



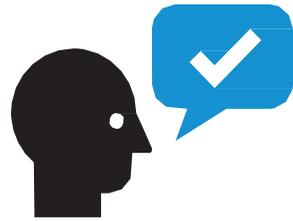
ALASKAN WAY PROTECTED BIKE LANE

Building a protected bike lane on Alaskan Way from Virginia Street to Broad Street

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

MAY 10, 2022

Community Member/Question	SDOT Answers
An attendee asked:	
How was this route selected?	This route was recommended by the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan Implementation Plan. When completed, this bike facility will fill a 0.6-mile gap in the bike network between the Elliott Bay Trail and the new Waterfront bike path, providing a continuous all ages and abilities bike facility along the central waterfront.
An attendee asked:	
Why not keep the protected bike lane to one side of the street?	<p>We did initially explore design options that included keeping the protected bike lane to one side of Alaskan Way. However, while keeping the entire facility on the west side provides for much smoother transition with the Waterfront bike path and Elliott Bay Trail, it creates too many conflicts with Pier 66's cruise ship sailing day operations for six months out of a year, which is significant.</p> <p>On the other hand, keeping the entire facility on the east creates intersection conflicts at Vine St and Clay St that would require additional signal phases and add delay for people walking, biking, and driving. For these reasons, our proposed design is split between the west and east side of Alaskan Way to provide and a safe and comfortable space for bicyclists of all ages and abilities.</p>
An attendee asked:	



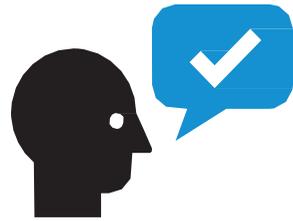
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How much longer will SDOT be taking feedback and comments from the public?	<p>After this online open house, our project team will continue to encourage the public to provide feedback by emailing our project inbox and by phone as we progress with project design. We anticipate reaching 60% design milestone by fall 2022.</p> <p>We will try our best to consider feedback and respond accordingly before we reach 60% design. However, it does get more challenging to make any major changes to the design beyond the 60% design mark. At that point, we may be able to make smaller adjustments and changes to meet community needs. We encourage you to provide comments on the proposed concept by September 1, 2022.</p>
An attendee asked:	
How is this project funded?	This project was recommended by the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan Implementation Plan and funded in part by the 9-year Levy to Move Seattle, Puget Sound Regional Council, and Washington State Department of Transportation.
An attendee asked:	
How do the two crossings work for people biking? Will there be sensors, or will it require push buttons?	The crossing at Virginia St is shortened because the Waterfront project will be extending the curb bulb, reducing Alaskan Way from four lanes to two-lanes. Our project will add flashing beacons to enhance visibility for people crossing by foot and bike, and the flashing beacons will automatically detect people walking and biking, so they do not have to push a button to cross.



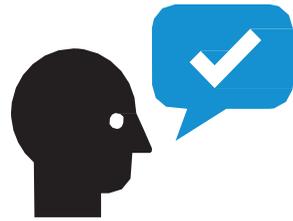
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	<p>The crossing at Wall St will be a diagonal crossing for people biking and an all-way walk for people walking (also known as a scramble, like what we have at 1st Ave and Pike St). These two movements will come up automatically every light cycle to minimize delay for people walking and biking. We will be upgrading the signal at this intersection to allow for these movements.</p>
An attendee asked:	
Is this the final design? Or when will the design be finalized?	<p>This is not our final design for this project. Our project team has explored various design options and arrived at the current concept as it balances filling this important gap in the bike network, with the existing operations of Alaskan Way. .</p> <p>We are launching our project outreach now and are seeking feedback from community. We will consider all public feedback and try our best to respond to folks' needs and concerns with our project as we move forward with the design process. We anticipate reaching 60% design milestone by fall 2022. It will be more challenging to make any major changes beyond that point. We may be able to make smaller changes and adjustments at that time. We anticipate reaching 100% design milestone by spring 2023.</p>
An attendee asked:	
What other design options have you looked at?	<p>We looked at several other design options. We originally considered two bike route options, a 2-way PBL on the west side of the street, and a 2-way PBL on the east side. Both options would be built between the existing curbs and redesign Alaskan Way from 4 lanes to 3 lanes (1 lane in each direction with a center left turn lane) for the whole project area.</p>



