

January 17, 2024

From SDOT:

Nyles Green
Neftalie Gonzales
Jules Posadas
Marilyn Yim

From MCOC:

Ann Goos, Moderator
Thomas Powell, Host

Tom began the meeting at 6:09 pm and introduced history about the infrastructure developed over the last centuries, from 106 miles of roads to 4,000 miles today; 2200 sidewalk miles and 6,000 crosswalks, 100 bridges, and 100,000 signs.

Ann introduced the program and the importance of accessibility for kids and families, in particular during school hours. She welcomed the SDOT team.

Jules Posadas, Outreach Lead, raised in Seattle, went to grade school in Ballard, was a paperboy, camp counselor and volunteered on Sustainable Ballard.

Marilyn Yim, project manager, SDOT capital projects division, civil engineer is a fourth generation Seattlite – in Phinney Greenwood neighborhood and lived in Ballard and Queen Anne.

15th Ave W/NW & Ballard Bridge Paving & Safety Project

The SDOT team acknowledged that there had been Move to Seattle Levy questions submitted, but that topic was not part of the program. They provided some written information as a handout.

Presentation Overview

The SDOT team presented the vision, mission values and goals and core values (see the handout) and goals (equity, safety, mobility, sustainability, livability and excellence)

Meeting Norms were agreed upon (see handout)

Presented the Project Goals (see handout)

Overview of the project presented by Marilyn Yim

Rounding out the 9 year levy in 2024, we will have completed a lot of milestones on the information sheet and this project is one of them. We will be repaving the bridge (see project overview for scope) to restore the condition of the road. It is a critical north/south arterial in our community.

Paving and Bridge Maintenance

- The project will improve earthquake safety, including the Leary Bridge and improvements on the fixed parts of the Ballard Bridge
- Rapid D Line bus reliability (“bus only” lanes and markings)
- General improvements
- Repair sidewalks, driveways and stormwater drainage
- Plant new trees and replace old trees in select areas
- Improve curb ramps, stormwater drainage, etc.
- Bike and pedestrian signal at NW 51st Street (similar to NW 53rd) that is pedestrian activated
- Additional landscape median added between 50th and 54th; making room for additional trees and shrubs in the middle (adding a boulevard feel to 15th) and trees to the sidewalk edge
- Improving pedestrian lighting underneath bridges at Leary and on the south side pedestrian path under the bridge at Nickerson
- (see additional project elements related to safety and accessibility)

Schedule

- The project is at the Final Design phase, about to begin construction in the spring – SDOT is expecting it to be mid to late May. Contractors are asking us for more time to bid on the project – so it might push to June.
- Construction will last approximately one year
- Changes in construction timeline may be due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather, soil conditions, etc.)

- Bridge work this year – so not torn up the whole time

Pre-construction and Community Outreach

There is no contractor onboard yet. Bids will be opened later this month and SDOT can get more specifically into the details of the schedule and what will be done once the contractor is identified.

Pre-construction

- We will stage the materials in the project corridor; they may do some prep work such as implementing traffic control plans to create a safe work zone; and they will engage businesses through door to door efforts and providing relevant information to the community on our project listserv and webpage updates
- They will determine vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian traffic control plans
- Information will be distributed. The project listserv is sent out via email, on the webpage and there is information on the documents they have provided to get added to the project listserv.
- The project webpage will be updated
- SDOT has key stakeholders they will communicate actively with, including Magnolia Chamber of Commerce. They will email about big traffic impacts so the neighborhood organizations can relay this information to their members. SDOT encourages people to share the information with neighbors; they will be working with media agencies so that big closures will be announced via a press release.
- If there are big disruptions, they get communicated to navigation apps. If there is construction activity, the apps will be notified for updates

What to expect during road construction

- Temporary land and street closures for people driving and during outside construction hours
- Temporary vehicle and bus detours
- Temporary sidewalk and crossing closures and detours for people walking and rolling
- Temporary bus stop relocations

- Disruptions to on-street parking
- Noise, dust and vibrations during work hours (generally Mon-Fri, 7 am-4 pm)
- Construction staging and parking impacts near the work sites
- Occasional night or weekend work, as needed. They will be announced, as they are unexpected.

Bridge Construction

There will be weekend bridge closures – all weekend – trying to do this part before the end of 2024 (there are other constructions on five out of the six bridges that cross the ship canal - Ballard, Fremont, I-5 Ship Canal, University, Montlake Bridges)

Pedestrian, bicycle, vehicle and bus detours to the Fremont Bridge and Aurora Bridge

Fremont Bridge will be next – so they have to be done at separate times; they are coordinating with the route 40 contractor that is working on that project

The project should not disrupt water traffic – bridge openings will still take place. The metal grating vasculature is not being worked on. We are doing paving around the vasculature and bridge expansion points.

There was a question about whether the Ballard bridge is going to be widened as a part of the process and the SDOT team indicated that is not the case. That is outside of the scope of this project.

In addition to the weekend closings, would you expect one lane closings during weekdays? It is possible that there will be lane closures and on 15th during the week.

Question: How many bus lanes and how many car lanes?

