

FREMONT BRIDGE

**APPROACH
REPLACEMENT
PROJECT**



December 2003

Fremont prepares for bridge improvements

What will the project involve?

- Replacement of the north and south approaches to the bridge.
- An upgrade of the bridge's antiquated electrical and mechanical infrastructure.
- Replacement of the bridge maintenance shop located beneath the south approach.

When will construction begin?

- Mid 2005.

How long will it last?

- Approximately one and one-half years.

How much will it cost?

- \$31 million.

The Fremont Bridge is just 30 feet above the water, and opens an average of 35 times a day, making it one of the busiest bascule drawbridges in the world. After 86 years of use, the north and south bridge approaches – the elevated roadway sections that lead to the double-leafed portion of the bridge – have deteriorated significantly and must be replaced.

In 2002, a team of consultants led by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) began planning the reconstruction of this critical link. The project will replace the approaches with structures that meet current seismic codes and traffic safety needs while working with the community to manage construction impacts.



The Fremont Bridge and its approaches have supported heavy traffic for nearly a century.

What we've heard from you

Since public outreach began in Fall 2002, the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) has helped guide involvement with the community. Within the last year the project team held a series of briefings for neighborhood and stakeholder groups and hosted two public meetings. We've gathered invaluable local knowledge that will assist in project planning and implementation. Here's a look at the issues community members have asked SDOT to consider:

- Safety
- Impacts to pedestrian, bicycle and auto traffic
- Impacts to businesses, employers and employees
- Impacts during key neighborhood events and festivals
- Circulation, parking and access
- Traffic signal improvements
- Utility and service interruptions
- Aesthetic quality and integrity of bridge
- Communication and notification

In March 2003 SDOT completed a planning study required by our funding partner, the Federal Highway Administration. The report describes the proposed structure and design alternatives, identifies anticipated construction impacts, and recommends a preferred alternative.

Community feedback overwhelmingly supports maintaining access over the bridge to the greatest extent possible. The project team is working on a design that will keep closures to an absolute minimum.



Fremont speaks



Erling Rockwell,
*neighborhood
business owner*
"I'm looking forward to the completed project and trust that SDOT will do a good job. Let's get it done."

Lillian Welch,
neighborhood bookseller
"This project could be a good opportunity to improve the terrible access to and from the new PCC store."

Ann Sweringen,
*neighborhood
bookseller*
"I'm concerned about traffic and parking."



Environmental review continues

SDOT is preparing a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) checklist as required by the Washington State Department of Ecology. SEPA provides a way to identify possible environmental impacts that may result from construction of a public project such as the Fremont Bridge approach replacement. SDOT has determined that this project is unlikely to have a significant adverse environmental impact, and will therefore issue a determination of non-significance (DNS) in early 2004. Copies of the DNS will be available for citizen review at the Fremont Public Library.

Project unfolds

September 2002

- Community workshop

October 2002

- Citizen Advisory Group holds first meeting
- Open House I

March 2003

- Planning study complete

2003

- Design phase begins
- Outreach continues
- Permitting and environmental review begin

2004

- Open House II
- Permitting and environmental review complete
- Design work complete

2005

- Construction begins

2007

- Bridge and trails fully open to pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles

What you can expect during construction

- The new bridge approaches will be built in the same location as the existing approach structures.
- Construction work below the bridge deck is expected to last for nine months. During this first phase, pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles will have full access across the bridge.
- Construction on the bridge deck is anticipated to take another nine months, during which time the vehicular traffic will be limited to one lane in each direction. Sidewalk traffic will be limited to one sidewalk for pedestrian and bicycle traffic in both directions. During this nine month period, we estimate a need for up to 10 weekend full closures with no vehicular, bicycle or pedestrian traffic access.
- Metro expects to reroute bus service when bridge traffic is restricted to one lane in each direction.
- As a necessary safety precaution, the Burke-Gilman and Ship Canal trails will be closed to pedestrians and bicyclists beneath and immediately adjacent to the Fremont Bridge throughout all phases of construction.
- Trail traffic will be rerouted to North 34th Street, Westlake Avenue North and Nickerson Street.



Traffic improvements coming to Fremont

The City recently applied for and received grant funding for two additional projects in Fremont. One project involves improvements on Bridge Way North between Stone Way North and Fremont Avenue North. The other would implement community priorities identified in the Fremont Circulation Plan.

Design for these projects will begin as soon as possible in 2004. The goal is to have the Bridge Way and Fremont Circulation Plan improvements completed before lane restrictions are required for the Fremont Bridge approach reconstruction work.



Need additional information?

For additional information contact Seattle Department of Transportation project manager Rob Gorman at (206) 233-7205 or via e-mail at robert.gorman@seattle.gov. You can also contact Marybeth Turner, Community Relations at (206) 684-8548 or marybeth.turner@seattle.gov.

To subscribe to e-mail updates on the Fremont Bridge Approach Replacement Project, please go to the project website and register online: <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/fremontbridgeapproaches.htm>

Written comments may be mailed to the following:

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“The Fremont Bridge is a vital link between communities. This project will ensure that those links remain and improve the safety of the bridge.”



Mayor Greg Nickels

