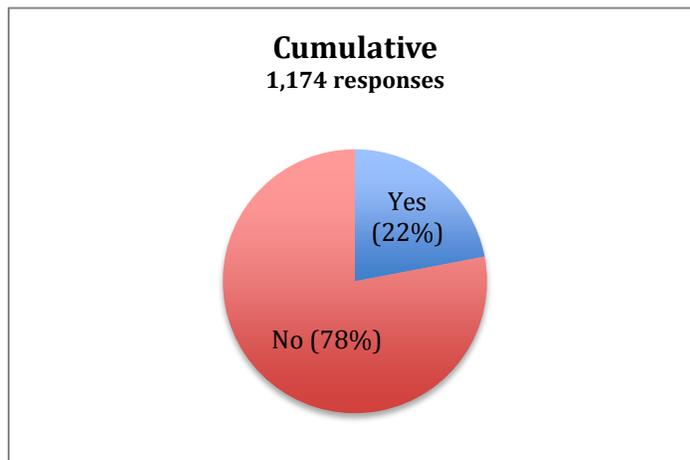
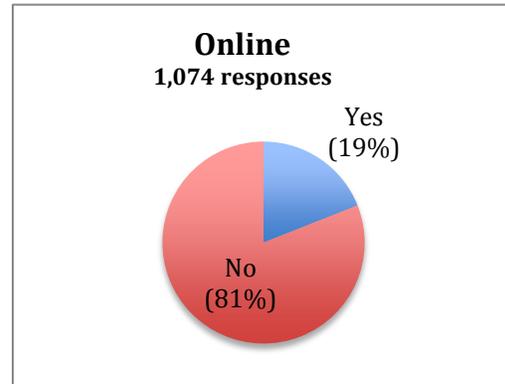
Results: How do you currently use Aurora? (Choose all that apply.)

1,082 online + 102 door-to-door = 1,184 total responses



Results: Do you (or your employees/customers) use on-street parking or loading on Aurora Avenue?

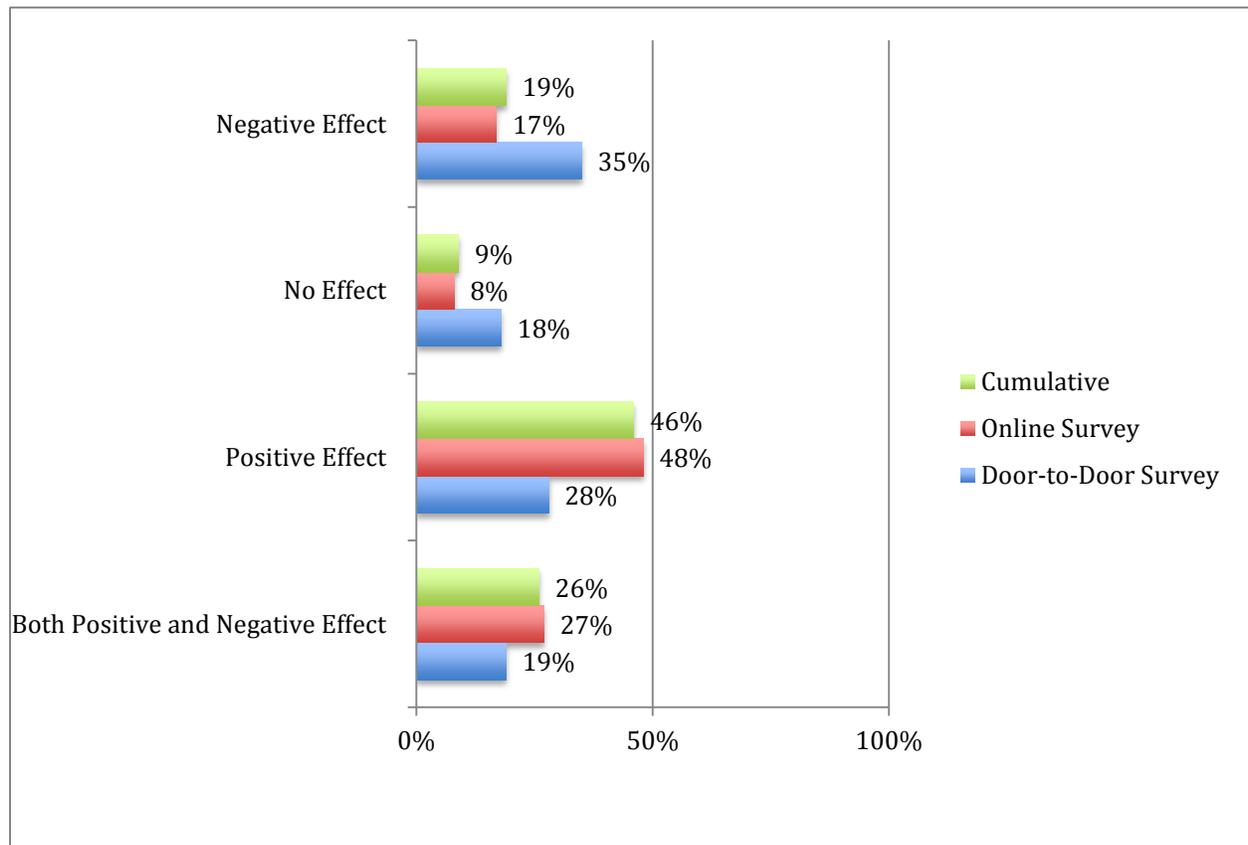
1,074 online + 100 door-to-door = 1,174 total responses



Results: What do you feel would be the effect on you of peak period BAT lanes in both directions on Aurora Ave?

