

History/context of Rainier Ave 2 min

- Originally a trail, later a streetcar line (1890–1937), then a major highway.
- Supported commercial, industrial, and residential growth.
- I-90 expansion (1958–1968) displaced ~200 homes, including in Judkins and the Italian community.
- Area faced disinvestment by the 1970s, partly due to freeway plans.
- Rainier Ave S ceased being a state highway on April 1, 1992.

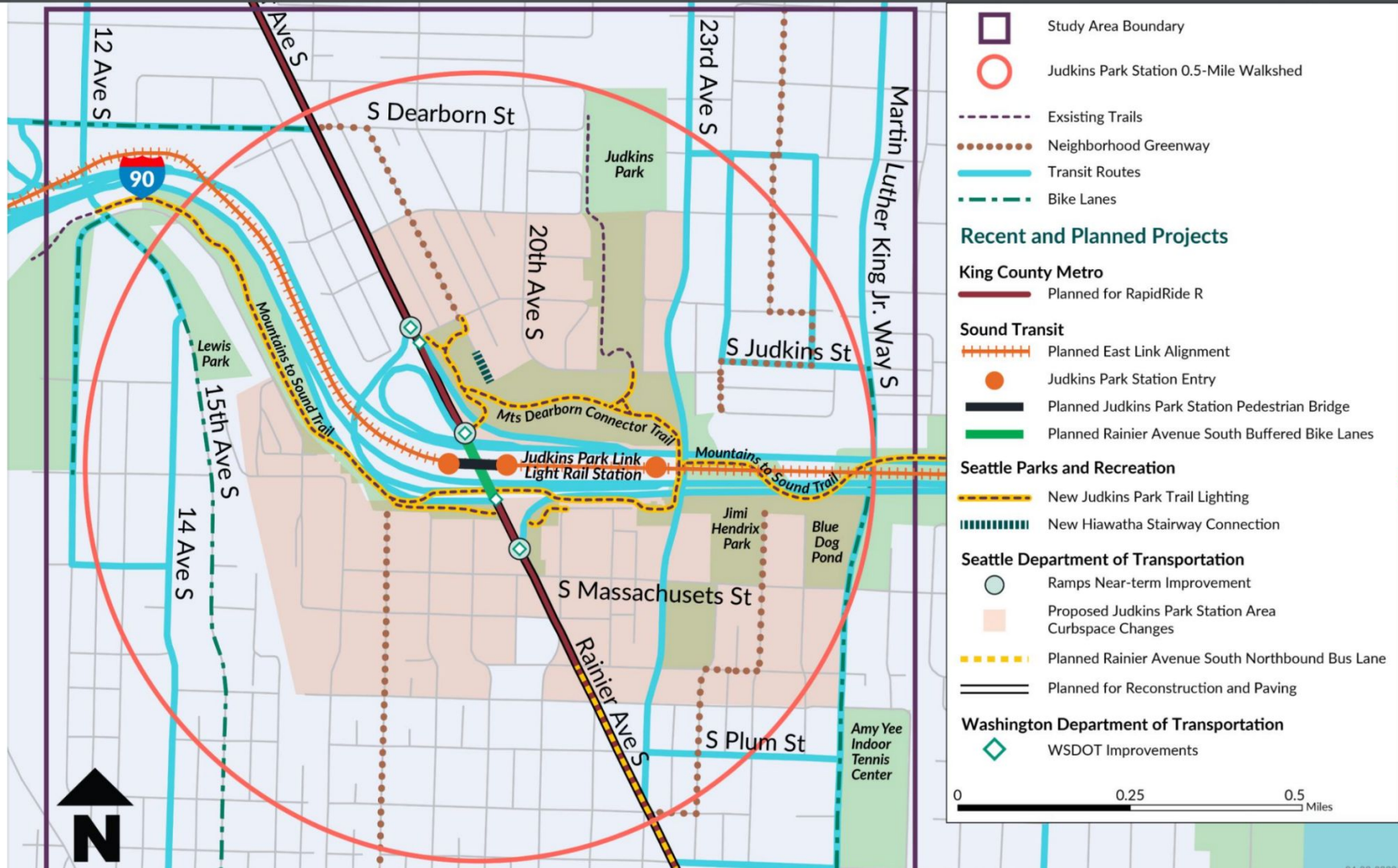








1925 photograph of Rainier Avenue at Atlantic Street. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, SMR244.

