

**NW 58th Street Neighborhood Greenway
Questions and Answers**

March 2013

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has been collecting public input over the past year on the NW 58th Street Neighborhood Greenway. Below is a summary of the questions we have received and their answers. More information about the project can be found at www.seattle.gov/transportation/ballardgreenway.htm. Visit www.seattle.gov/transportation/greenways.htm to learn more about neighborhood greenways in general.

1. How can I get involved and participate in the development of this project?

SDOT has revised how we approach neighborhood greenway projects to more actively involve residents and the broader community from the start. Future projects will host two open houses. The initial open house will be an opportunity for all residents and businesses to participate and provide input about the challenges they face when traveling around the neighborhood, where auto use is low and where they want to walk or ride a bike more. Feedback will then help shape the design proposal that will be shared at a second open house.

Additionally, we want to more clearly convey what a neighborhood greenway is. Neighborhood greenways are new in Seattle, so there are not a lot of real-life examples we can point to. Because of this, we are working on ways to better demonstrate what we are proposing and how it can enhance your street and make you, your family and friends safer.

For Ballard, we paused our schedule for a few months to do additional outreach. We are now ready to share the final project design which incorporates feedback. A second Open House for the Ballard Neighborhood Greenway will be held April 11 in the Ballard High School Lunchroom from 6 to 7:30 p.m. A presentation will be given at 6:30 p.m. followed by a question and answer session.

2. What outreach has been done since the July 2012 Open House?

Since the initial open house, SDOT further studied the options for the greenway based on what you told us. We met with the East Ballard Community Association, Central Ballard Residents Association and Ballard business representatives to solicit their collective input about how to best improve bicycling and walking in Ballard. We took all of the feedback we received to date and revised the project plans based on your input.

3. Are you adding a bike lane and will it take away on-street parking?



No. A bike lane is not being added to NW 58th Street. A neighborhood greenway on NW 58th Street would function just like the street currently does—a street where people driving and riding a bike share the same road; as well as people walking when they cross the street. The only real changes are the signs and bicycle pavement markings on the street that indicate the street is a designated greenway route. On-street parking stays the same on NW 58th Street. However, stop signs will be added on the minor cross streets. As at all stop signs in Seattle, to ensure pedestrian and stop sign visibility, there will be no parking within 30 feet of the sign.

4. Are you installing a median at 24th Avenue NW and NW 58th Street?

No. SDOT is no longer proposing a median at 24th Avenue NW after discussing the idea with the Ballard Chamber of Commerce and Security Properties, which is the company that owns the 'On the Park' apartment building on the southeast corner. Access to the parking garage serving as the primary access point for over two hundred apartments would be hindered by the median island.

SDOT is now planning to install a 'Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon' to alert motorists to people crossing 24th Avenue NW. Push buttons will be placed both on the sidewalk and next to the curb so people walking and biking can both easily activate the beacon. This solution will improve safety for people using the greenway while not limiting access to the large apartment complex.

5. Have you considered installing signs directing people to local bicycle and pedestrian friendly destinations (shops, schools, parks, etc.)? This would be a great addition.

Yes. These signs will definitely be included as part of the greenway.

6. NW 58th Street doesn't seem wide enough for people to pass each other and more people walking and biking on my street could be inconvenient. Will this be a problem?

The typical residential street in Seattle, including NW 58th Street, is 25 feet wide. With parking on both sides, 11 feet remains for traveling along the street. When cars moving in opposite directions meet, one driver usually has to come to a stop and allow the other driver to pass. While some may find having to stop and let oncoming traffic pass inconvenient, the end result is slower moving traffic and fewer collisions. This is a tangible safety benefit and a good reason to use 25 foot wide streets for neighborhood greenways.

Whether your street is designated as a greenway or not, people walking, riding bikes and driving should always be super safe. Visit our road safety web site at www.seattle.gov/besupersafe/ to learn more about Seattle's goal to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries by 2030.

7. Why not consider 59th Street? It's much wider and there are fewer driveways.

This a great question. In addition to NW 58th Street, both NW 57th and NW 59th streets were considered for the greenway. There are numerous factors that can be considered when choosing the best route, including driveways, pavement condition, street width, number of hills, proximity to businesses and services, traffic speeds and more. While NW 59th Street is wider between 24th and 32nd Avenues NW, the result is that traffic speeds are also higher (see answer #3 for more info). Residential driveways exist along all of the potential routes, so rather than chose a route based on which one has a few less driveways, the focus is on ensuring residents exiting their driveways are expecting to encounter people walking and bicycling and vice versa. There are several wider, heavily used driveways serving the businesses along NW 57th Street east of 24th Avenue NW. The route along NW 58th Street intentionally avoids those.

Ultimately, NW 58th Street was selected for many reasons. It is a consistent width, makes a straight connection across Ballard and is as close as possible to the businesses and services that people need to go to.

8. How many more people will be bicycling on my street?

It is impossible to know for sure, however, SDOT expects more people to use the street than currently do if it becomes a neighborhood greenway. It will not become a major bicycle thoroughfare like the Burke-Gilman Trail, but rather a neighborhood amenity primarily used by those who live nearby. SDOT will collect bicycle volumes along the greenway route to monitor the success of the project.

9. Will it be hard to see people on bikes when we use our driveways? There is lots of on-street parking making it difficult to see.

NW 58th Street's proximity to Ballard's attractions is exactly why it is an ideal location for the greenway. Residents pulling out of their driveways need to pay attention and expect to see pedestrians and bicyclists, just as they currently do. Pedestrians and people riding bikes along the greenway also must pay attention, because there is always a likelihood they could encounter a vehicle pulling out of a driveway.

10. Is the greenway a substitute for the Burke-Gilman “missing link?”

The greenway is a not substitute for the “missing link” along the Burke-Gilman Trail. The Neighborhood greenway will provide better access for residents who want to get to their local schools, parks, shops and services. It is envisioned that one day there will be a network of connected greenways that provide convenient routes to wherever you want to go.

11. How does the greenway help seniors and people with disabilities?

The main purpose of neighborhood greenways is to provide people of all ages and abilities a safe place to travel. We understand that some people have restricted mobility and are not able to walk along the greenway, but they will still experience the benefits of a quieter street. Also, SDOT is constructing as many curb ramps along the greenway as funding allows to improve access for people in wheelchairs, those with challenges walking up and down raised curbs and for families using strollers.

12. What does this greenway add for walkers that they don't have already?

One of the great things about Ballard is that there is a complete sidewalk network. Other proposed neighborhood greenways in Seattle do not have this. We are adding other improvements that should make it even easier and safe to walk, including crossing improvements at the major streets, rectangular rapid flash beacons, marking crosswalks and installing curb ramps.

13. What effect does a greenway have on property values and crime rates?

The value of a property is a function of many attributes including but not limited to house and lot size, age of the structure, school and tax districts, proximity to desirable and undesirable amenities, views from the property, noise and pollution levels, interest rates, month and year of sale, as well as socio-economic elements such as characteristics of neighboring structures, residents and streets. Because there are so many variables that determine the value of a given property at a given moment in time, it is challenging to make an “apples-to-apples” comparison of two streets where the only difference is the presence of a neighborhood greenway. This is particularly difficult given the relative newness of greenways (or bike boulevards as they are called in some city's) in the United States. There is not a lot of existing data that measures all of these changes after a street becomes a greenway.

According to researchers studying the links between property values and the environmental changes that take place after a greenway is built (including decreased traffic volumes, less noise, and having more transportation choices) it appears that the overall effect is a positive one. More information on [existing research](#) is available from the [Transportation Research Board](#).

14. We already have a lot of bike lanes, how about spending the project money to fix potholes?

Not everyone can drive and yet almost everyone pays sales taxes and property taxes. These taxes all contribute to funding transportation so it is important to deliver a safe, reliable, efficient and socially equitable transportation system that gives people travel options. One way to do that is to make walking and riding a bike more convenient. When one person chooses to walk instead of driving it means more space on the roads for those who are driving. It also means less damage to roads, reducing the need to fix potholes.