1,069 online + 102 door-to-door = 1,171 total responses

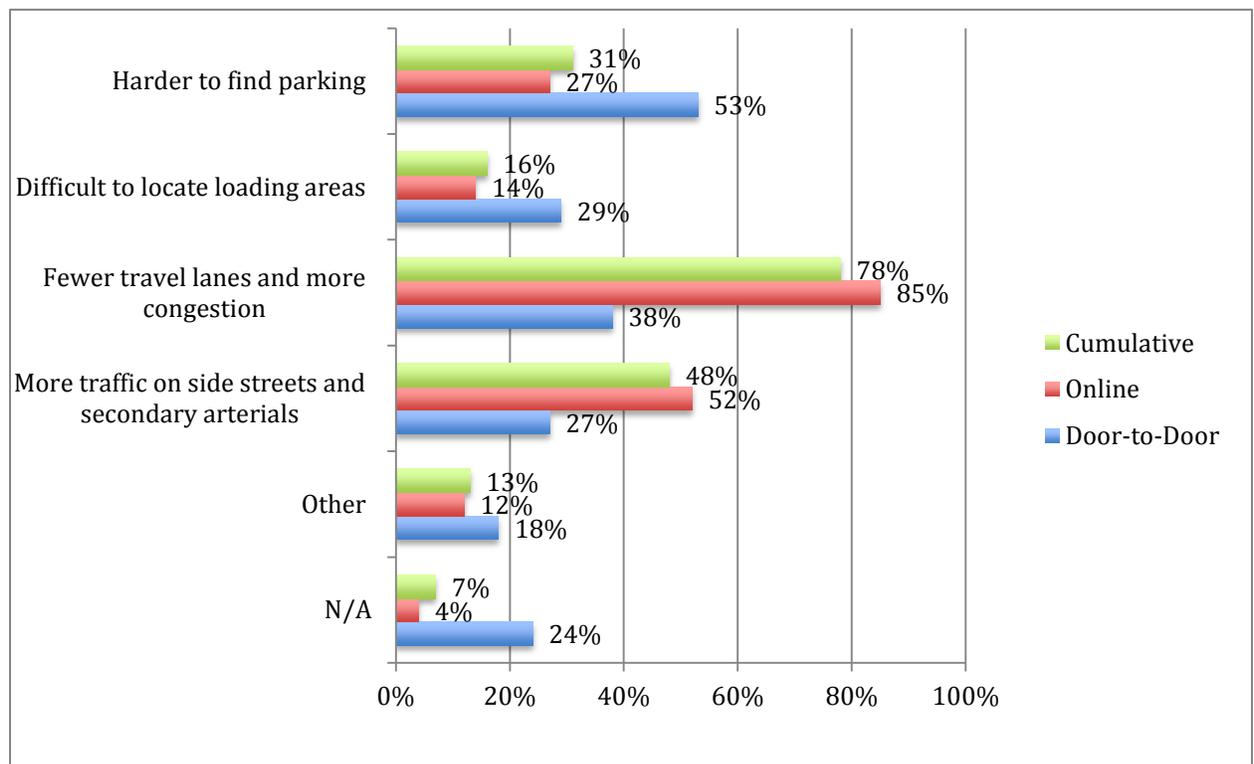
- **Online:** Nearly half of online respondents thought peak period BAT lanes would have a positive effect, and only 17% said the effect would be negative. Other online responses were mixed, with 27% saying the effect would be “both positive and negative” and 8% saying there would be no effect.
- **Door-to-door:** Door-to-door respondents were divided as to the effect BAT lanes would have, with 35% saying it would be negative and 28% saying it would be positive. The remainder of door-to-door responses were evenly divided between “both positive and negative” (19%) and “no effect” (18%).



Results: If negative, what are your concerns? (Choose all that apply.)

