

GENERAL / BACKGROUND**What is a neighborhood greenway?**

Seattle is building a network of neighborhood greenways. Neighborhood greenways are safer, calm residential streets for you, your family and neighbors. They are built on streets with low car volumes and speeds. Greenways can provide access to schools, trails, parks, transit, and neighborhood businesses. To watch a short film about neighborhood greenways, please go to:

<http://www.streetfilms.org/portlands-bike-boulevards-become-neighborhood-greenways/>

Benefits of greenways include:

- Improving safety – Installing speed humps slows drivers and people riding bicycles, and improving street crossings and curb ramps makes walking, pushing a stroller or moving in a wheelchair easier and safer. Speed humps also discourage motorists from using neighborhood streets to avoid main streets.
- Helping people cross busy streets - Adding curb extensions, rapid flashing beacons, crosswalks, median islands or traffic signals helps people cross more easily and safely.
- Giving priority to pedestrians and people biking – Adding stop signs to residential streets that intersect with the greenway helps calm traffic entering and crossing it and prioritizes pedestrians and people biking.
- Getting people to where they want to go – Bicycle sharrow markings on the street and new signs let you know where the greenway goes and what's nearby, like parks and local shops.
- Keeping speeds low—Lowering the speed limit to 20 mph and installing traffic calming devices slows drivers so they are better able to prevent collisions.
- Providing more "eyes on the street" - More people on the street riding bikes and walking leads to safer streets and helps protect the residential character of your neighborhood.

What makes a good greenway?

The most important component of a “good” greenway is how comfortable, safe and accessible the street is for pedestrians and people who bike. Greenways are designed for all ages and abilities, so those from eight to eighty will be comfortable. Greenways do not add bike lanes and there are minimal if any on-street parking impacts.

Neighborhood greenway streets should start with low traffic speeds and volumes. Typically streets that have fewer than 1,000 cars per day and speeds close to 20 miles per hour are good candidates. They should be relatively flat (no small feat in a city like Seattle) and comfortable to walk or ride a bike. Greenways should provide attractive connections between neighborhoods and to destinations such as schools, parks, transit, business districts and trails.

Why is the city proposing a neighborhood greenway near 23rd Avenue?

As part of the Complete Streets process, improvements to the 23rd Avenue Corridor could not accommodate on-street bicycle facilities. As an alternative, the city proposed building a neighborhood greenway. Making a neighborhood greenway adjacent to 23rd Avenue can be especially beneficial for

families, children and seniors who might find these routes more comfortable to travel on than the busier nearby street.

What are the possible routes for the Central Avenue Neighborhood Greenway?

SDOT is evaluating four streets East and West of 23rd Ave. 21st, 22nd, 24th and 25th avenues or some combination of the above are potential routes. Some of the characteristics used in identifying these routes were continuity of route, steepness, access to shopping and community destinations and community feedback.

What are the criteria being used to select the final route?

We are looking at many factors in determining which route will ultimately be chosen. Our selection criteria include:

- Safety – streets with low traffic volumes, speeds and collisions
- Topography – minimal grade changes along the route and to destinations
- Route continuousness with connections to places you go in your neighborhood and 23rd Avenue
- Minimal conflicts with vehicular access to property
- Pavement conditions
- Parking conditions – minimal parking turn over along the route
- Community feedback

How will a neighborhood greenway change the streets?

The changes made to transform residential streets into neighborhood greenways vary from one greenway to another. It is a combination of small things that add up to a big difference. Common elements include signs and markings to help people find their way around the neighborhood, 20 mph speed limit, speed humps at about every block, and crossing improvements at busy streets (i.e., crosswalks, curb ramps, rapid flashing beacons, median islands or traffic signals). At residential streets crossing the greenway, stop signs slow motorists and provide priority for people on foot and on bicycles.

Central Area Neighborhood Greenway Neighborhood Toolbox and possible features

Below are tools that SDOT is proposing to use along the Central Area Neighborhood Greenway in order to provide a safer, calm residential street:

Crossing Improvements

At busy streets, improvements are made to make it easier for pedestrians and people on bicycles to cross. Improvements include crosswalks, curb ramps, rapid flashing beacons, median islands or traffic signals. Exact improvements are made based upon a technical analysis, community input and engineering judgment.

Traffic Calming

Traffic calming will be applied along the greenway. Exact locations will be determined through technical analysis and community input. Examples of traffic calming include:

- Median islands
- Curb bulbs
- Speed humps

These safety improvements help keep speeds low and drivers from using neighborhood streets to avoid main streets.

Signs

20 Miles per Hour Signs

These require motorists to drive more slowly.