RapidRide R Line



WSOT Judkins Park (5 min)



-  Study Area Boundary
 -  Judkins Park Station 0.5-Mile Walkshed
 -  Existing Trails
 -  Neighborhood Greenway
 -  Transit Routes
 -  Bike Lanes
- ### Recent and Planned Projects
- King County Metro**
-  Planned for RapidRide R
- Sound Transit**
-  Planned East Link Alignment
 -  Judkins Park Station Entry
 -  Planned Judkins Park Station Pedestrian Bridge
 -  Planned Rainier Avenue South Buffered Bike Lanes
- Seattle Parks and Recreation**
-  New Judkins Park Trail Lighting
 -  New Hiawatha Stairway Connection
- Seattle Department of Transportation**
-  Ramps Near-term Improvement
 -  Proposed Judkins Park Station Area Curbspace Changes
 -  Planned Rainier Avenue South Northbound Bus Lane
 -  Planned for Reconstruction and Paving
- Washington Department of Transportation**
-  WSDOT Improvements
- 0 0.25 0.5 Miles



Orientation: Existing Ramps

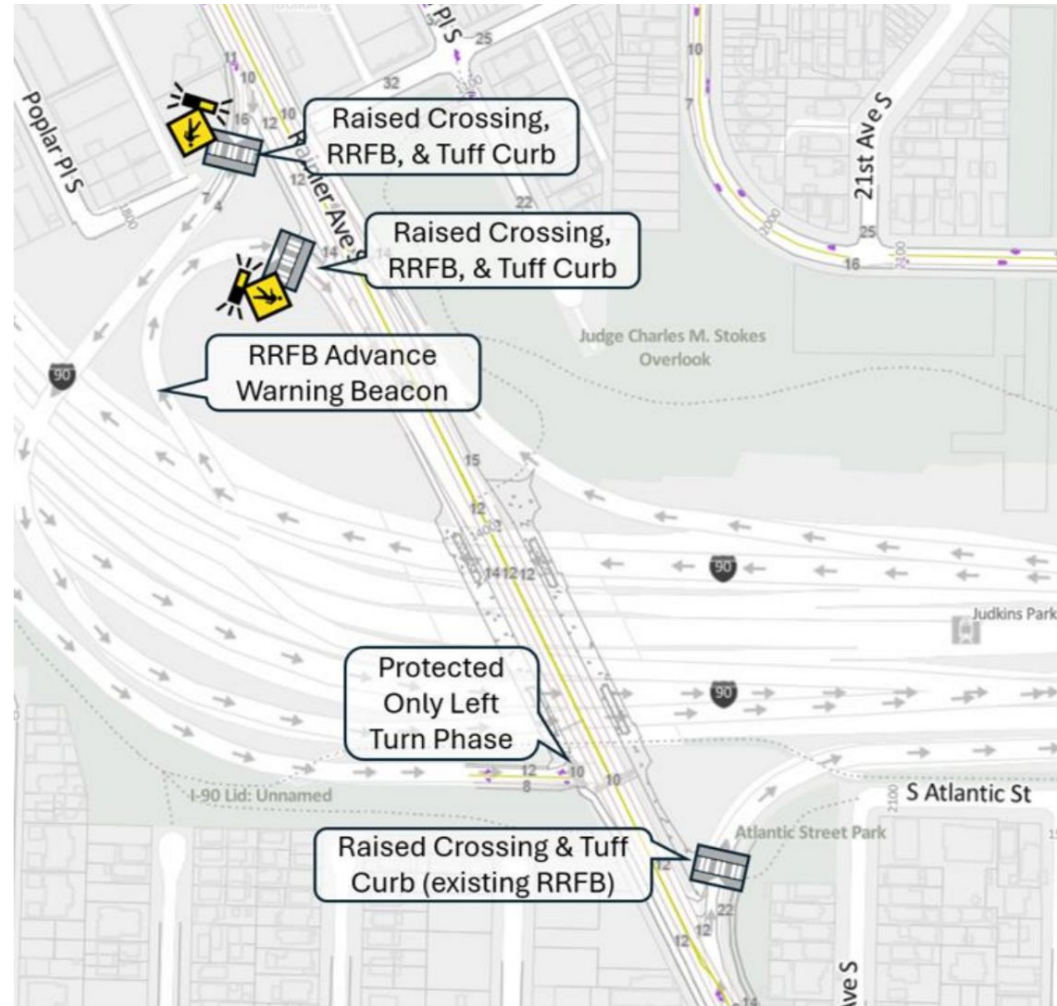


LEGEND

-  Existing Ramp Alignment
-  Existing Traffic Signal
-  On-ramp #
-  Off-ramp #

SDOT Near-term improvements