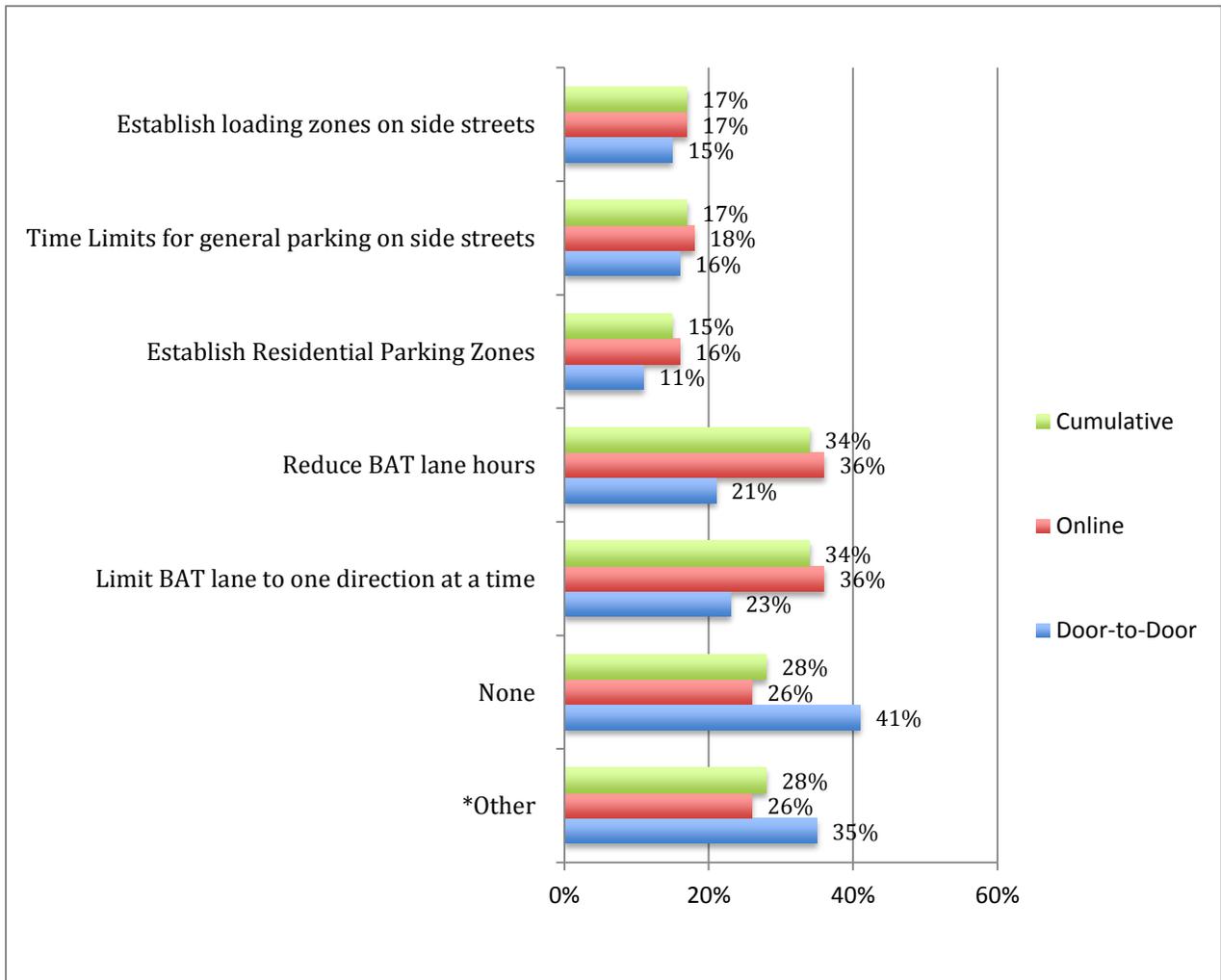
457 online + 79 door-to-door = 536 total responses

- **Door-to-door:** Among door-to-door respondents who thought peak period BAT lanes would have negative effects, the primary concern (53%) was that it would be harder to find parking, followed by “fewer travel lanes and more congestion” at 38%.
- **Online:** Among online respondents who thought peak period BAT lanes would have negative effects, by far the biggest concern (85%) was “fewer travel lanes and more congestion,” followed by “more traffic on side streets and secondary arterials” at 52%.



Results: Are there ways the City could lessen those concerns? (Choose all that apply.)

