

INTRODUCTION

The South Ballard Transportation Corridor is the key link for industrial and commercial businesses located north of the Ship Canal. It provides the primary arterial and transit linkage to the Ballard and Fremont Bridges, as well as direct property access to many of the water-dependent industrial properties. The corridor is also the location of an active rail spur operated by the Ballard Terminal Railroad Company, and is envisioned as the final link in the Burke-Gilman Trail Extension to Golden Gardens Park. Most of the South Ballard Transportation Corridor is located within the Ballard/Interbay Northend Manufacturing and Industrial Center (BINMIC), while the rest is within the adjacent Ballard Hub Urban Village. It is a critical transportation link for both areas.

All modes of land transportation exist in the South Ballard Corridor, including passenger vehicles, trucks, transit, rail, pedestrians, and bicyclists. In most places these modes co-exist, but in some locations there are conflicts. In addition, increasing traffic volumes and the potential for future development have or are likely to cause additional congestion in the corridor, which affects all transportation modes. This study was launched to find solutions that would reduce congestion, reduce conflicts among the modes of transportation, and improve safety for all modes. The purpose statement presented below was initially drafted with a citizens' committee to develop the scope of work for this study. This committee also helped identify the study area, the products, and how the study would be managed.

Purpose Statement

- Identify measures to improve access, mobility and safety for all modes.
- Identify measures to reduce automobile trips in the study area.
- Identify measures to improve regional industrial mobility.
- Identify the best way to allocate the different, and sometimes competing, uses among the streets within the corridor.
- Evaluate alternatives to complete the Burke-Gilman Trail through Ballard.
- Enhance the connection between the Locks and the business/historic district.
- Estimate costs, identify potential funding sources, and prioritize the recommendations.

Management and Participants

The South Ballard Corridor study was managed by the City of Seattle's Strategic Planning Office, with technical support from Seattle Transportation, who will be responsible for implementing many of the recommendations from this study. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed for the study, whose mission was 1) to review technical products, 2) to comment on the draft study products, and 3) to discuss recommendations. The TAC included staff members from the following City departments and other government agencies:

- Strategic Planning Office
- Seattle Transportation
- Department of Neighborhoods
- Department of Design, Construction, and Land Use
- King County Metro

The study was also guided by a Project Advisory Committee (PAC), which included citizen representatives from neighborhood and business groups and other stakeholders that may be affected by, or have an interest in, the corridor study. The PAC included the following members:

- Warren Aakervik, BINMIC
- Tom Bayley, Chamber of Commerce
- David Boyd, Groundswell NW
- Steve Cohn, Ballard District Council
- Byron Cole, Ballard Terminal Railroad
- Jody Haug, Neighborhood Planning Committee
- Jennifer Macuiba, Friends of Burke-Gilman
- Paul Nerdrum, North Seattle Industrial Association

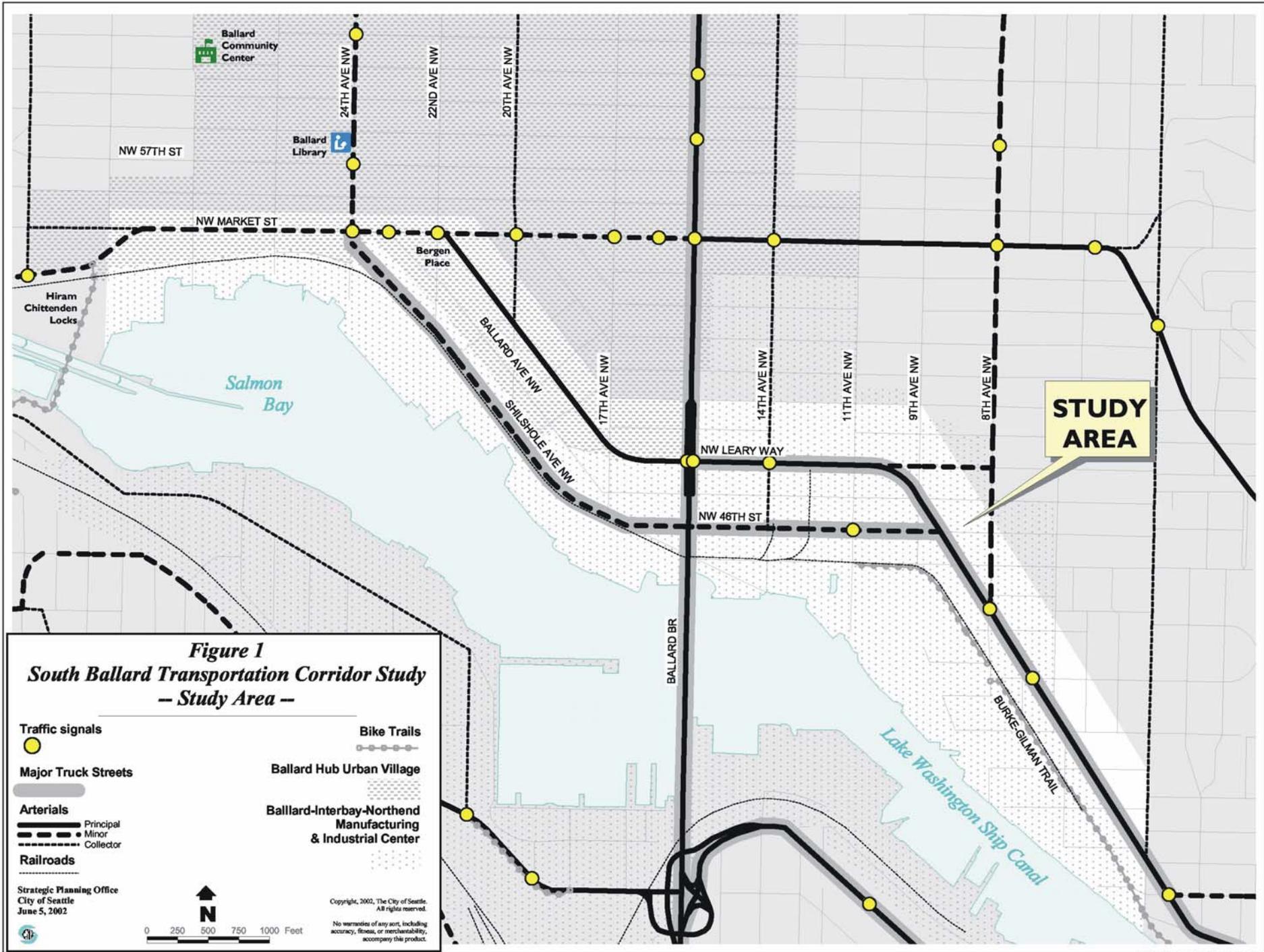
Study Area

The South Ballard Transportation Corridor Study Area (Figure 1) is bounded by NW Market Street on the north, Third Avenue NW on the east, Salmon Bay on the south, and 30th Avenue NW on the west. The analysis of traffic and transportation operations is focused along a generally east-west corridor defined by Leary Way NW, Shilshole Avenue NW/NW 46th Street, and Ballard Avenue NW between 3rd Avenue NW and 24th Avenue NW.

Study Methodology

The study began in June 2001 with a workshop where stakeholders identified issues and began to generate ideas on potential solutions. A list of potential improvements was then developed based on the results of that workshop, along with recommendations from neighborhood plans and an analysis of background transportation conditions. This list was presented at a public meeting in early October 2001 and refined based on input received from the TAC and the community.

Options that are not feasible or are ineffective were dropped from consideration, and the remaining options were put through technical analysis to determine their effect on traffic operations and mobility. The technical analysis included developing a detailed traffic simulation model of the study area and testing various changes to the system. This detailed analysis was used to develop preliminary recommendations that were presented to the public in late November 2001. Input received at and after the meeting was then used to further refine the recommendations that are contained in this report.



STUDY AREA

Figure 1
South Ballard Transportation Corridor Study
— Study Area —

- Traffic signals
- Major Truck Streets
- Arterials
 - Principal
 - Minor
 - Collector
- Railroads
- Bike Trails
- Ballard Hub Urban Village
- Ballard-Interbay-Northend Manufacturing & Industrial Center

Strategic Planning Office
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South Ballard Transportation Design Study

The Seattle Department of Transportation is proceeding with a design study of alternative bicycle and pedestrian routes connecting the current terminus of the Burke-Gilman Trail (45th Street at 11th Avenue) to the Ballard Locks. This work was initiated through Council Resolution 30408, which was adopted in October 2001. The Design Study is evaluating alternative routes that were initially identified through the SBTCS. Because of the overlap between the two studies, the SBTCS scope with regard to the Burke-Gilman Trail was limited to identifying alternative routes and issues to be considered in the Design Study. Detailed analysis of the advantages and impacts of the alternatives will be provided through the Design Study.

Other recommendations in this report may be affected by the outcome of the Design Study. These include recommendations that were designed, in part, to accommodate one of the alternative bicycle routes, as well as measures that may be modified through design of one of the alternative routes. Such recommendations will be included in the Design Study analysis and may be modified as a result of that study. Any modifications to the recommendations will be incorporated into the Implementation Plan, which is periodically updated to direct future City projects (the initial Implementation Plan is presented in the Implementation section of this report.)

Report Organization

This report first presents information about existing transportation conditions in the corridor, which includes discussions about all of the modes of land transportation. This *Background Conditions* section also includes information about how these conditions may change in the future as a result of growth. The report then presents an *Issues* section that compiles issues identified through an analysis of transportation conditions, neighborhood plans and input received from the community during the course of this study. Based on the information in the first two sections, a list of *Improvement Options* was developed. These are then analyzed in the *Evaluation of Improvement Options* section of the report. Finally, the report contains an *Implementation* section, which presents the recommended actions, phasing, and potential funding options.