Way-finding Signs

These are signs that let people know where and how far away the neighborhood destinations are located.

Neighborhood Greenway Signs

These are signs that are placed along the greenway that let people know they are on the greenway. These signs are also used on streets with bicycle facilities to let travelers know they are about to cross a greenway.

Stop Signs

Adding stop signs to residential streets that intersect with the greenway helps calm traffic entering and crossing it. It also gives priority to those using the neighborhood greenway.

Speed Hump Signs

These signs alert motorists that there are speed humps along the greenway.

Pavement Markings

Sharrows

Sharrows, or shared lane markings, are bicycle symbols that are placed in the street indicating that a motorist should expect to see and share the street with bicycles.

Curb ramps and marked crosswalks

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that any new pedestrian crossing improvement, such as a marked crosswalk, include curb ramps. SDOT plans to add new curb ramps to intersections that will be getting pedestrian crossing improvements.

Beyond neighborhood greenways, SDOT prioritizes new curb ramps primarily at locations that are requested by individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities can request curb ramps by using the online form at the following website: http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/ada_request.htm

Evaluation

Approximately one year after the completion of a neighborhood greenway, SDOT conducts a study to evaluate its performance and determine if additional safety improvements are needed.

Central Area Neighborhood Greenway Specific Questions

Is the Central Area Neighborhood Greenway part of the 23rd Avenue Street Improvement Project?

They are companion projects in that SDOT would like to implement the neighborhood greenway prior to construction beginning on the [23rd Avenue Corridor Improvements Project](#). This will provide people with a safer, more comfortable opportunity to walk and bike near the corridor.

What will the impact to on-street parking be?

There will be minimal impacts to existing on-street parking. A neighborhood greenway on 21st, 22nd, 24th or 25th avenues or a combination of these would function just as the street currently does: people driving and riding a bike share the road, as do people walking when they cross the street. However, stop signs will be added on the residential cross streets. As at all stop signs in Seattle, to ensure pedestrian and stop sign visibility, there is no parking within 30 feet of the sign.

How many more people will be bicycling on my street?

It is impossible to know for sure. SDOT expects more bicyclists to use the street than currently do if it becomes a neighborhood greenway, but it will not become a major bicycle thoroughfare like the Burke-Gilman or I-90 Trail (which serve as regional trails). Rather, it will be a neighborhood amenity primarily used by those who live nearby. SDOT will monitor bicycle volumes along the greenway route in the before and after study.

Will it be hard to see people on bikes when we use our driveways? There is a lot of on-street parking making it difficult to see.

Residents pulling out of their driveways need to pay attention and expect to see pedestrians and bicyclists, just as they currently do. Pedestrians and people riding bikes along the greenway also must pay attention, because there is always a likelihood they could encounter a vehicle pulling out of a driveway. Normal care and caution are needed.

Why not consider 19th Avenue? It's a wider street and near amenities.

Greenways function best on streets with low car volumes and speeds. As such, much of 19th Avenue is not a viable option, especially in the Capitol Hill neighborhood. SDOT is working with the community to identify a network of neighborhood greenways, and as part of the Ridge Neighborhood Greenway planning process a more detailed evaluation of 19th Avenue will be conducted.

What's the project timeline?

Fall and winter 2013: Propose greenway routes and collect community feedback

Winter 2013: Additional stakeholder meetings, select route

February 2014: Present early corridor design with most promising route

Spring 2014: Finalize design

Summer/Fall 2014: Implementation

PEDESTRIAN INFORMATION

What does this greenway add for walkers that they don't have already?

We are adding improvements that should make it easier and safer to walk, including intersection control (stop signs) on residential streets, crossing improvements at the major streets like rectangular rapid flash beacons, marked crosswalks and ADA ramps. In addition, we are making sidewalk repairs along the selected corridor eliminating tripping hazards.

How will pedestrian traffic be prioritized along the greenway?

The city is installing new stop signs on many of the side streets or residential streets that intersect the greenway so drivers will have to stop before turning onto or crossing the greenway. These stop signs give priority to people who walk and bike along the greenway, making the route more attractive.

Will the plan make it easier to cross busy streets along the greenway?

At the busy arterial street crossings of E. Madison, E. Union, E. Cherry, E. Yesler and S. Jackson streets, crossing safety improvements will be made to reinforce to motorists on the busy street that they can expect to see people who walk or ride bikes along this route and help people of all ages and abilities cross the street. Improvements will be made based upon a technical analysis, community input and engineering judgment and may include crosswalks, curb ramps, rapid flashing beacons, median islands or traffic signals. In addition, improvements on the busy street include signs identifying the street as a neighborhood greenway and advance warning signs that pedestrians and bicyclists will be crossing ahead.