457 online + 75 door-to-door = 532 total responses

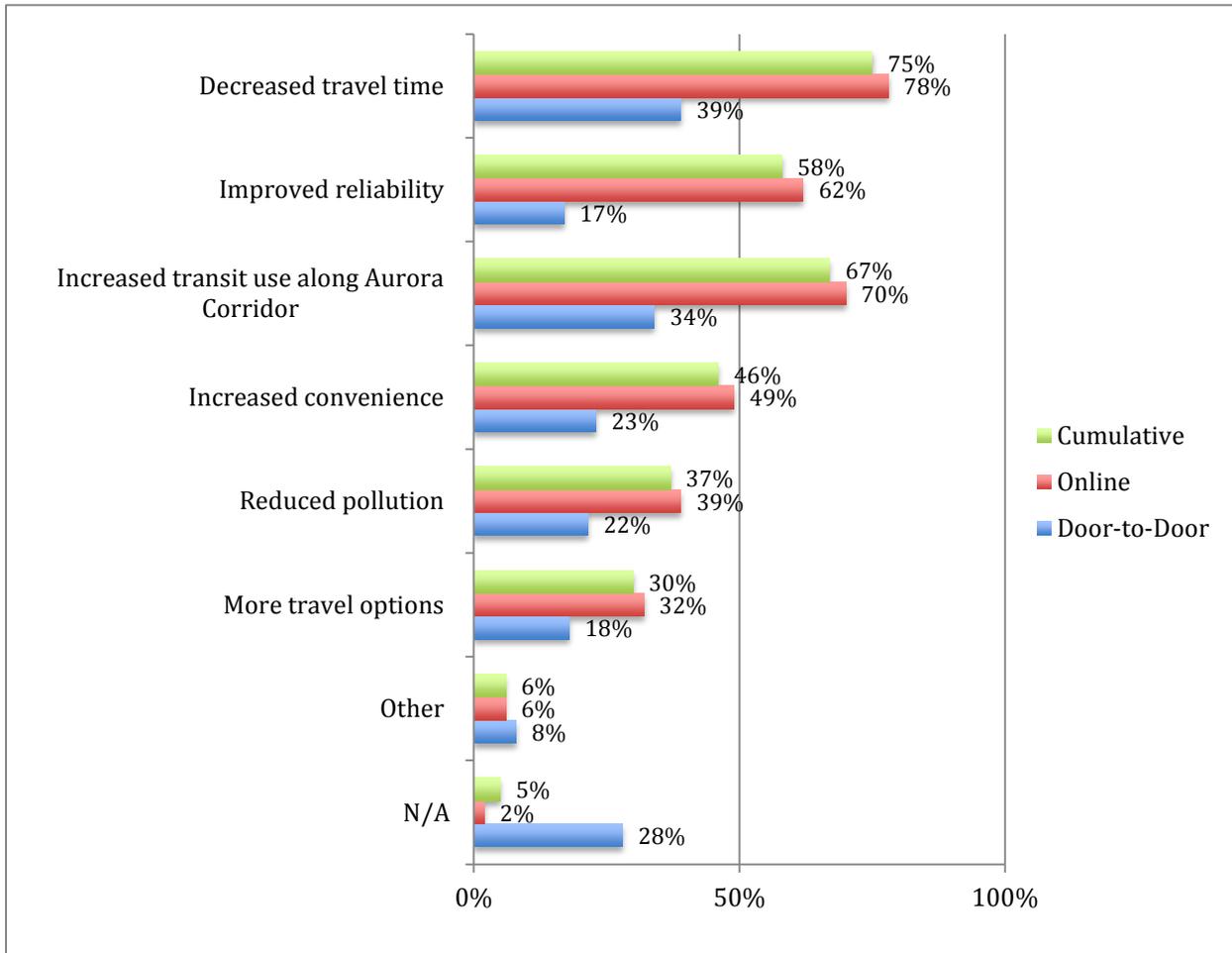


*11% of all respondents (i.e., 49 online and 9 door-to-door respondents) selected “Other” as one of their responses to this question and wrote, “No BAT lanes.”

Results: If positive, what do you see as the benefits? (Choose all that apply.)

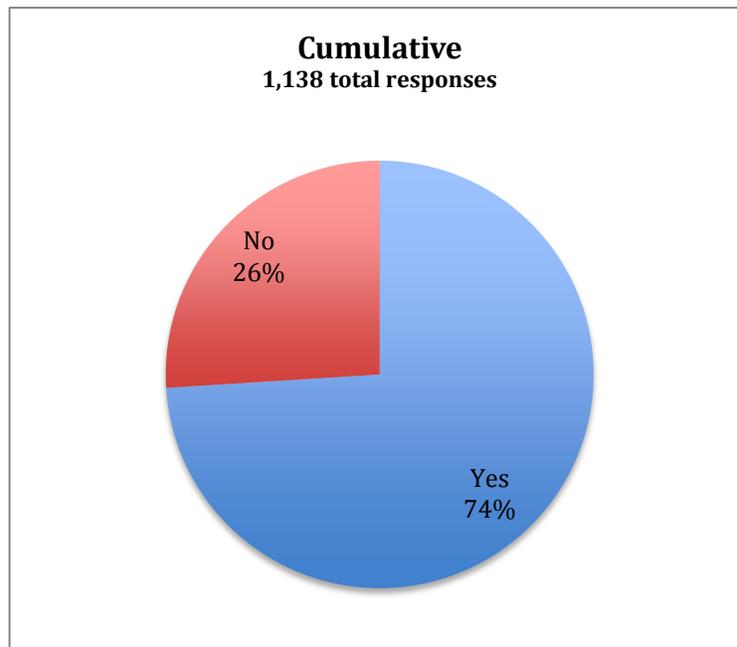
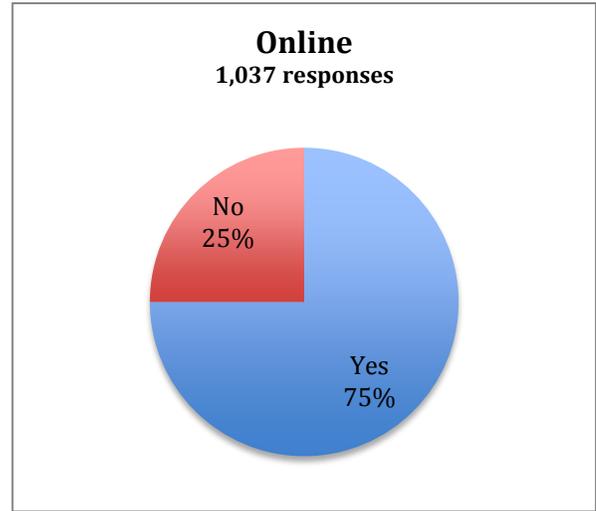
780 online + 79 door-to-door = 859 total responses

- Door-to-door and Online:** Among those who said BAT lanes would have positive effects, door-to-door and online respondents agreed (though by different margins) that “decreased travel time” and “increased transit use along Aurora Corridor” were the top benefits.



