

Wilson Ave S Transportation Improvements Project

Public meeting summary
Updated: 9/27/2018



Overview

On August 16, 2018, SDOT hosted a public meeting at the Lakewood Seward Park Community Club. Staff presented an updated design for the Wilson Ave S protected bike lane and parking. There was a short presentation and facilitated Q&A. Of the people who attended, 56 signed in.

Public Meeting
August 16, 2018 from 6 to 8 PM
Lakewood Seward Park
Community Club
4916 S Angeline St

Meeting purpose

- Provide project background on:
 - Benefits of paving and accompanying improvements
 - Context of Wilson Ave S as an arterial
 - Why a protected bike lane on Wilson Ave S was included in the Bike Master Plan and how this was incorporated into the design of the paving project
- Share community feedback heard to date
- Inform the community of the updated design, including outlining the ways that the street will change and confirm the decision to install a protected bike lane
- Explain how the design addresses needs and concerns we have heard from the community
- Get community feedback on the new design and on specific elements of the channelization (parking, crosswalks and other pedestrian improvements, and adjusting the speed limit)

Key points from the presentation

- Why a bike lane on Wilson Ave S: In addition to being in the Bike Master Plan, Wilson Ave S is the flattest and most direct route between Rainier Beach and neighborhoods to the north. Building bike lanes helps in the city's efforts to quadruple bike ridership throughout the city by 2030.
- Updated design overview: In the updated design, parking remains on the east side of the street between S Dawson and S Orcas streets. South of S Orcas St, parking was removed from the east side of the street. This change was made in response to concerns about parking availability (there are fewer driveways on the west side meaning there are more parking spaces available), and concern about cars being sideswiped at the curve between S Hawthorne and S Upland streets. S Orcas St was chosen as the place to switch the protected bike lane because it has a four-way stop.

Community feedback: overarching themes

General

Many attendees expressed frustration and felt the city is not hearing the community's concerns about bike lanes and pedestrian safety. Attendees shared their disappointment that no elected officials attended the meeting. Some attendees also felt previous outreach was poorly done and that they were not properly informed during the planning phase of the project.

Bike lane

Many attendees who shared feedback at the meeting felt there was no need for bike lanes on Wilson Ave S. Attendees also shared:

- Support for the updated design of switching the protected bike lane and impacts to parking at S Orcas St
- Suggestions for alternative bike infrastructure, for example an uphill climbing lane, similar to the one found on Seward Park Ave S
- They did not feel Wilson Ave S is heavily used by people biking
- Concerns about the equity of parking removal as some people must drive and need safe places to park and cross the street
- Concerns about safety for people biking on Wilson Ave S without a protected bike lane
- Concerns about protected bike lanes creating a conflict between people walking and biking
- Concerns about the loss of visibility when cars are parked on the outside of a bike lane, especially for those pulling out of driveways and people crossing the street
- There was mixed reaction to the possibility of using planter boxes to separate parked cars and the new protected bike lanes. Some were concerned that it would be difficult to get in and out of cars when parked next to a planter box. Others were concerned about visibility around planter boxes. There were also concerns about planter box maintenance, understanding that maintenance would be the responsibility of residents.

Attendees asked questions about:

- Bike lane maintenance
- Logistics of parking next to a protected bike lane
 - How do people get in and out of cars that are parked next to a planter box?
 - Can a large truck fit in the parking spaces adjacent to a protected bike lane?
 - Will there be enforcement for those parking in the bike lane?

Parking and safety for people walking

Many attendees expressed concerns how the new street configuration would impact people walking and were unsure if the design adequately considers the safety of people crossing the street. In the updated design, parking will be on one side of the street, and some are worried about consistently needing to cross the street to access their home or car. As in previous outreach, attendees requested crosswalks. SDOT staff shared that current pedestrian counts do not support the need for new crosswalks but stated they would work with the community to monitor and re-count after the project is complete.

There was also discussion about what parking will look like near the commercial area at S Dawson St. Business owners in attendance expressed concern about the current lack of parking. SDOT staff raised the idea of short-term street parking to help create turnover in the area.

Construction impacts

Attendees shared feedback about current construction, including the need for clearer signage for those walking/biking/driving through the work area. All construction related comments were shared with the contractor.

Other

- Many attendees raised the issue of increased traffic from Rainier Ave S, due to the Rainier Vision Zero project. The perception of increased traffic compounded other concerns related to driveway access and pedestrian safety.
- Concerns were raised about the impact of Wilson Avenue S Transportation Improvements Project on housing values
- Many attendees supported the idea of a reduced speed limit on Wilson Ave S

Commitments and next steps

During the meeting, the community raised some concerns that the city representatives committed to address. Below is a summary of those concerns and how SDOT plans to address them.

Concern	How SDOT is addressing?
We don't feel safe crossing the street and request a crosswalk between S Hawthorn Rd and S Upland Rd.	SDOT will complete another pedestrian count on a Saturday to determine if a crosswalk can be accommodated. Look into adding signage on Wilson Ave S that alert drivers to pedestrian presence.
We do/don't want planters and/or posts.	The project team will share an updated design that will show the location of planters and posts on Wilson Ave S and request feedback from the community.
People drive too fast on Wilson Ave S.	SDOT will look into lowering the speed limit on Wilson Ave S.
There currently isn't enough parking near businesses on Wilson Ave S.	SDOT is looking into adding timed parking in the area to create more turnover near business.

The project team will follow up on the commitments stated above and will share an updated plan that includes planters and posts with the community. Construction of the protected bike lane will be completed in Spring 2019. The project team will continue to work with the community to address additional concerns that may arise.

Community feedback: after the public meeting

The above sections capture community feedback shared at the public meeting. Other community members shared feedback by sending in emails to the project after the meeting. Some key feedback from these emails include:

- Support for the protected bike and updated design
- Support for using planter boxes to delineate the protected bike lane from parking
- Support for more crosswalks and flashing lights at crossings