BICYCLE INFORMATION

How will bicycle traffic be prioritized along the greenway?

The city is installing new stop signs on all the side streets or residential streets that intersect the greenway so drivers will have to stop before turning onto or crossing the greenway. These stop signs give priority to people who walk and bike along the greenway, making the route more attractive.

Why is the city using sharrows on the greenway?

Sharrows, or shared lane markings, are bicycle symbols that are placed in the roadway lane indicating that motorists should expect to see and share the lane with bicycles.

What a motorist should know:

- Expect to see and share the roadway with bicyclists.
- Follow the rules of the road.

What a bicyclist should know:

- Use the sharrow to find your way along the greenway.
- Follow the rules of the road.

Sharrows will be used along the greenway at the following locations:

1. Entering the greenway: When entering a greenway from an arterial street you will see a modified sharrow marking with chevrons offset indicating both directions of travel.
2. Along the greenway: As you are traveling along the greenway, sharrows will be placed at non-arterial intersections to let motorists know that they should expect to see bicyclists traveling along this route and to help guide bicyclists along the route.
3. When the greenway turns: Sharrows will be placed to guide you in the right direction, and there will be a confirming sharrow to continue along the greenway. There will also be greenway signs directing you to turn.

GENERAL

Sidewalk and Pavement Condition

SDOT will evaluate the sidewalk and pavement conditions and identify locations where spot improvements are needed. These repairs will be completed as part of this project.

Truck traffic and deliveries

Deliveries and truck traffic will still be able to access the neighborhood greenway as usual. We do not expect any changes to access for businesses or residents.

Emergency vehicles

The proposed greenway and accompanying changes will not negatively impact emergency vehicles. The Seattle Fire Department reviews all operational changes.

How does the greenway help seniors and people with disabilities?

The main purpose of neighborhood greenways is to provide people of all ages and abilities a safe place to travel. We understand that some people have restricted mobility and are not able to walk along the greenway, but they will still experience the benefits of a quieter street. Also, SDOT is constructing curb ramps at all the arterial street intersections along the greenway to improve access for people in wheelchairs, those with challenges navigating raised curbs, and for families using strollers.

What effect does a greenway have on property values and crime rates?

The value of a property is a function of many attributes including but not limited to house and lot size, age of the structure, school and tax districts, proximity to desirable and undesirable amenities, views from the property, noise and pollution levels, interest rates, month and year of sale, as well as socio-economic elements such as characteristics of neighboring structures, residents and streets. Because there are so many variables that determine the value of a given property at a given moment in time, it is challenging to make an “apples-to-apples” comparison of two streets where the only difference is the presence of a neighborhood greenway. This is particularly difficult given the relative newness of greenways (or bike boulevards as they are called in some cities) in the United States. There is not a lot of existing data that measures all of these changes after a street becomes a greenway.

According to researchers studying the links between property values and the environmental changes that take place after a greenway is built (including decreased traffic volumes, less noise, and having more transportation choices) it appears that the overall effect is a positive one.

More information on existing research is [available](#) from the [Transportation Research Board](#).

OUTREACH

How can I get involved and participate in the development of this project?

SDOT hosted an open house at Nova High School on November 6. We had large turnout with over 150 people in attendance. If you missed that meeting, you can visit our [website](#) to view the materials or learn more, and you can always contact the Project Communications Lead, Maribel Cruz, at Maribel.Cruz@seattle.gov.

We will be hosting another open house in early 2014. This will be an opportunity to share what we've learned, what we believe is the most promising route and discuss general treatments that might be applied to the route. We will publicize that meeting through email, media, posters and online.

What outreach has been done to let the neighborhood know about the greenway?

Below is the list of outreach tools we utilized to raise awareness of the project and opportunities to provide feedback:

- Open House invitation and project brochure mailed to 10,600 households and businesses.
- Email invitation (with flyer and brochure attached) to more than 225 organizations and individuals
- Notifications on 13 citywide and neighborhood event calendars
- Posters distributed to community centers, libraries and other community gathering spots within the project area
- SDOT project website
- Community open house held on November 6, 2013

How is SDOT reaching out to non-English speaking residents and business owners?

Notification of the open house was translated into seven languages that are represented in the project area. Additionally, the media advisory was sent to ethnic media outlets to gain further visibility. We will continue to communicate with these populations throughout the project lifecycle.

Where can I download project plans and additional project materials?

<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/centralgreenway.htm>

Where can I send additional questions?

Maribel.Cruz@Seattle.gov