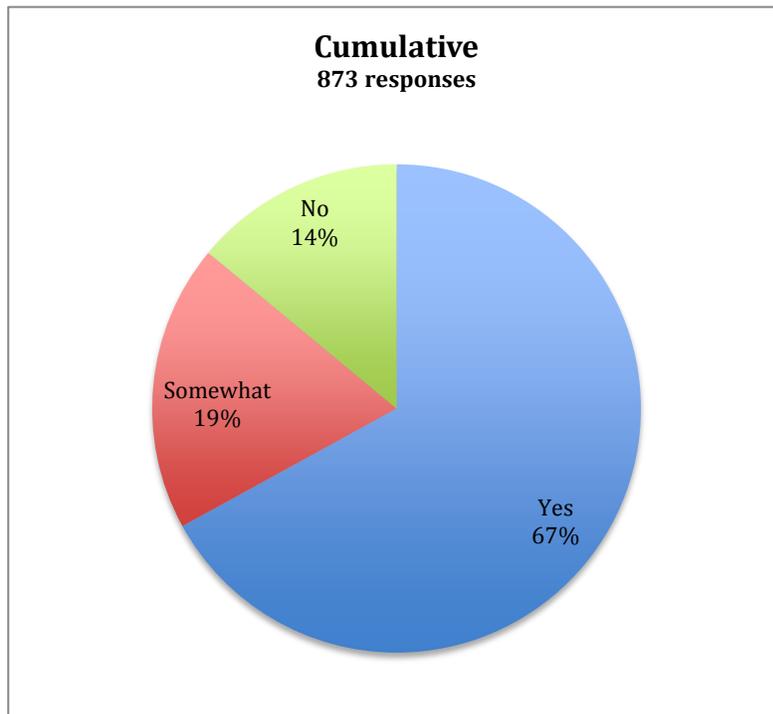
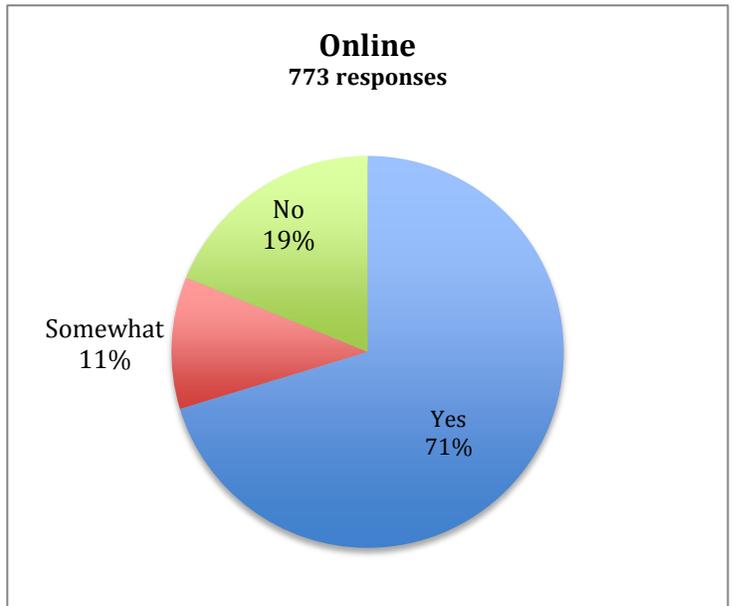
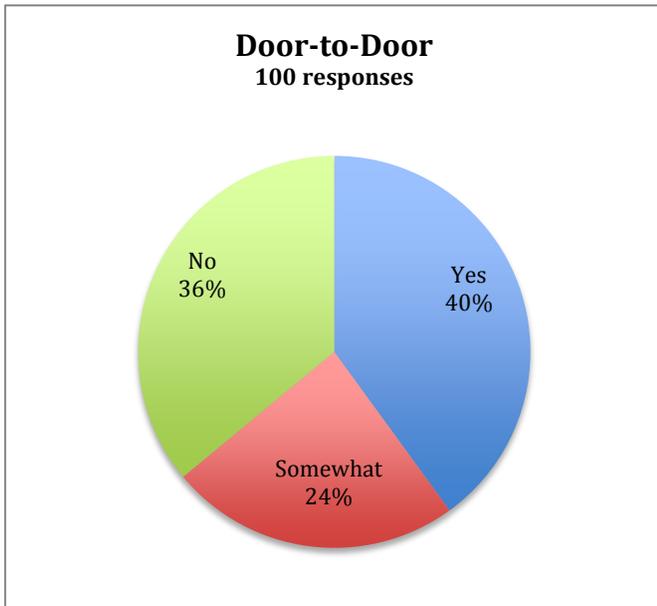
Results: Do you and/or your customers currently ride Metro along this segment of the Aurora corridor?

