FAUNTLEROY WAY SW BOULEVARD PROJECT

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

January 2017

We're designing improvements to better organize Fauntleroy Way SW between 35th Ave SW and SW Alaska St to make it more predictable and comfortable for everyone. Project improvements include: new sidewalks, crosswalks, and shortened crossings at side streets; new street lighting; signal revisions; a reduced speed limit; a one-way protected bike lane on either side of the street; and new landscaping, including a landscaped center median.

PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

Q. Will you repair sidewalks on Fauntleroy Way SW?

A. Yes. We'll rebuild 6-foot sidewalks on both sides of Fauntleroy between SW Alaska Stand 35th Ave SW.

Q. Will you add new crosswalks on Fauntleroy?

A. The current project design adds a new crosswalk at 38th Ave SW where we're modifying the existing emergency signal to also serve as a pedestrian-activated crossing. We've heard requests from the community for an additional crosswalk between SW Avalon Way and SW Oregon St. As we refine the design, we're examining the feasibility of adding an additional mid-block crosswalk in this area, but need to consider how this would affect safety and vehicle movements.

LANDSCAPING

Q. Why does the design include a landscaped median?

A. This project builds on previous community planning that identified this section of Fauntleroy to become a boulevard and gateway entrance to West Seattle. A landscaped center median is a typical boulevard street design that helps clarify vehicle turning movements, reducing the risk of head-on collisions. It also provides opportunity for landscaping, adding green space and beautifying the area.

Q. How will the new landscaping be maintained?

A. SDOT's Street Maintenance and Urban Forestry teams maintain standard landscaping in the public right of way and will maintain the new landscaping along Fauntleroy. We're also exploring stewardship alternatives and invite the community to become involved in landscaping to ensure it's well-maintained. If you're interested in participating in discussions about community landscaping maintenance, contact us: fauntleroyblvd@seattle.gov.

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PROTECTED BIKE LANES

Q. What is a protected bike lane?

A. A protected bike lane (or PBL) combines the user experience of a multi-use trail with a conventional bike lane. They have different forms, but all share common elements — they provide space that is used for bicycles and are separated from motor vehicle travel lanes, parking lanes, and sidewalks. You may have seen protected bike lanes on Roosevelt Way NE or on Alki Ave SW west of 59th Ave SW.

Q. Why are you adding a protected bike lane to Fauntleroy?

A. We're building a network of bicycle facilities in Seattle to help make biking a safe, affordable travel option. As a part of this effort, we conducted a public survey and mapping exercise to understand where people currently bike and where they would like to bike and combined this feedback with information about key destinations, topography and existing street conditions to create Seattle's Bike Master Plan. The Bike Master Plan outlines a network of new bicycle facilities to be built throughout the city, including a protected bike lane on Fauntleroy. A protected bike lane on this section of Fauntleroy will create a flat bike route that connects the commercial hub at the Junction to Avalon, a key bike route in and out of West Seattle.

Q. How will the protected bike lane connect to other bike routes?

A. The protected bike lane will connect to existing in-street bike lanes and shared-use lanes ("sharrows") on Avalon, Alaska, and continuing south on Fauntleroy. On the south end, people biking will enter/exit the protected bike lane onto the sidewalk, and use the crosswalk to cross Fauntleroy and enter the in-street bike lane on Alaska, or sharrows to continue south on Fauntleroy. On the north end, people biking will enter/exit the protected bike lane at 36th or Avalon. At 36th, people biking would use the crosswalk to connect to the sidewalk. As a part of the final design, we're revising certain connectivity features based on community feedback. Changes include adding a "bike box" at the intersection of Avalon and Fauntleroy to make room for a safe left-turn movement for people biking.

In 2014, we highlighted plans to include a greenway on 36th. Since resuming design on the project, we're coordinating with the Neighborhood Greenways Program to determine what connection makes the most sense for greenway connectivity. The Bike Master Plan update calls for protected bike lanes on Avalon, Alaska, 35th, and continuing on Fauntleroy south of Alaska. The Fauntleroy protected bike lane will be built to connect to these future routes as they are built.