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	<p>After further analysis we realized there were challenges with both concepts. The west side option created a lot of conflicts with passenger loading at Pier 66 and reduced space for passenger loading and truck staging. And starting in 2022 cruise ship sailings at Pier 66 will increase by 70% over pre-pandemic levels with an average of five sailings a week during the peak summer season. This frequency much higher than we initially anticipated. And while an east side option has less impact to Pier 66 operations, there are additional intersection conflicts north of Wall St. To provide this bike connection, while minimizing conflicts to people biking, we arrived at the proposed hybrid design that you have seen.</p>
<p>Tarn O asked:</p>	
<p>I have a question: Has SDOT and/or the Port investigated having cruise passengers waiting for rides on Alaskan Way move to the *north-east* side of the street, that is, northbound, using the existing signalized crosswalk, or even to Elliot Ave using overhead bridge and - and, if not, when can that analysis be completed?</p>	<p>The project team has considered the existing traffic control plan that's in place for Pier 66 sailing days. Currently there is a lot of demand for the curb, between the provisioning trucks lining up on the east side of Alaskan Way, requiring direct access Pier 66, and the coach, taxi, Uber's and Lyfts's, loading and unloading on the west side of Alaskan Way. While the skybridge provides a connection from Pier 66 to Elliott Ave, there is limited passenger loading space on Elliott Ave and the skybridge elevators cannot current support large numbers of passengers and luggage. The terminal itself has a small footprint, and the Port is trying to make most of the area in front of the terminal. Even though the project will be in place for many years, it is an interim project—the seawall will need to be rebuilt in 10 years. When the seawall is replaced, there will be an opportunity to redesign how Alaskan Way looks and feels. Currently, we are trying to fit within existing conditions, but there is an opportunity down the road to reconsider.</p>



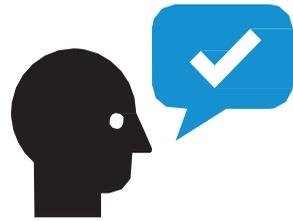
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Emily asked:	
What is the Port's plan for directing pedestrian traffic on the west side of the street?	Currently there is a traffic control plan. There is a lot of activity on the west side sidewalk – sailing day crowds, luggage, staff to help load. There is not an official way the Port is managing pedestrian traffic through that area, but that is something we can look into.
“A” asked:	
Has SDOT coordinated with the Port of Seattle on this project? Did the Port of Seattle ask for the PBL to be on the east side of Alaskan Way by Pier 66, or was this an assumption made only by SDOT?	<p>We’ve been coordinating very closely with the Port of Seattle on this project. We’ve collected information about Pier 66 from the Port, looked at the existing traffic patterns, and observed sailing day operations. The hybrid design is what felt safest to the project team, based on all this activity around the Pier 66.</p> <p>We recognize that the pandemic has affected the number of sailings. But in 2022, sailings will not only return to pre-pandemic levels but increase by 70% this year. This is going to increase to an average of 4-5 days a week in the summer. June through Sept, there will be sailings there every other day. That’s a lot to consider when building a bike facility in this area.</p>
Jack asked:	
What are the features of the waterfront bike trail: width, separation, connections?	The majority of the bike trail will be standard width for protected bike lanes in the city, 10 ft. There will be a buffer between people biking and parked cars. There will also be a buffer between the bike trail and any vegetation or trees. The one portion that will be narrower is the shared use path. . This will be 8 ft wide, with some additional clearance on either side. This is for a shorter segment, not nearly as busy as the area south of Bell Street.