1,037 online + 101 door-to-door = 1,138 total responses



Results: Do you feel you and/or your customers will benefit from the reduced travel time and reliability that are a result of BAT lanes?

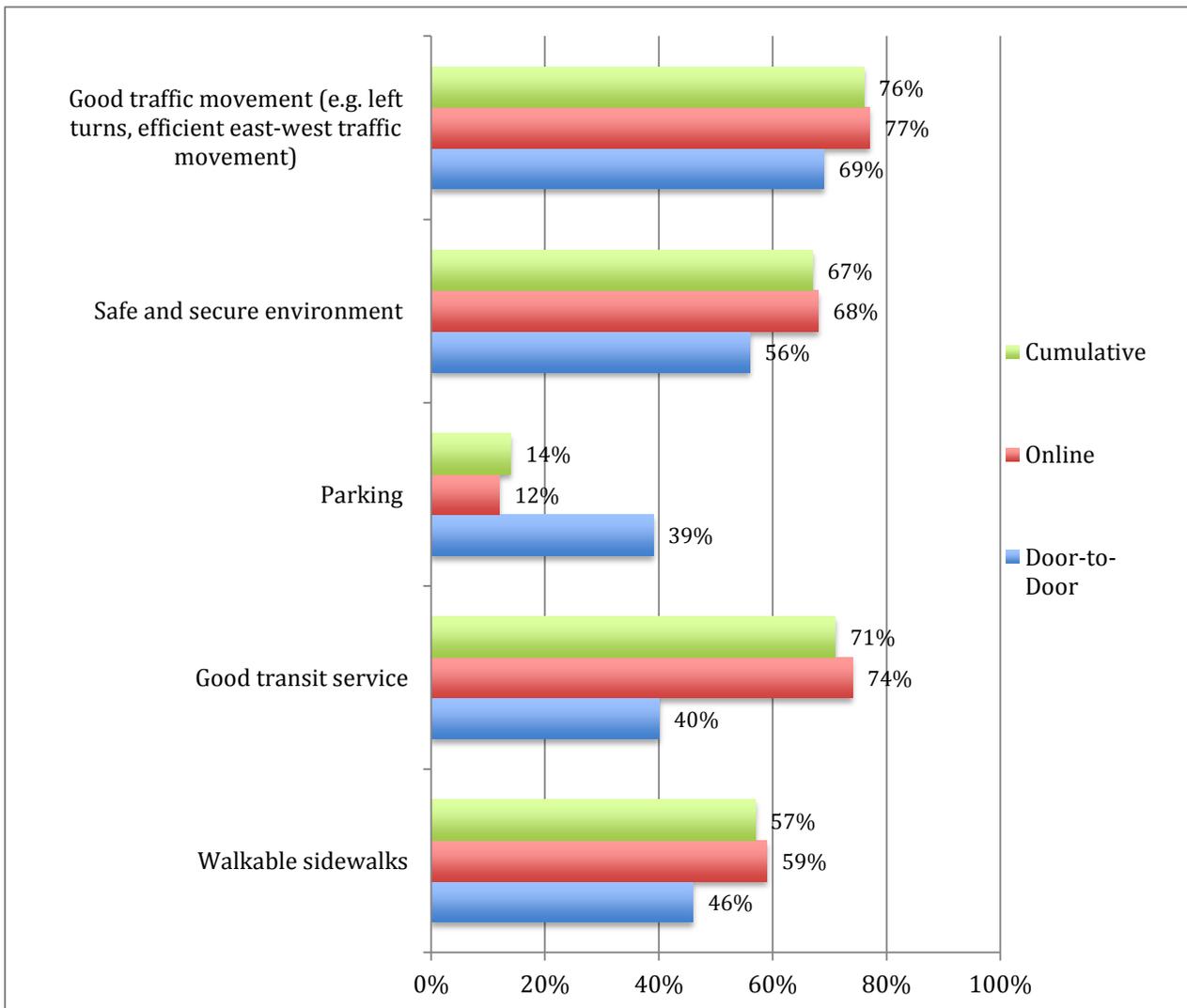
773 online + 100 door-to-door = 873 total responses



Results: What are the most important features to create, preserve or enhance on Aurora? Choose all that apply.