Q. Why does the design include a 1-way protected bike lane on both sides of the street instead of one 2-way protected bike lane on one side of the street?
A. Creating a 2-way protected bike lane on one side of the street would require moving the travel lanes out of the existing curb area, increasing project costs and complicating signal timing. We're designing the street to be built within the existing curbs to reduce costs associated with street widening and relocating utilities and drainage.

VEHICLE TRAFFIC

Q. Will people driving have slower travel times through the area once the project is built?
A. Our goal is to move people and goods safely and efficiently, including people driving, delivering goods, riding transit, walking, or biking. We've heard concerns from some people who drive that changes to the street will cause increases in traffic delays on an already busy road. Our traffic modeling of the current project design forecasts minimal increases in traffic delays at intersections during peak travel times on Fauntleroy. Once the boulevard is constructed, we'll continue to monitor traffic flow in the area and make modifications as needed.

Q. How will I make left turns in a vehicle?
A. The design includes a landscaped median in the middle of the street. People driving on Fauntleroy will be able to make left turns at signalized intersections at 38th, Alaska and westbound at Oregon. To drive to businesses on the left side of the street, people driving will need to use side streets – 35th, Avalon, Alaska, 37th and Oregon to exit Fauntleroy and re-enter on the other side.

As a part of the design process, we are looking at wayfinding signs to help people driving easily understand access routes.

Q. Will I be allowed to make a U-turn in a vehicle?
A. No. U-turns around the planted median won't be allowed. We studied whether U-turns can be incorporated, but the street width doesn't allow for a safe turning radius.

Q. Will the vehicle speed limit change?
A. Yes. Once construction is complete, we will lower the speed limit on Fauntleroy from 30 MPH to 25 MPH. We've already implemented this change on downtown arterials and we're lowering the speed limit on major arterials throughout Seattle, including Fauntleroy, Rainier Ave S, Martin Luther King Jr Way S, Airport Way S, 35th Ave SW, SW Roxbury St, Delridge Way SW, Harbor Ave SW, and W Marginal Way SW. This change is part of SDOT's Vision Zero initiative – the plan to end traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030, via street designs that emphasize safety, predictability, and the potential for human error, coupled with targeted education and data-driven enforcement.

Q. Will the project eliminate the right-turn lanes currently on Fauntleroy at Avalon and Oregon?

A. The current design eliminates the right turn pockets at Avalon and Oregon, though right turns will still be allowed. In response to questions from the community, we evaluated 2 alternate project designs that incorporated right-turn pockets from Fauntleroy onto Avalon. These alternate designs yielded slight decreases in projected wait times for people driving in the corridor. However, they would require us to remove portions of the protected bike lane and landscaped buffer, which serves to separate people driving from people walking and biking and improve safety. We're currently conducting an additional traffic study to verify our earlier analysis. We'll make a final decision regarding the right-turn lanes as a part of the final design.

Q. Will the traffic signals operate the same as they do today?

A. Once the project is complete, we will monitor and adjust traffic signal timing as needed based on traffic flow. We're modifying the existing emergency signal on Fauntleroy at 38th to also serve as a pedestrian-activated crossing. The design also includes separate bike lane signals for people biking.

PARKING AND LOADING

Q. How will parking and load zones be affected by the project?

A. We've heard concerns from some in the community that the project will negatively affect parking. This portion of Fauntleroy currently has on-street parking that can accommodate approximately 5 vehicles. To have sufficient space for new sidewalks and a protected bike lane, on-street parking will be eliminated. Some businesses in the project area currently have load zones located in the public right of way that will be impacted by the project improvements. In addition, in some portions of the project area, the sidewalk and street are poorly defined and people have become accustomed to using this public right of way for parking. We're working with businesses individually to relocate and/or adjust the configuration of these load zones.

UTILITIES

Q. Will the project relocate utilities underground?

A. During the early design process, we considered relocating utilities underground in the project area to remove visual clutter. After evaluating costs and community priorities, we're exploring less expensive options to improve the appearance of utilities in the corridor. This could include putting traffic signals on mast arms, as opposed to the current wires, or decorative utility poles.