- Partnership between WSDOT and City of Seattle
- **3 raised crossings** of the on/off-ramps at I-90
- Crossings will include **pedestrian-activated rapid flashing beacons**
- **Protected left-turn phase**

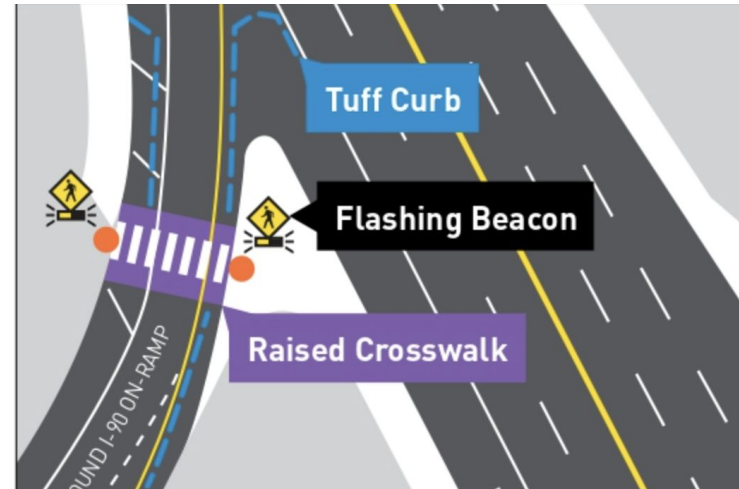
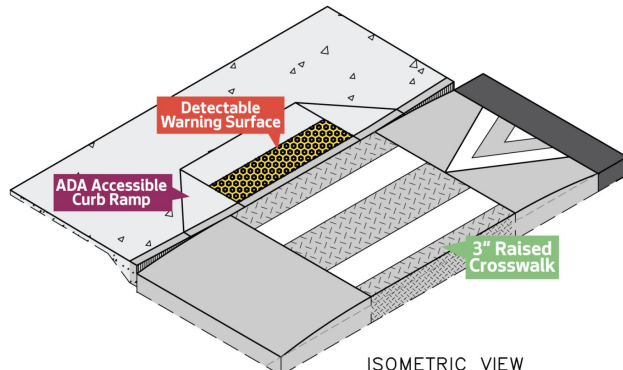




- **Judkins Park Station** is opening at the end of ~~2025~~ 2026 in the *median of I-90*.
- Hundreds of new apartments nearby (e.g., 569-unit Grand Street Commons).
- Increased pedestrian activity at *dangerous highway ramp crossings* with fast-moving traffic

Short Term Improvements

- **SDOT Vision Zero program and WSDOT** partnered to fund and make **near term** improvements to 1-90 crossings in response to community feedback and concerns from Disability Rights Washington.
- **Raised crosswalks** at 3 existing crosswalks.
- **Flashing pedestrian beacons** at 2 previously unmarked ramps.
- **"Tuff curbs"** to visually and physically narrow ramp entrances/exits and slow traffic.
- **Advance warning beacon** on blind curve ramp to alert drivers.