1,030 online + 101 door-to-door = 1,131 total responses

- **Door-to-door and Online:** Though by different margins, door-to-door and online respondents agreed that “good traffic movement” was the most important feature to create, preserve or enhance on Aurora, and that “parking” was the least important:



What We Heard: A Snapshot

Drawing from the more detailed survey data discussed earlier, the table below provides a snapshot summary of key findings:

	Door-to-Door	Online
Effect of BAT lanes	Divided	More strongly positive
Top concerns	Parking	Increased congestion
Top ways to lessen concerns	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> None Limit BAT lanes to one direction at a time 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce BAT lane hours Limit BAT lanes to one direction at a time
Top benefits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased travel time Increased transit use 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased travel time Increased transit use
Reduced travel time and reliability will benefit me/my customers	Divided	More strongly positive
Most important features to create, preserve, or enhance on Aurora	<p>Most: Good traffic movement</p> <p>Least: Parking</p>	<p>Most: Good traffic movement</p> <p>Least: Parking</p>

Appendix I. Media Coverage

Seattle Transit Blog

BEST POSTS

USEFUL LINKS

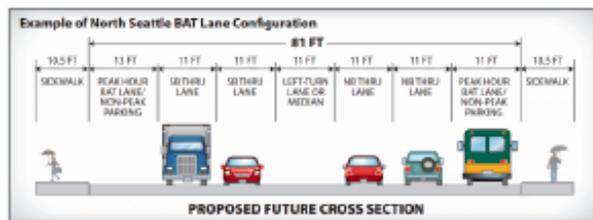
CALENDAR

GLOSSARY

ARCHIVES

SDOT Seeks Comments on Aurora BAT Lanes

JUNE 25, 2013 AT 11:00 AM BY BRUCE NOURISH



The Seattle Department of Transportation is seeking public feedback on its proposal to add peak-period, peak-direction bidirectional [Business Access and Transit lanes](#) to Aurora Avenue, between 38th St and 115th St. These BAT lanes will connect with the existing full-time BAT lanes on Aurora, in both directions between 115th St and 145th St (and [extending north throughout Shoreline](#)), and southbound between Roy St and

ABOUT

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- [Extra Cascades Train to Bellingham Concludes](#)
- [DPD to Double Required Parking for aPodments](#)
- [Transit and the Mayors](#)



A faster Aurora Avenue with 'bus only' lanes?



by GLENN FARLEY / KING 5 News

KING5.com

Posted on June 21, 2013 at 12:13 PM

Updated Friday, Jun 21 at 6:35 PM

SEATTLE -- The Seattle Department of Transportation is proposing changes to Aurora Ave. between N 38th St. and N 115th St.

The city wants to add dedicated bus lanes during morning and afternoon rush periods, much like they are already in Shoreline. The city is also proposing changes to traffic light timing that is expected to improve travel times for cars and trucks during some periods.

Southbound, bus travel times are expected to improve 16 to 17 percent in the morning and afternoon rush hours respectively. Cars will see a zero percent gain in the morning and a nine percent gain in the afternoon.

Northbound estimates are better for cars: up to 24 percent faster commute times through the area in the afternoon, but a 10 to 11 percent improvement over current bus times.

Appendix II. Fact sheet (front and back)

AURORA CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Aurora Avenue North is among the most heavily used transportation corridors in King County. It connects neighborhoods and serves as a major thoroughfare for commuters traveling daily to and from work.

As part of King County Metro's RapidRide E Line project, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is recommending traffic signal timing improvements for all lanes and the implementation of peak period Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes between N. 38th Street and N. 115th Street.

SDOT Recommendations

- Retime traffic signals for all lanes to keep vehicles moving.
- Allow traffic signals to detect approaching transit and extend a green light or end the red light early.
- Implement Peak Period BAT Lanes: AM (6-9 a.m.) and PM (3-7 p.m.)

BAT LANE LOCATION	DIRECTION	TIME
N. 38th St. to N. 115th St.	Northbound	AM/PM PEAK
N. 115th St. to N. 38th St. *	Southbound	AM/PM PEAK

* Recommendation concerning southbound PM BAT lane between N. 77th St. and N. 72nd St. is pending evaluation of implementation options.

Aurora Corridor Improvement Benefits

- Reduce travel times for all users
- Manage traffic growth within constrained space
- Keep buses moving, even in heavy traffic

Recommended Schedule

- Fall 2013 – Retime traffic signals. Add signage and lane striping northbound and southbound AM and PM peak period BAT lanes described in the above table. Evaluate benefits of southbound between N. 77th St. and N. 72nd St., where parking options are available.
- February 2014 – Start RapidRide E Line service, with possible peak period BAT lane between N. 77th St. and N. 72nd St.

Cost and Funding

- Cost to implement BAT lanes is estimated at \$600,000, funded by federal funds.
- Funding for transit service provided by King County Metro through federal funds.

We Want to Hear from You!
Please visit the project website at www.seattle.gov



CONTACT US
Email: 684-RO
Phone: (206) 684-RO

AURORA CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

What is a Business Access and Transit (BAT) lane?

Aurora BAT lanes are well established in Shoreline, where the outside lanes are reserved for buses and right-turning vehicles only. They improve access to businesses and residences and save time for transit riders. BAT lanes also enhance the capacity of the remaining travel lanes by removing buses from general traffic.

How will BAT lanes look?

Example of North Seattle BAT Lane Configuration

PROPOSED FUTURE CROSS SECTION

How will travel times (bus, car and freight) be improved on Aurora?

