

Project Information

23rd Avenue Corridor Improvements Project

March 2013

What is the 23rd Avenue Corridor Improvement Project?

The 23rd Avenue Corridor Improvement Project is a Seattle Department of Transportation project to improve the 23rd Avenue corridor between E John and S Rainier streets. The project, which originally began as a repaving project between E John and S Jackson streets only, has recently been expanded through the award of several grants for signals, paving, transit and pedestrian improvements. SDOT is working to finalize the scope of work with the addition of these grants and acknowledges the opportunity to redevelop the corridor into a Complete Street. Seattle's Complete Streets policy is meant to guide the creation of safe streets for all travel modes, designing, as the budget allows, for the wide array of public needs and uses.

What does SDOT have money to do? Specifically, there are funds to:

From E Madison St to S Jackson St	From S Jackson to Rainier Ave S
Partially reconstruct and pave the outside lanes	Upgrade signals
Partially overlay the interior lanes of pavement	Install Transit Signal Priority (TSP)
Upgrade signals	Install fiber optics
Install Transit Signal Priority (TSP)	Install closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras
Install fiber optics	Provide detection Improvements
Install closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras	Install license plate readers for travel time information
Provide detection Improvements	Provide access improvements to S Hill Street
Install license plate readers for travel time information	
Make bus stop improvements	
Repair sidewalks	
Make lighting improvements	

**There is also the potential for an additional grant to fund transit speed and reliability improvements north of E John Street to Montlake Boulevard. An announcement on award of the grant should occur in the first half of 2013.*

What types of designs are being considered?

There are two designs currently being evaluated. One would keep the roadway in its current state – as a four-lane roadway and the other would bring it to a three-lane. One crucial key to the future of this corridor's cross section is an analysis of how a three-lane cross section would affect transit reliability and performance on the corridor. **If transit is adversely impacted, then the existing four lane section will have to be maintained.** This analysis is currently in progress and will be completed in April 2013.

What other design challenges are there?

Based on a traffic analysis of the corridor there are three intersections along 23rd, E Yesler Way, E John Street and E Madison Street that must be maintained as a four-lane cross section. A three-lane section at these intersections would result in a volume to capacity shortfall, causing queuing (backups) that would breakdown the function of the corridor and the surrounding roadway network.

In addition to the constraints of the intersections mentioned above, we also face a general limitation of available right-of-way. Building locations and roadway width are as little as 35.5 feet in some areas. Purchasing additional right of way (property) is not feasible or funded on this corridor, except possibly in isolated locations. Therefore, expansion of the total cross section through property acquisition has not been considered as a way to widen the roadway or sidewalk areas throughout the corridor.

Is 23rd Avenue a State Route?

23rd Avenue is not a State Route (24th Avenue is a State Route, starting at the SR 520 interchange), but it is a designated Emergency Response Route. As a result, our improvements will include emergency vehicle pre-emption at traffic signals.

What are the current volumes like on 23rd Avenue?

The average Vehicular Daily Traffic (VDT) varies greatly from north to south. They currently range from:

- 20,000 from Boyer Ave E to E Madison St
- 16,500 from E Madison St to S Jackson St
- 13,400 from S Jackson St to Rainer Ave S

What are the current pedestrian volumes like on 23rd Avenue?

Pedestrian volume counts during the PM peak hour at 23rd & Union counted 17 pedestrians on average, traveling N-S along 23rd on four separate days between 5-6:45pm. Higher pedestrian volumes were documented traveling E-W along Union Street – averaging 54 pedestrians during that same peak hour.

What is a cycle track?

A cycle track is an exclusive bike facility that combines the user experience of a separated path with the on-street infrastructure of a conventional bike lane. A cycle track is physically separated (grade or barrier) from motor traffic and distinct from the sidewalk. Cycle tracks have different forms but all share common elements—they provide space that is intended to be exclusively or primarily used for bicycles, and are separated from motor vehicle travel lanes, parking lanes, and sidewalks.

Who is SDOT coordinating with?

In addition to the work SDOT will be doing, the Department of Planning and Development is engaged in a community outreach process to create a shared vision and action plan to improve the health and equity of three Central Area community cores: 23rd Avenue and E Union Street, 23rd Avenue and E

Cherry Street and 23rd Avenue and S Jackson Street. This work is separate from one another; however, the two departments are committed to coordinating efforts to provide the biggest impact to this important public investment.

What is current timeline for this project?

The planned schedule for this project is to begin construction in mid 2014, and be completed by the end of 2015. However, if the scope of work is expanded or modified through the current scoping process, there is a potential that the project could be phased for construction, and the proposed timeline would adjust accordingly.

How can I receive the latest project information?

Sign-up to receive email updates by contacting:

- Maribel Cruz, Project Communications Lead, maribel.cruz@seattle.gov (206) 684-7963

How is this project funded?

Funding for a portion of this project is made possible in part by Bridging the Gap, the voter-supported transportation levy, and was launched from a grass roots effort to get design dollars added to the City's 2008 budget. Significant funding was also secured through the Puget Sound Regional Council – Countrywide & Preservation grants, a Transportation Improvement Board grant and potentially through a Washington State Department of Transportation Regional Mobility grant. The announcement of that grant award will likely occur in the first half of 2013 (please see attached funding table for more specific information on what the grant dollars can be used for).