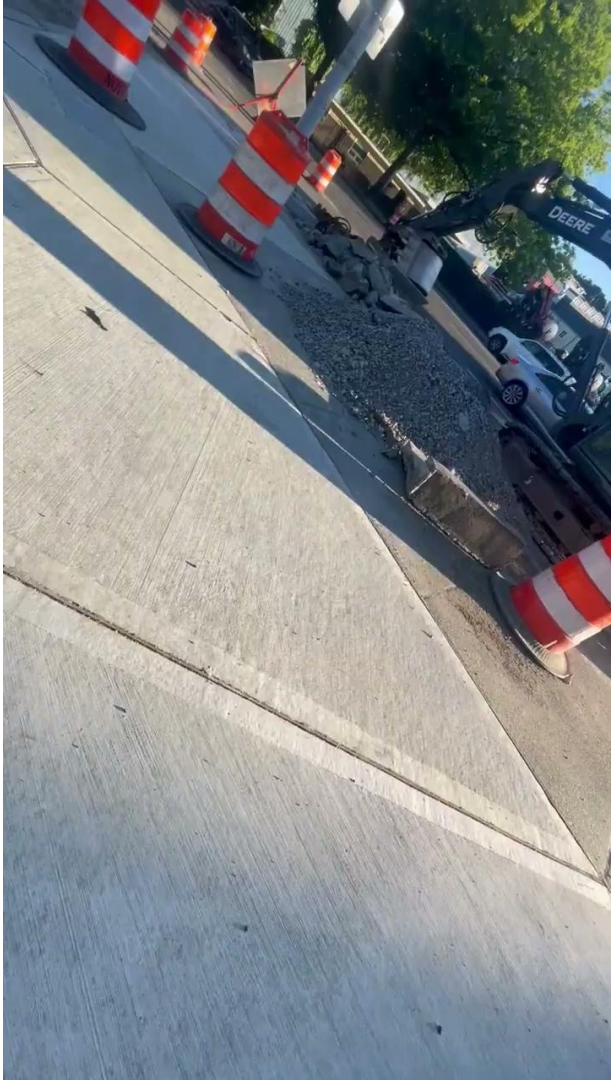




Hamilton
Robinson
School



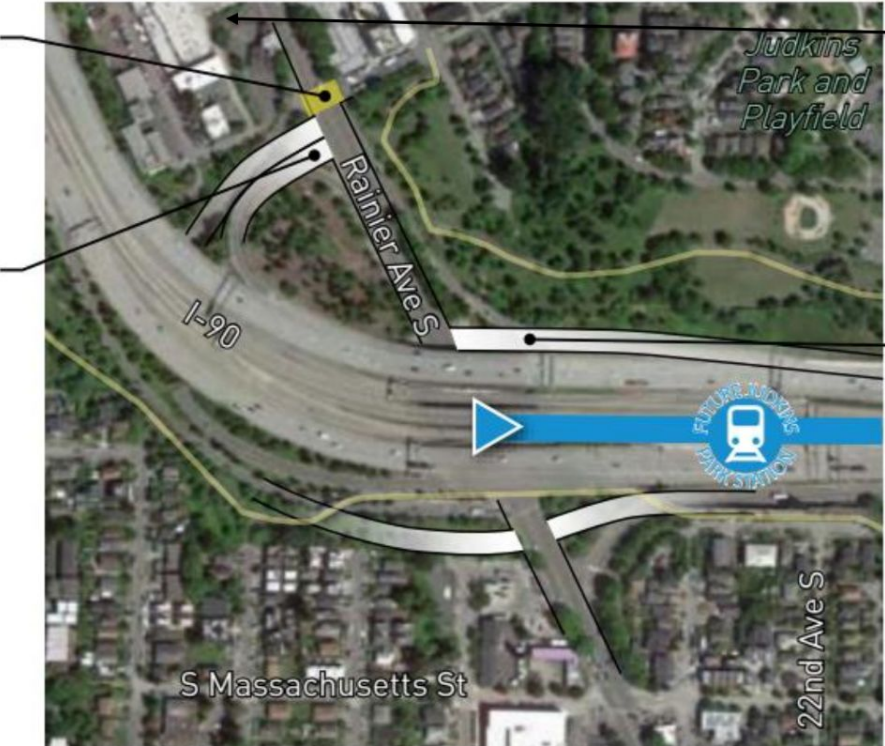




Judkins Park Station Access Study: I-90 Long-Term Goal

Add pedestrian crossings.

Consider allowing left turns so that the ramp in the northeast quadrant can be removed.



In the NE quadrant of Rainier Ave S and I-90, consider allowing development to activate the area and could help partially fund the intersection improvements.

Either T-up or consider closing this ramp and allowing development, which could help pay for these improvements.

Long Term Improvements

Access Study: I-90 Long-Term Goal #1