Northbound Travel Time Summary - N 38th/Bridge Way to N 145th				Southbound Travel Time Summary - N 38th/Bridge Way to N 145th					
	Time	Existing Travel Time	Estimated Recommendation Travel Time	Travel Time Improvement (Percentage)		Time	Existing Travel Time	Estimated Recommendation Travel Time	Travel Time Improvement (Percentage)
BUS	AM	23 min	21 min	10%	BUS	AM	27 min	23 min	16%
	PM	23 min	20 min	11%		PM	26 min	22 min	17%
CAR/TRUCK	AM	14 min	13 min	7%	CAR/TRUCK	AM	13 min	13 min	0%
	PM	17 min	13 min	24%		PM	15 min	13 min	9%

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
RapidRide:
www.kingcounty.gov/rapidride

Appendix III. Survey

(*question appeared on online survey only)

Name _____

Position _____

Address _____

Zip code _____

(check box) Business – Residence – Other

Name of business _____

Type of residence

- Single family
- Multi-family
- Other _____

How often do you travel on Aurora Avenue? *

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Occasionally
- Never

How do you currently use Aurora Avenue?

- Walking
- Driving
- Bus
- Bicycle

Do you (or your employees/customers) use on-street parking or loading on Aurora Avenue?

- Yes
- No

What do you feel would be the effect on you of peak period BAT lanes in both directions on Aurora Ave?

- Negative effect
- No effect
- Positive effect
- Both positive and negative

If negative, what are your concerns? Choose all that apply.

- Harder to find parking
- Difficult to locate loading areas
- Fewer travel lanes and more congestion
- More traffic on side streets and secondary arterials
- Other _____
- N/A

Are there ways the City could lessen those concerns? Choose all that apply.

- Establish loading zones on side streets
- Time limits for general parking on side streets
- Establish Residential Parking Zones
- Reduce BAT lane hours
- Limit BAT lane to one direction at a time
- Other _____
- None

Aurora Corridor Improvement Project
Community Outreach Summary

If positive, what do you see as the benefits? Choose all that apply.

- Decreased travel time
- Improved reliability
- Increased transit use along Aurora corridor
- Increased convenience
- Reduced pollution
- More travel options
- Other _____
- N/A

Do you and/or your customers currently ride Metro along this segment of the Aurora corridor?

- Yes
- No

Do you feel you and/or your customers will benefit from the reduced travel time and reliability that are a result of BAT lanes?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

What route number do you primarily use? *

- Route 5
- Route 16
- Route 345
- Route 355
- Route 358
- Other _____

What are the most important features to create, preserve or enhance on Aurora? Choose all that apply.

- Good traffic movement (e.g. left turns, efficient east-west traffic movement)
- Safe and secure environment
- Parking
- Good transit service
- Walkable sidewalks

What is your Zip Code? *

- 98103
- 98107
- 98115
- 98117
- 98133
- 98155
- 98177
- Other: _____

Would you like to receive project updates by email from the Aurora Corridor Improvement Project?

- Yes If yes, email address: _____
- No

Comments:

Appendix IV. Mailer (inside and outside)

99 AURORA CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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BAT LANE LOCATION	DIRECTION	TIME
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N. 115th St. to N. 38th St. *	Southbound	AM/PM PEAK

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Recommended Schedule

- **Fall 2013** – Retime traffic signals. Add signage and lane striping to create northbound and southbound AM and PM peak period BAT lanes as described in table at left. Evaluate benefits of southbound PM BAT lane between N. 77th St. and N. 72nd St., where parking options are limited.
- **February 2014** – Start RapidRide E Line service, with possible addition of peak period BAT lane between N. 77th St. and N. 72nd St.



What is and Tra

Aurora BAT lan Shoreline, whe for buses and improve accep and save time enhance the lanes by rem

How will travel times (bus, car and freight) b

Northbound Travel Time Summary - N 38th/Bridge Way to N 145th
All times rounded to the nearest minute

Time	Existing Travel Time	Estimated Recommendation Travel Time	Travel Time Improvement (Percentage)
BUS AM	23 min	21 min	10%
BUS PM	23 min	20 min	11%
CAR/TRUCK AM	14 min	13 min	7%
CAR/TRUCK PM	17 min	13 min	24%

Southbound Travel Time Summary - N 115th to N 38th

Time	Existing Travel Time	Estimated Recommendation Travel Time	Travel Time Improvement (Percentage)
BUS AM	23 min	21 min	10%
BUS PM	23 min	20 min	11%
CAR/TRUCK AM	14 min	13 min	7%
CAR/TRUCK PM	17 min	13 min	24%

99

Learn about recommended Aurora Corridor improvements.

PSRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #2871
SEATTLE, WA



99 AURORA CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Seattle Department of Transportation is recommending improvements to make travel on Aurora more reliable and efficient. See inside for more information.

- Aurora Corridor Improvement Benefits**
- Reduce travel times for all users
 - Manage traffic growth within constrained space
 - Keep buses moving, even in heavy traffic

We Want to Hear from You!
Please visit the project website at www.seattle.gov/transportation/aurora.htm to complete a survey.

CONTACT INFO
Phone: 206-684-ROAD Email: 684-Road@seattle.gov



Appendix V. Mailer Area

Mailing area boundaries were N. 38th Street on the south, N. 145th Street on the north, Greenwood Ave. N. on the west, and Meridian Ave. N. on the east:

