Delridge Way SW Safety Improvements FAQ's and Quick Facts

Where is Delridge Way SW?

Delridge Way SW is located in the southwest part of Seattle. It is a 3.86 mile principal arterial that connects the West Seattle Bridge to the southern city limits at SW Roxbury St in White Center. Some other routes that parallel this corridor include 35th Ave SW to the west and West Marginal Way SW is to the east. Delridge Way SW is not designated a major truck route.

Figure 1: Vicinity Map

What is Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) proposing to change along Delridge Way SW?

SDOT proposes to:

- Change the travel lanes to one lane in each direction between SW Myrtle St & SW Kenyon St to be consistent with the roadway north of this section;
- Improve vehicular safety and access by providing a northbound left-turn lane at SW Holden St
- Provide safer pedestrian crossing with fewer lanes to cross;
- Install bike lanes between SW Myrtle St & SW Kenyon St;
- Install bike sharrows between SW Kenyon St and SW Roxbury St;
- Provide approximately 6 additional parking on the east side of Delridge Way SW between SW Holden St & SW Kenyon St. There will be no impacts to existing, parallel on-street parking.

What is lane reconfiguration?

After SDOT conducts an analysis of the traffic for safety and capacity, it changes the lane lines on a street, in this case from a street that has two travel lanes in each direction and a center turn lane to a street that has one travel lane in each direction, a center turn lane and bike lanes.

Why change the lanes on Delridge Way SW?

- SDOT wants to bring consistency to the roadway section to drivers. In 1988, Delridge Way SW between SW Dakota St and SW Myrtle St was changed to have one travel lane in each direction with a center turn lane. This section of roadway is just north of the area where SDOT is proposing the lane reconfiguration.
- SDOT is planning to repave Delridge Way SW from SW Orchard St to SW Roxbury St. Since this is a major transportation project, the city's "Complete Streets" policy requires SDOT to consider all transportation modes in its design. For more information on the paving project, please check out their website at: http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/pave_delridge.html
- After reviewing for "Complete Streets", SDOT is considering reconfiguring the lanes on a short section of Delridge Way SW to reduce collisions and improve the street for pedestrians, bicycles and motorists. Narrowing the space for motor vehicles has been shown to reduce travel speeds making for a safer environment while not decreasing the capacity of the street. When a street has one lane in each direction improvements can be made to help pedestrians cross the street.
- Local residents indicated at recent outreach events that they would like safer left-turn opportunities off Delridge Way SW.
- The Delridge Neighborhood Plan (1999) recommends that the Delridge Way streetscape to include bike lanes and on-street parking on both sides of the street.
- The Bicycle Master Plan, passed by City Council in 2007, identified bike lanes and sharrows along the corridor to provide north-south connections through the Delridge neighborhood. The bike lanes will provide a critical non-motorized connection between Westwood, Highland Park and South Delridge Triangle neighborhoods through the existing bike facilities on Sylvan Way SW.
- The goal of the Pedestrian Master Plan, passed by the City Council in 2009, is to make Seattle the most walkable city in the nation. Reducing motor vehicle lanes reduces the multiple-threat for pedestrians and enables SDOT to build pedestrian crossing improvements in the future.

How many drivers care to travel on Delridge Way SW on an average day (project area in bold)?

Delridge Way SW (cross street)	Average Daily Traffic	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour	Street Section
SW Genesee St - SB (Apr 2011)	9,747	574	1,015	2 lanes, 1 additional southbound lane between 4 – 6 PM on weekdays
SW Genesee St - NB (Apr 2011)	13,157	1,304	917	
SW Genesee St - TOTAL	22,904	1,878	1,932	
SW Orchard St - SB (Jan 2012)	**7,073**	**397**	**697**	**Proposed 2 lanes with center turn lane**
SW Orchard St - NB (Jan 2012)	**6,700**	**584**	**525**	
SW Orchard St - TOTAL	**13,773**	**981**	**1,222**	
SW Henderson St - SB (Jan 2012)	6,820	455	622	2 lanes, 1 additional southbound lane between 4 – 6 PM on weekdays
SW Henderson St - NB (Jan 2012)	7,081	449	584	
SW Henderson St - TOTAL	13,901	904	1,206	

Provide some examples of the average number of cars per day on other roadways that have been reconfigured.

Other Streets	Average Daily Traffic	Street Section
Fauntleroy Way SW from California Ave SW to SW Alaska St (Nov 2010)	15,589	2 lanes with center turn lane
Columbian Way S from Beacon Ave S to 15th Ave S (Feb 2011)	13,925	2 lanes with center turn lane and bike lanes
California Ave SW from SW Willow St to SW Edmunds St (Nov 2010)	15,554	2 lanes with center turn lane
Rainier Ave S from Seward Park Ave S to city limits (May 2009)	19,206	2 lanes with center turn lane and bike lanes

What factors did you consider?

- Volume (AWDT) – reviewed the amount traffic that travels along this section of roadway
  - South of SW Orchard ST (Jan 2012 ADT 13,773
  - Northwest of SW Henderson ST (Jan 2012) – ADT 14,287
- Speed – reviewed for any speeding issues
  - Posted Speed Limit of 35 mph north of SW Henderson St and 30 mph south of SW Henderson St.
  - Delridge Way SW south of SW Orchard St, 85% of the drivers were driving 37 MPH in both the northbound and southbound directions. (July 2012) SDOT looks at the 85% as a measure for what the average speed that drivers feel comfortable with.
  - Delridge Way SW southwest of SW Myrtle St, 85% of the drivers were driving 38 MPH in the northbound direction. (Nov 2010)
- Collisions – reviewed collisions between SW Myrtle St and SW Kenyon St over the last 5 years (1/1/2007 to 7/17/2012)
  - 102 total collisions
  - 40 resulted in injury (38% of total collisions, average for minor arterials city-wide is 33%)
  - 32 rear end
  - 28 left turn (13 at SW Holden St)
  - 16 right-angle
  - 8 side swipe
  - 3 parked car
  - 3 pedestrian related
  - 1 bicycle related
- Transit (Metro Route 120) – looked at any possible impacts on transit service in the corridor
  - Serves more than 7,000 riders per day
  - 28 busses/AM peak hours (6 – 9 AM), 33 busses/PM peak hours (3 – 6 PM), 144 busses during the weekday, all day Saturday and Sunday service
  - Bus stops locations are a mix of pull-outs and in-lane.
- Roadway classification – Delridge Way SW is designated as a principal arterial.
- Freight needs—Delridge Way SW is not a designated truck route.
- Bicycle needs— existing sharrows with bicycle lane on the uphill side along SW Orchard St end at Delridge Way SW.
- Parking— on-street parking exists between SW Holden St to SW Roxbury St. Approximately 6 parking spaces will be added between SW Holden St and SW Kenyon St on the east side. Front-in parking between 17th Ave SW and SW Roxbury St will be converted to back-in parking.

Aren't there too many cars on Delridge Way SW for this to work?

The current average daily traffic on Delridge Way SW is under 14,000 motor vehicles each day. National studies show that this level of traffic can be accommodated within the proposed 3-lane configuration. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has published a report back in March, 2004 concluding that this lane configuration can handle up to approximately 20,000 vehicles. The report can be found at: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/humanfac/04082/index.cfm

How does SDOT know that reducing the number of lanes won't decrease the capacity of the street? That doesn't make sense.

We agree it seems odd, but we have reconfigured 33 streets over the past 40 years, without reducing capacity – some nearby examples include: Delridge Way SW from SW Dakota St to SW Myrtle St (1988), California Ave SW from SW Genesse St to SW Walkter St (1972) and mostly recently Fauntleroy Way SW from California Ave SW to SW Alaska St (2009).

What about safety?

Reconfiguring the travel lanes has been shown to reduce collisions and speeds. Delridge Way SW does have higher than average speeds in both directions. Reducing the roadway to one lane in each direction will help to reduce vehicular speeds.

How does the lane reconfiguration help pedestrians?

By reducing the roadway to one lane in each direction, it will remove the multiple lane threat to pedestrians. When crossing the street, pedestrians will have two less travel lanes to be concerned and crossing distance will be shortened.

I ride a bike along Delridge Way SW. How does this help me?

Reconfiguring the travel lanes on Delridge Way SW will allow SDOT to add 6' wide bike lanes between SW Myrtle St and SW Kenyon St and will connect to the existing bicycle facilities along SW Orchard St. New sharrows south of SW Kenyon St to SW Roxbury St will help bicyclists position themselves away from parked cars as well as alert drivers to expect bicyclists to occupy the travel lane.

Will parking be affected?

SDOT will be adding approximately 6 parking spaces on the east side of Delridge Way SW between SW Holden St and SW Kenyon St. We do not propose to remove any existing, parallel on-street parking. The front-in parking 17th Ave SW and SW Roxbury St will be changed to back-in parking spaces. We believe strongly that back-in angle parking is safer than head-in for several reasons:

- Traffic is already stopped when he/she is backing into a parking space, rather than backing out into a moving traffic lane when visibility is limited.
- When leaving a parking space it is easier and safer to drive into a travel lane than back a vehicle out of a space into a travel lane.
- Loading and unloading will be safer with trunks adjacent to the sidewalk and open car doors offering protection from the street.
- When leaving a vehicle, open doors will direct children towards the sidewalk rather than the street.
- Bicyclists are better able to avoid a vehicle backing into a parking space than a vehicle backing out of a space into a bicyclist's path.
- The time required to back into an angle space requires less time than to back out of an angle stall. Therefore traffic delays are reduced.

Is this work related to changes along Delridge Way SW between SW Andover St and SW Oregon St?

The safety improvements or the paving projects are not related. King County Metro is making improvements to improve the speed and reliability of Metro Route 120 along Delridge Way SW between SW Andover St and SW Oregon St. More information about Metro's plans can be found at: http://metro.kingcounty.gov/have-a-say/projects/route120/

How is SDOT soliciting feedback?

SDOT distributed postcards to businesses and residences along Delridge Way SW informing people of the proposed changes. SDOT will keep the community informed by attending the Delridge/West Seattle Town Hall on August 28th, 2012 and updating the DNDC at their meeting on September 19th, 2012. A public open house will be held to talk about the reconstruction and safety improvements on October 2nd, 2012. Project information is also posted on our website at: http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/bikeprojects/delridge_safety.htm

What is the timeline for this project?
SDOT will continue outreach to the community throughout the summer with an open house on October 2nd. The project will start in early 2013 in coordination with the paving project. We anticipate project completion in 2013.

How do I submit a comment?
Send your questions and comments to walkandbike@seattle.gov or call 206-684-7583.