Identify and recommend changes to the I-90 ramps at Rainier Avenue South to improve safe travel and access.



Long Term Improvements

Access Study: I-90 Long-Term Goal #2

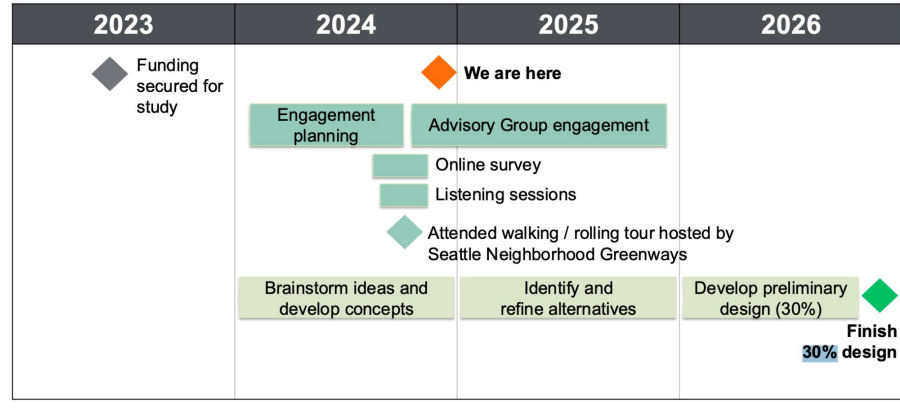
Increase connectivity in the neighborhood for those who ride public transit, walk, bike and roll.



- **Ramp reconfiguration** to function like city intersections. (T-intersections)
- **Removal of ramps.**

30% Design Phase

Timeline



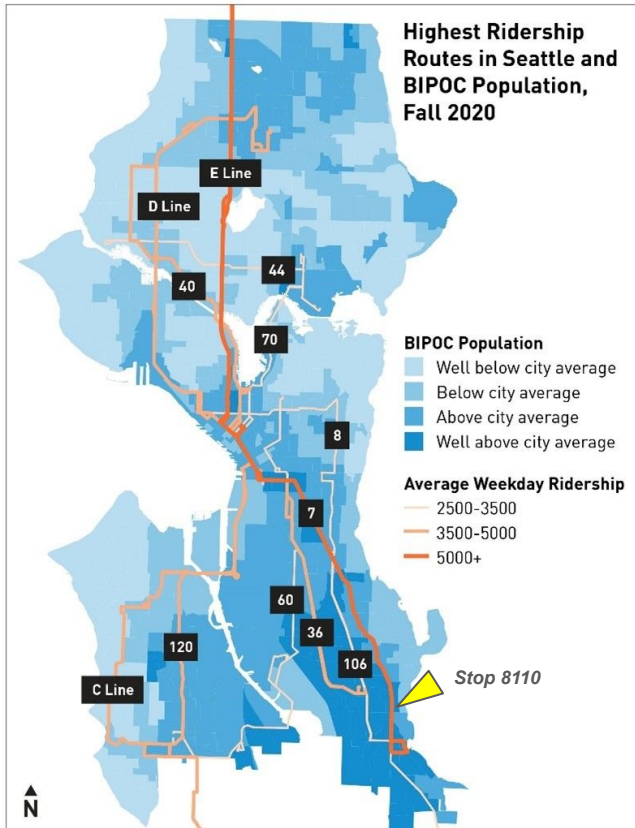
Timeline 2023-2027 Project status Pre-construction **Funding** \$3 million (Planning and 30% design only)