The bus markings, there is the same curb lane we have now. Southbound there are two spots bus only lanes – a slip lane between Leary and Ballard Avenue leading to the Ballard Bridge southbound; by where the storage building is. Going south onramp to the Ballard Bridge will be a bus only – that will be marked (it is being used now for that purpose). It will be two lanes, with one being marked for buses.

Project Elements

Safety and accessibility enhancements

Install a new bike and pedestrian crossing

Between Market Street and the Ballard Bridge (Starbucks, Seafood Co) – north of Market Street (it is 2 lanes SB and 1 bus only lane). In order to make room for the island it will be two lanes southbound; bus will be one block (no changes to Market Street). The changes will occur a block south of Market Street. Buses go through the light to Market and one curb lane for a block will be bus only, then they will merge into the two continuing southbound lanes on 15th. This doesn't add a lot of delay on 15th itself.

There will be a pedestrian crossing on 51st

See page 8 for project elements (and described above)

With the additional crossing and reduction of lane it does not add significant time to go down from 57th to 85th it is two general purpose lanes – we are continuing that two general north of Market Street to the Ballard Bridge

Using Community Feedback for Detour Planning

The SDOT team has spoken with Ballard PTSA / High School and Seattle Public Schools and will continue to coordinate with them

They collected feedback on preferred detour routes in 2023 and based on what we heard we are detouring people to the Fremont and Aurora Bridges during Ballard Bridge work

They are coordinating with the route 40 team to ensure the Fremont bridge stays accessible during Ballard Bridge work

Next Steps

The SDOT team sent the construction contract to AD so contractors can bid on the project now

Once a contractor is selected, they will work with them to develop a construction schedule that includes work zones and bridge closure dates

They are coordinating with nearby schools, King County Metro and emergency services to prepare them for construction activities and possible detour routes

They will encourage people to take alternative modes of transportation to reduce congestion

They will send out regular email updates about construction to our project listserv. Sign up for likely to be weekly email updates

If there are specific concerns on the corridor or an event, they would like to be aware of it so they can plan with community members. Let them know as far in advance as possible.

Question from the Moderator: What is your expectation on traffic, i.e., how it is going to impact Emerson Bridge and 15th and traffic backup on Dravus?

On the detour route – we would focus on it. There would be congestion on Fremont and Frelard and SPU. Once people get beyond that, it should be more disbursed.

Comment: There are no other options for Magnolia.

If you have tried to get onto 15th from Emerson, you can be backed up past Fisherman's Terminal. Hopefully part of this meeting is to help in your thinking about that. Very interested if you have thought out Magnolia given our limitations. And have you been monitoring when the Ballard bridge has closed one lane for painting on how long it takes to get across the bridge on a regular basis. Have you been or can you track that data?

Thorough our communication and broad outreach we are hoping people are more aware and can adjust plans (alternate transportation and detours)

Note: the impact of Emerson and Dravus are impacted most

Comment: When Magnolia Bridge went down people found it hard to get out

Cannot get to the flyover – open up roads through the Interbay area – north end or the south; any consideration on adding regress; we can work on traffic operations division and our contractor to see what detours are

In a response to a comment from SDOT personnel, a participant mentioned we cannot get to Aurora from Magnolia. When 15th is blocked we cannot get off the island

There is a way to get out of Magnolia through the big parking area – consider opening it up

Bicycle and Lyme scooter routes – will sidewalks be open? 15th be open?

The SDOT team anticipates detour routes for pedestrians; it is not part of the scope to do the pedestrian area on Ballard bridge – only the paving and vascule portion; no pedestrian work but it doesn't mean it has to be shut down. They would still have to detour on Nickerson to Fremont bridge

Question: General purpose lanes north of market street – what is that? When they share the same lane.

SDOT will send the links to the updates, and everything will be on the Magnolia website on Issues and the SDOT blog

Question: Is it unusual not to have a contractor at this point in the project? It is designed in house and now that is complete; the package of plans and specifications – this is a good time to do it as contractors are putting together their plan the rest of the year

Comment: The website hasn't been updated since December 8.

Response: We don't have any updates. We will provide relatively soon on preconstruction outreach and engagement.

15thAveW_NWpaving@seattle.gov

206-512-3950 (leave voicemail)

June 14 Ballard graduation – Friday

www.seattle.gov/transportation/15thAveBallardBridgePaving

Comment: We don't have a great bus service or direct city route to Ballard (for her two kids) and there is no service on the school – please work with bus services to figure it out.

Response: SDOT is in meetings with King County Metro and Ballard schools. Closures will only be on the weekends, but there will be lane closures during the week.

Comment: If we have an emergency and need to get to Ballard Hospital, website should be updated.

SDOT regularly provides information to the navigation apps.

Further questions can be sent to MCOC for further information

Question: If the bids come in way over, is it likely to delay the project?

Response: Yes, there can be delays. We have federal grants to pay for this so we are motivated to see it through.

Question: Are you going to change signalization on Dravus due to feeding North on Dravus?

Response: That was not part of the plan and it is a good question. That is a traffic ops question and we can consider it.

Comment cards and check the box to be added to the listserv.