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An attendee asked:	
<p>Bikers are likely to ignore a bike path that requires multiple crossings - have you considered conflicts that will occur from bikers just remaining on west side sidewalk?</p>	<p>We anticipate that not everyone will use this facility as intended. Some people chose to continue riding in the street or sidewalk based on ability or direction, even though we've added two crossings to transition from east to west sides. We've designed this lane to be as safe and as comfortable as possible. And even with the crossings, we're trying to make them as direct and add as little delay as possible.</p>
Jessica Brown asked:	
<p>Thank you for the presentation. Why is the city choosing to prioritize high-pollution leisure travelers over low-carbon commute modes? The current layout does not prioritize low-carbon modes of transportation like biking and walking (in line with the city's goals of lowering emissions, nor the Port's goals for that matter). It looks like we're reducing efficiency for people moving by bike in favor of cruise operations. While I appreciate cruise is an economic stimulator in the region, those passengers and freight (supporting leisure transportation) should not take priority over people commuting to work. This is a transit desert, and a fast, safe, efficient bike connection is very important for reliable transportation options for people who need to move across this area every day (like me). I vehemently oppose making pedestrians and bikes cross the street twice in favor of leisure travelers who will only be moving through the area once.</p>	<p>We are trying to balance the design through this busy area. We have come up with a design solution that we can build in the near-term and provide the connection as soon as the Waterfront bike path in the south is complete. There may be a better, long-term solution, but we think that the opportunity for that will come when the sea wall is rebuilt. We can then redesign this portion of Alaskan Way more holistically.</p>
An attendee asked:	
<p>Are there any plan to artistically paint the bike lanes to make it pretty?</p>	<p>We haven't considered this yet, but we can consider this going forward.</p>



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Nick Sattelle asked:	
Has the port made any effort to mitigate traffic to allow the bike lanes to stay on the west side?	We want to eventually get to the west side, to connect to the Elliot Bay Trail. While there are more frequent sailings of the Victoria Clipper, there is a more manageable level of activity that we can design for. We struck this balance while talking to the Port. We are working at Pier 69 to get the facility back to the west side.
Nick Sattelle asked:	
If Alaskan Way is being narrowed to 2 lanes at Virginia, why is it not narrowed throughout the study area?	Non-sailing day traffic volumes are planned to go down because there is a new street being built as part of the waterfront project. That's why the number of lanes is reduced in the south end of the project. While we aren't going all the way down to 2 lanes, we are reducing the number of lanes along the whole project. From Broad St to Wall St, we are reducing Alaskan Way from 4 lanes to 3 lanes. And south of Wall St, we are we are reducing from 2 northbound lanes to 1 lane, to encourage lower speed, and safer environment.
Jack asked:	
The concept seems to take parallel parking form one side of Alaskan Way; is that so?	Some of our graphics may not represent what's on every block face, since every block is a little different. This project currently proposes to maintain just about all the on-street parking. There will be only one block face, between Vine and Clay Street, across from Pier 69, that we will have to take out on-street parking on the east side of Alaskan Way.
Braeden asked:	