Q. Are you adding street lighting?

A. Yes, the project will include new human-scale street lights for better nighttime visibility.

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CONSTRUCTION

Q. When will you start construction? How long will construction last?
A. We anticipate construction will start in late 2017 and wrap up in early 2019.

Q. Will Fauntleroy Way be closed during construction?
A. We're evaluating different options for construction sequencing, including maintaining 2-way traffic on Fauntleroy throughout construction, or restricting to 1-way traffic only with a detour route. During construction, Fauntleroy will likely remain open to traffic with temporary vehicle lane restrictions, sidewalk closures, and side street restrictions in place as needed.

Q. Will there be a construction detour route for cars?
A. We're evaluating construction sequencing, which will determine how vehicle traffic will be routed during construction. The alternate route for vehicle traffic during construction would likely be 35th and Alaska. We'll explore signal timing adjustments and wayfinding signs to help keep traffic moving efficiently on nearby streets.

Q. Will I still be able to access businesses on Fauntleroy during construction?
A. Yes. We will maintain public access to all businesses throughout construction. Ahead of construction starting, we'll work with the Office of Economic Development, as well as with local business owners, to implement strategies to help mitigate the effects of construction. Potential construction mitigation tactics include completing construction in phases to minimize the amount of time construction is active in front of individual businesses, requirements that contractors park their vehicles off-site to avoid filling-up on-street parking, and wayfinding signs to let the public know businesses are open.

Q. When will there be more information about construction impacts?
A. We'll finalize the project design in the summer of 2017, which will inform the final construction sequencing plan. In the summer of 2017 we'll conduct targeted outreach to area businesses and residents to understand individual access needs and how we can adapt construction plans to meet these needs.

RELATED PROJECTS

Q. How will Sound Transit's ST3 plan to expand to West Seattle affect the Fauntleroy Boulevard Project?
A. We've been coordinating with our partners at Sound Transit as we plan the Fauntleroy Boulevard Project. While the passage of ST3 commits Sound Transit to serve the areas outlined on their ST3 project map, the precise locations of the new Sound Transit stations and alignments will be determined through separate design processes that emphasize opportunities for public involvement. The routes shown on Sound Transit's ST3 project map

reflect the representative alignments that were used to develop estimates of ridership and costs to help inform their planning, but the final route alignments are not yet defined.

Q. Will King County Metro service be affected?

A. While there are 2 King County Metro bus stops on this portion of Fauntleroy Way, this portion of the street is not a major transit route. There are no plans to move these stops or to change bus service to these stops as a part of the project. During construction, these bus routes may need to be temporarily detoured. We'll work with King County Metro to communicate any service changes to riders ahead of time.

OUTREACH

Q. How has the community been involved in the Fauntleroy Boulevard Project?

A. Discussions of improvements to Fauntleroy began in 1999, when the West Seattle Junction Hub Neighborhood Plan identified streetscape improvements in this area, and continued through the multi-year West Seattle Triangle planning process. The community chose a preferred streetscape plan for the project in 2012, which was formally adopted by SDOT and the Seattle Department of Planning and Development (now the Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development). In addition, the 2014 Bike Master Plan designated Fauntleroy for a protected bike lane. In 2014 and 2015, we met with neighborhood stakeholder and property owners to gather feedback on the early design, and we held a public open house in the fall of 2014. Throughout 2017, we'll continue to meet with area businesses, stakeholder organizations, and residents to refine and finalize the design, and prepare for project construction.

Q. How can I stay informed about the project?

A. There are several ways to stay up to date on project progress:

- Review project materials and subscribe for project email updates on our webpage: www.seattle.gov/transportation/FauntleroyWySWBlvd.htm
- Contact us directly with any questions about the project. Email us at fauntleroyblvd@seattle.gov or leave a message on the project voicemail: 206-727-3994
- Request a briefing for your business or organization via phone or email