

Roosevelt Way NE Paving and Safety Improvements Project Open House

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Overview

On November 17, 2014, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) hosted the first public open house for the Roosevelt Way NE Paving and Safety Improvements Project. The meeting was held from 5:30 to 7:30 PM at University Heights Center in Seattle's University District. Approximately 50 people attended the event. A total of 16 individual written comments were submitted. Additionally, 105 pre-typed comments (which were signatories to a form letter requesting that SDOT additionally design a protected bike lane from NE 45th Street to the north end of the project – NE 65th Street) were deposited in the comment box.

At the event, attendees were able to:

- View a series of display boards featuring information on project purpose and need, project elements, information about the multimodal Roosevelt corridor, the protected bike lane design, as well as bike rider collision data in the project area
- Study roll plots of the project elements, including curb bulbs, curb ramps and the protected bike lane alignment
- Have one-on-one discussions with project staff
- View a project overview presentation
- Get questions answered by project staff during a question and answer session

The display boards, presentation and project fact sheet were also made available on the project Web page for those unable to attend in person.

Meeting goals

- Share the purpose, need and goals of the project with the public
- Provide an overview of SDOT's design for the corridor based on the latest (60%) design
- Allow the community to ask questions about the project plans and share feedback on the current design
- Share with interested parties the project schedule, next steps and opportunities for involvement

Meeting notifications

SDOT used the following tools to publicize the open house:

- Mailers delivered to approximately 9,500 residents and businesses in the project vicinity, between I-5 and 15th Avenue NE
- Invitation included in personalized impact letters sent to adjacent businesses and residents
- Announcement on project Web page
- Door-to-door outreach on the west side of Roosevelt between NE 45th Street and the University Bridge

Public feedback – Key themes

- Safety was a primary concern. Many commenters felt the protected bike lane would improve safety by increasing predictability in the corridor, separating modes of travel and keeping people riding bikes away from people driving.
- Several attendees expressed their support for the protected bike lane proposed between NE 45th Street and the south end of the University Bridge, and expressed interest in extending it to NE 65th Street (the northern extent of the project).
- Some were concerned that reduction in parking spaces as a result of the protected bike lane installation could negatively impact businesses and residents.
- Some were concerned that the protected bike lane would not improve safety unless safe bike riding behavior was enforced.
- It was suggested that the driving lane next to the new protected bike lane be converted into a parking lane during nonpeak hours.

Question & Answer session summary

At the open house, the project team presented on the project and accepted questions and comments from the audience. These questions and comments, and the responses from City staff, are summarized below.

Pedestrian elements

- **Comment/ Question:** The sidewalks along the corridor are in a horrible state of disrepair. Why aren't sidewalk improvements part of this project?
 - *Response:* The funding we currently have available has been allocated specifically for critical road repairs, as this project was identified through our Arterial Asphalt and Concrete Paving program. By making these improvements, we will also be making much-needed safety and accessibility improvements including upgrading curb ramps to revised Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and curb bulbs to improve visibility between drivers and pedestrians and shorten pedestrian crossing distances. We are still pursuing funding for sidewalk repairs as part of this project.
- **Comment:** Roosevelt Way NE is one of the most difficult streets to cross because people don't yield to pedestrians. The bike lane and buffer will really help people get across the street.
- **Comment:** I want to point out how much safer Roosevelt will be with the addition of the protected bike lane because cars will be moving slower.

Design elements

- **Comment:** Thank you for designing a protected bike lane on Roosevelt. Please also consider extending it further north to NE 65th Street, at least.

- **Comment:** I like the protected bike lane as a way for pedestrians to safely cross the street. As you develop the permanent design, it would be great if you had a pedestrian refuge there.
- **Question:** Since you will be closing one of the travel lanes during construction, could SDOT evaluate the feasibility of permanently converting the travel lane [adjacent to the bike lane] into parking during nonpeak hours?
 - *Response:* We will certainly evaluate the behavior changes and user demands in the corridor during construction. However, this may not be a true reflection of demand in the corridor since corridor users often find other routes during construction.
- **Question:** Could SDOT have a dedicated protected bike lane between NE 65th Street and the University Bridge during peak commute periods and convert it into parking during the day, when parking demand tends to be higher and bike volumes lower?
 - *Response:* We will look into that; however, we also have to consider transit service and facilities in the corridor as well.
- **Question:** I have noticed that it is much harder to make a right turn at NE 50th Street when bicycles are there, so you cannot make a right turn on red and traffic backs up. I was impressed with how the bike lane on Ravenna interacts with the left turn lane – would you be able to mimic that?
 - *Response:* Thanks for bringing that to our attention. We will consider that in the design.
- **Comment:** I think the northeast corner of 43rd and Roosevelt is one of the worst spots for collisions. The only thing that slows the traffic down is the pedestrians trying to cross Roosevelt. Please consider adding a stoplight at that intersection.

Parking and building access

- **Question:** How will delivery and service vehicles access the condominium buildings and apartments after parking is removed?
 - *Response:* We are looking into establishing a load zone across the street from the condominium buildings. We are still in the design phase of the project right now and are committed to working with businesses and residents to determine the best options.
- **Comment:** Parking is very difficult in this neighborhood. Before removing parking, please consider where tenants, customers, delivery service trucks and moving vehicles are supposed to park in the future.

Concerns about business impacts

- **Question:** Will bicyclists really visit and use the businesses along the corridor? Why shouldn't SDOT focus on a bike facility on a nearby street?
 - *Response:* We have heard an interest from people who ride bikes along this corridor – and know from experience in other corridors – that they have an interest in visiting and utilizing the businesses along Roosevelt. This corridor is a multi-modal street and sees demand from all types of corridor users. A protected bike lane is particularly important near the pinch-point at the University Bridge.

- **Comment:** I worry that the additional business from more bike traffic will benefit businesses more than the loss of parking in the area would hurt them. I understand that there's a need for safety improvements, but I hope we can agree on something that works for everyone.

Construction

- **Question:** How long is each construction phase going to take?
 - *Response:* We are planning for about 180 working days – or 10 months – for construction. We're planning to divide the work into zones so that impact to any one business or resident is minimized and doesn't affect everyone on the corridor for the entire duration of the project. Currently, we're thinking of dividing the work into three or four phases.
- **Question:** Will construction be noisy? How noisy will it be?
 - *Response:* There will be typical construction noise, vibration and dust. We are aware that there are hotels and residences in the area and will coordinate with adjacent properties closer to construction regarding specific impacts and timing. I would also recommend that you sign-up for our project email updates so that you can stay up-to-date about planned construction activities.

Photos