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<p>What is the additional waiting time projected for bikers (and drivers) waiting for crossings to the east?</p>	<p>We don't anticipate any additional delay with this proposed concept. The big reason for that is the new street being built to connect to Elliott Ave & Western Ave. Any impacts from lane reduction will be balanced by the lower traffic volumes on Alaskan Way. However, eastbound traffic is frequently stopped when the train comes along Alaskan Way, and it is likely that you may still be stopped by a train crossing.</p>
<p>George asked:</p>	
<p>Lenora St. has local traffic entering and exiting. The bike path and sidewalk cross Lenora. It is often difficult to safely make a left turn from Alaskan Way into Lenora with foot and bike traffic. Is there a way to make that crossing safer?</p>	<p>If you're making a southbound left turn from Alaskan Way onto Lenora St, there will be a new left turn lane, so you can pull out of traffic while you wait to make that turn. The PBL will also have green markings to make the crossing more visible.</p>
<p>An attendee asked:</p>	
<p>How will reduction of the vehicle roadway width to 2 lanes affect vehicle queuing on Alaskan Way during peak AM and PM traffic periods?</p>	<p>The forecasted traffic volumes on non-sailing days on Alaskan Way are significantly reduced due to the new connection to Elliott Ave and Western Ave. Traffic on Alaskan Way north of Pine St will mostly be drivers trying to access local destinations along the waterfront. We took that into consideration in the design.</p>
<p>An attendee asked:</p>	
<p>Has the City considered limiting Uber/taxi access near Pier 66? That may limit the amount of high activity that is preventing the city from keeping the bike lane on the west side.</p>	<p>Taxis, Ubers, and Lyft represent a good portion of vehicles accessing this area. There are also dozens of private vehicles, shuttles, coach buses, etc. Even if we can manage one type of vehicle that is accessing this area, there is still a lot of other activity and other types of vehicles accessing the area.</p>



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An attendee asked:	
How does prioritizing cruise traffic advance SDOTs equity goals?	We want to make this bike facility useable by people of all ages and abilities—ensure they can travel along Alaskan way safely, whether they own a car or not. It will allow for people to commute to downtown or visit the waterfront. We are trying to provide a transportation option for people biking through this area.
Braeden asked:	
Could additional traffic calming, including speed bumps, rumble strips, expanded curb bumps, sharrows or other art/markings, etc. be included to make remaining on the street safer for those traveling southbound on the west side?	One consideration with this street is it's an arterial and freight route. There is also the possibility of having transit along here in the future. Those suggestions are often used on non-arterial streets, rather than busy/arterial streets. That said, we are looking at redesigning the street and reducing the number of lanes to respond to lower traffic volumes and to encourage slower speeds. This will we create a more comfortable space to bike, should you still choose to ride in the street.
"C" asked:	
For the shared use path, 8 feet is super narrow, like not even wide enough for those big pedicabs that go up and down the waterfront all the time. Is there a way to make that significantly wider?	The 8ft will have at least 1ft of clearance on either side, so it will feel like 10 ft or more as you go through this area. When the PBL is adjacent to the traffic, we are considering adding a pedestrian railing to provide more separation between bikers/walkers and traffic.
Jack asked:	



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<p>yes, the BNSFRR crossing at Broad Street will fill up a single lane; good that most traffic will be on Elliott Avenue Connector. When is that arterial expected to be open?</p>	<p>It was originally planned to be open by end of 2023, but it may be pushed back a little bit. We will follow up on this question.</p>
<p>Kian asked:</p>	
<p>Why is there only one design option? Usually there are multiple.</p>	<p>The team did consider multiple options. Given the conditions that are out here, especially activity at Pier 66 and 69, we had a lot to balance. The team feels as though this is the best design that balances all considerations. But as we mentioned earlier, there may be an opportunity to redesign when the seawall gets rebuilt. This current design maintains uses while providing the bike connection.</p>
<p>An attendee asked:</p>	
<p>Have you explored having the port do drop-offs in another location and using that big pedestrian bridge over Alaskan Way?</p>	<p>In coordinating with the Port on this project, they communicated to us that providing the access to west side curb space is important. They have made recent improvements in front of Pier 66 such as truck staging, passenger loading. While there may be longer term options in this area, we tried to respond to existing operations and have a design that is safe for everyone in this busy area.</p>
<p>Lisa asked:</p>	
<p>Have you considered a design that removes all parking?</p>	<p>The majority of the protected bike lane will meet PBL standards, so will be similar to any of the protected facilities that you have ridden on nearby—like the 2nd Ave PBL downtown, and other trails around the city. We acknowledge that the shared use path will be narrower, but we are trying to keep that to a short segment in the most constrained area of the project</p>



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