

West Woodland (3rd Avenue NW, NW 56th Street and NW 55th Place) NSF Project Frequently Asked Questions – 5/20/14

What is Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) planning to do?

We will improve pedestrian safety near 3rd Avenue NW, NW 56th Street and NW 55th Place by:

- Changing NW 55th Place to one-way, southwest-bound
- Creating an all-way stop at the intersection of 3rd Avenue NW and NW 56th Street
- Separating NW 55th Place from 3rd Avenue NW and NW 56th Place
- Adding curb bulbs on the west and east sides of NW 56th Street and 3rd Avenue NW to shorten the length of the pedestrian crossing
- Replacing the school zone flashing beacons on 3rd Avenue NW to improve their reliability

Why is SDOT doing this project?

This project was selected by the Bridging the Gap Oversight Committee to improve pedestrian safety, particularly for the intersection's proximity to West Woodland Elementary and its designation as a route to school.

Why is SDOT not just closing NW 55th Place entirely, rather than making it one-way southwest-bound?

The city engineer reviewed the traffic counts at NW 55th Place and determined that safety could be improved without restricting the southbound traffic by adding curb bulbs and shortening the relatively long crossing distances. Additionally, a full road closure would require a cul-de-sac turnaround area that would significantly impact the proposed new green space.

Why is SDOT adding stop signs instead of speed bumps?

Speed bumps can be beneficial for slowing traffic. However, particularly because of the pedestrian and bike rider volumes and the relatively high collision rate at this intersection, we are implementing an all-way stop to create a safer intersection.

Why is SDOT not installing a median island for pedestrians?

We considered a median island; however, creating an all-way stop and shortening the pedestrian crossing distances achieves the project goal of improving safety.

How will you keep cars from entering NW 55th Place?

We will add a curb and "Do Not Enter" signage so that it is clear to vehicles that NW 55th Place is one-way southwest-bound from NW 56th Street to NW 55th Street.

Have you looked at other 4-way intersections for comparison? There are backups at the 4-way stop at NW 65th Street and 3rd Ave NW.

We consider similar examples when implementing design changes. The specific intersection at 3rd Ave NW and NW 56th Street is primarily serving a residential area and a nearby school. Because of this

nature, we pay particular attention to pedestrian and bike rider safety, as this intersection is also on a designated “safe route to school,” serving West Woodland Elementary.

Have there been any collisions at the intersection?

Four collisions have been reported to Seattle Police since 2010. Two involved motor vehicles only; one involved a motor vehicle hitting two pedestrians; another involved a motor vehicle hitting a bike rider (the pedestrians and bike rider were injured in both cases). The motor vehicle drivers were faulted and ticketed by Police for not yielding right of way.

How is the project being funded?

Community members applied for funding and completion of these safety improvements through SDOT’s Neighborhood Street Fund (NSF) Program, which pays for neighborhood transportation projects through funds from Bridging the Gap – a transportation levy passed by voters in 2006 and expiring in 2015. Half of the project funding will come from the NSF program; the other half will be funded through the Safe Routes to School program.

Cars are often parked too far away from the curb (especially on NW 55th Street) or too close to stops signs and driveways. What can be done about these problems?

Please report parking issues to Seattle Parking Enforcement at (206) 386-9012. Per Seattle Municipal Code 11.72.120, you can paint the top of the curb with yellow paint five (5) feet from each side of your driveway entrance to indicate to drivers that they should not park in that area. More information is available on [SDOT’s Driveway Marking Web page](#).

Water sometimes puddles near the intersection. Will you be improving the drainage nearby?

There are existing drainage issues near the intersection. We will be making improvements, including adding an inlet at the northeast corner of the 3rd Avenue NW/ NW 56th Street intersection to collect and drain the roadside ditch, as well as minor improvements associated with the curb bulb and paving improvements. For other issues, we suggest you contact Seattle Public Utilities Drainage and Sewer Maintenance at (206) 386-1800.

Will you be removing green space near the intersection?

The planned safety improvements require adjusting the alignment of the roadway and sidewalks near the intersection, which results in reconfiguring green space. After the project is complete, there will be new green space on the southwest corner of the 4-way intersection.

Can you expand the park south of the intersection?

The Greenwood Triangle Park is owned by the Seattle Parks Department. For inquiries related to city parks, you should contact Donald Harris at (206) 684-8018 or donald.harris@seattle.gov.

Can I plant a garden in the planting strip?

If you are interested in gardening in City-owned green space, you can apply for a Street Use permit online at http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_permits_online.htm, or in person on the 23rd floor of the Seattle Municipal Building (700 5th Avenue).