Summary of Outreach Activities
Aurora Corridor Improvement Project
Community Outreach Summary

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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.
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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:

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

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Type</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>1,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door-to-Door</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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?”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Seattle Neighborhoods Comprised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98103</td>
<td>Fremont, Wallingford, Phinney Ridge, Green Lake, Greenwood, Licton Springs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98133</td>
<td>Bitter Lake, Haller Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98177</td>
<td>Broadview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98117</td>
<td>Ballard, Greenwood, Whittier Heights, Loyal Heights, Crown Hill, Sunset Hill, North Beach, Blue Ridge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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:
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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

Door-to-Door
100 responses

Yes (59%)
No (41%)

Online
1,074 responses

Yes (19%)
No (81%)

Cumulative
1,174 responses

Yes (22%)
No (78%)
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%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Cumulative</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Door-to-Door</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harder to find parking</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to locate loading areas</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer travel lanes and more congestion</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More traffic on side streets and secondary arterials</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N/A
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.

![Bar chart showing percentages of responses for different benefits.](chart.png)
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

**Door-to-Door**
101 responses

- Yes: 62%
- No: 38%

**Online**
1,037 responses

- Yes: 75%
- No: 25%

**Cumulative**
1,138 total responses

- Yes: 74%
- No: 26%
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

**Door-to-Door**
100 responses

- Yes: 40%
- Somewhat: 24%
- No: 36%

**Online**
773 responses

- Yes: 71%
- Somewhat: 11%
- No: 19%

**Cumulative**
873 responses

- Yes: 67%
- Somewhat: 19%
- No: 14%
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:

![Bar chart showing responses for different features](chart.png)
## What We Heard: A Snapshot

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Door-to-Door</th>
<th>Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effect of BAT lanes</strong></td>
<td>Divided</td>
<td>More strongly positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top concerns</strong></td>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Increased congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top ways to lessen concerns</strong></td>
<td>1. None</td>
<td>1. Reduce BAT lane hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Limit BAT lanes to one direction at a time</td>
<td>2. Limit BAT lanes to one direction at a time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top benefits</strong></td>
<td>1. Decreased travel time</td>
<td>1. Decreased travel time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Increased transit use</td>
<td>2. Increased transit use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reduced travel time and reliability will benefit me/my customers</strong></td>
<td>Divided</td>
<td>More strongly positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Most important features to create, preserve, or enhance on Aurora</strong></td>
<td><strong>Most</strong>: Good traffic movement</td>
<td><strong>Most</strong>: Good traffic movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Least</strong>: Parking</td>
<td><strong>Least</strong>: Parking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Appendix I. Media Coverage

Seattle Transit Blog

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...
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 III. Survey

(*question appeared on online survey only*)

| Name _______________________________ |
| 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
If positive, what do you see as the benefits? Choose all that apply.
  o  Decreased travel time
  o  Improved reliability
  o  Increased transit use along Aurora corridor
  o  Increased convenience
  o  Reduced pollution
  o  More travel options
  o  Other ________________________
  o  N/A

Do you and/or your customers currently ride Metro along this segment of the Aurora corridor?
  o  Yes
  o  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?
  o  Yes
  o  Somewhat
  o  No

What route number do you primarily use? *
  o  Route 5
  o  Route 16
  o  Route 345
  o  Route 355
  o  Route 358
  o  Other ________________

What are the most important features to create, preserve or enhance on Aurora? Choose all that apply.
  o  Good traffic movement (e.g. left turns, efficient east-west traffic movement)
  o  Safe and secure environment
  o  Parking
  o  Good transit service
  o  Walkable sidewalks

What is your Zip Code? *
  o  98103
  o  98107
  o  98115
  o  98117
  o  98133
  o  98155
  o  98177
  o  Other: ________________________

Would you like to receive project updates by email from the Aurora Corridor Improvement Project?
  o  Yes  If yes, email address: ______________________________
  o  No

Comments:
Appendix IV. Mailer (inside and outside)
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: