Greenwood Ave N Facts and Answers

Why change the lanes on Greenwood Ave N?

- The Greenwood Transportation Plan (2006) recommends the development of Greenwood Ave N as a "three-lane urban arterial with pedestrian, bicycle and transit . . . features".

- SDOT is reconfiguring the lanes on Greenwood Ave N to improve roadway crossings for pedestrians, make left turns easier and safer, reduce speeds, maintain current capacity, reduce collisions and, add bicycle facilities. The speed limit on Greenwood Ave N St is 30 mph, but average speeds are higher. Narrowing the space for motor vehicles has been shown to reduce travel speeds 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.

- The Pedestrian Master Plan, passed by the City Council in 2009, identified two, top tier pedestrian crossing locations along the corridor at N 100th St and N 104th St. Reducing motor vehicle lanes enables SDOT to build pedestrian crossing improvements in the future.

- The city's "Complete Streets" policy requires SDOT to consider all transportation modes when designing a transportation project.

Isn't there too much traffic on Greenwood Ave N for only one travel lane?

No. The turns that motorists make onto Greenwood's many side streets and driveways reduce the flow of traffic to only one effective through lane today. A road diet creates more consistent traffic flow by removing conflicting movements from the travel lane. The capacity of a roadway with one lane in each direction and a center turn lane is between 20,000-25,000 vehicles per average week day, depending on the roadway conditions. The current number of vehicles currently traveling on Greenwood Ave N south of N 90th Street is approximately 14,500 well within the capacity of a 3 lane road.

How many cars travel on Greenwood Ave N on an average day (project area in bold)?

Greenwood Ave N	Average Daily Traffic	Profile
Greenwood Ave N north of N 107th St (Sept 2008)	24,962	4 lanes
Greenwood Ave N south of Holman Road (July 2010)	**11,666**	**4 lanes**
Greenwood Ave N south of 90th (Nov 2005)	**14,508**	**4 lanes**
Greenwood Ave N south of N 80th St (Nov 2009)	11,560	2 lanes with center turn lane
Greenwood Ave N south of 73rd St (Oct 2007)	12,480	2 lanes with center turn

Give some examples of the average number of cars per day on other roadways that have been rechannelized?

Other Streets	Average Daily Traffic	Profile
S Columbian Way -Beacon Ave S to 15th Ave S	15,100	2 lanes with center turn lane
W Nickerson St - Warren Ave W and 13th Ave W	19,000	2 lanes with center turn lane
Stone Way N – N 50th St to N 34th St	16,000	2 lanes with center turn lane
Fauntleroy Way SW – California Ave SW to SW Alaska St	18,700	2 lanes with left turn lane

Will the road diet on Greenwood Ave N result in more cars on side streets?

A Federal Highway Administration study has shown that traffic is not likely redirected from the arterial onto side streets unless the traffic volumes on the arterial street approach 20,000 vehicles per average day. The traffic volume on Greenwood is lower at 14,500 vehicles per average day and traffic use of side streets is not likely to occur. A recent example is Stone Way with a volume of 16,000. After the road diet on Stone Way, traffic on alternate streets decreased.

Will the proposed plan change the bottle neck at southbound Greenwood Ave N at N 85th St?

SDOT studied the Greenwood Ave N and N 85th St intersection. Based on results of the study, and community feedback about a "trap lane", SDOT will install a southbound dedicated left turn lane. In addition, there will be a dedicated right turn lane. To accommodate the right turn lane, 2 parking spots previously available for parking between 8 PM and 6 AM only, will be removed on the northwest corner of the intersection.

Why put bicycles on a busy arterial street when they could use a parallel residential street instead?

Seattle's arterial roadways are critical for bicycle access. The arterial streets are public rights-of-way that typically provide continuous connections between neighborhoods and key destinations in all parts of Seattle. They are often the most direct routes available for many trips. Continuing bicycle lanes on Greenwood connects to an existing bicycle route all the way into downtown Seattle. It also provides bicyclists access to the Greenwood business district. Further, bicyclists are legally allowed on the road with motor vehicles. Bicycle lanes give bicyclists their own dedicated space in the roadway.

Where are bicyclists expected to go when they reach N 103rd St?

Northbound bicyclists will be directed to turn right onto N 103rd St. N 103rd St intersects the Fremont Ave N bicycle boulevard.

As a bicyclist I am concerned about bike lanes that are too close to parked cars on the right and narrow lanes on the left.

The bike lanes on Greenwood Ave N will be 5 feet wide, and the parking lane will be striped 7 feet wide. The travel lanes will be 10.5 to 11 feet wide. Bike lanes are being installed because they are a well studied facility type that, according to multiple studies, actually reduces the number of bicycle collisions as compared to the use of unmarked streets.

Has SDOT considered the interaction between bicycles and buses?

Yes. Where there is a bike lane or a sharrow, bikes will be able to pass the bus because the buses should pull into the parking lane to make their stop. SDOT works closely with METRO to coordinate curb space uses.

I ride the bus, how will the changes to Greenwood Ave N affect transit?

Changes to Greenwood Ave N will not impact transit. Greenwood Ave N is a key transit corridor. Over 1100 people catch the bus on Greenwood Ave N between N 85th St and N 105th Street on an average week day. SDOT is working closely with METRO to review the project plans to ensure that transit is accommodated along the corridor. There will also be no impacts to transit stops. However, SDOT in coordination with METRO will be evaluating several stops where sidewalk does not exist for the installation of bus zone landings.

What are the next steps for implementation of the project?

Implementation of the project is scheduled to be completed by the end of October. Residents will receive door hangers in late September regarding temporary parking restrictions during restriping (parking is restricted so that paint does not get sprayed on adjacent parked vehicles). Weather permitting; restriping will occur in October.

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