- Funded by Sandy Williams Connecting Communities (\$2 million) program & RAISE grant program (\$1 million)
- Reconnecting Communities study will identify and recommend changes to the WSDOT I-90 ramps at Rainier Avenue South to improve safe travel for all modes and increase access to the Judkins Park Link light rail station via transit transfer, walking, and biking.
- We will identify a concept for the I-90 ramps at Rainier Avenue South and then take the concept to the 30% design level, focusing on safe travel for all. The design concept will also support access to the Link station via transit transfers, walking, and cycling. This study will follow a Complete Streets approach and will require an environmental justice assessment.
 - WSDOT's Complete Streets policy creates and maintains safe streets for everyone. The goal: Streets should be designed for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and persons of all abilities, while promoting safe operation for all users, including freight. Priorities: safety and mobility

Rainier Ave South

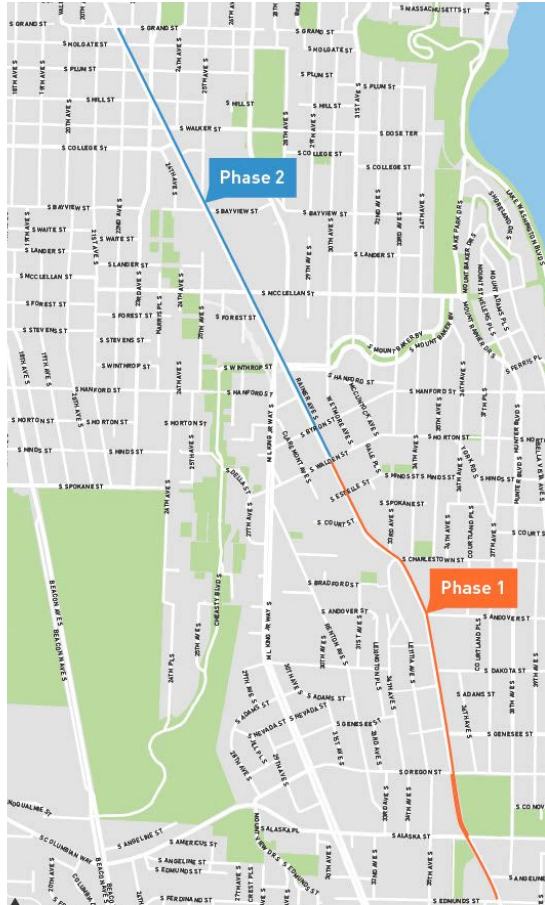
Bus Updates Without Bike Connectivity?

Why Rainier Ave South Matters



- **Route 7 carriers ~11K riders per day** clocking in as one of Seattle's busiest routes
 - **Economic and cultural bridge** across south Seattle neighborhoods: Rainier Beach → Columbia City → Mt. Baker → Downtown
 - Rider demographics:
 - ~30% lower income (< 200% FPL)
 - ~20% limited-English proficiency
 - Many riders rely on daily transit
- **Stop 8110** is one of very few that **saw almost no decrease in ridership through the pandemic**
- Held at 95% in 2020, bounce up back to 120% pre-pandemic (as of early 2023)

What's Happening Now



● Transit Only Lane: Phase 1 (completed July 2022):

- Bus-only lanes installed northbound (S Alaska → S Walden) and southbound (S Oregon → S Edmonds)
- Maintained parking to balance stakeholder needs

● Transit Only Lane Phase 2 (2024 underway):

- Extends northbound lanes from S Grand → S Walden
- *Incorporates signal timing and lane geometry updates*

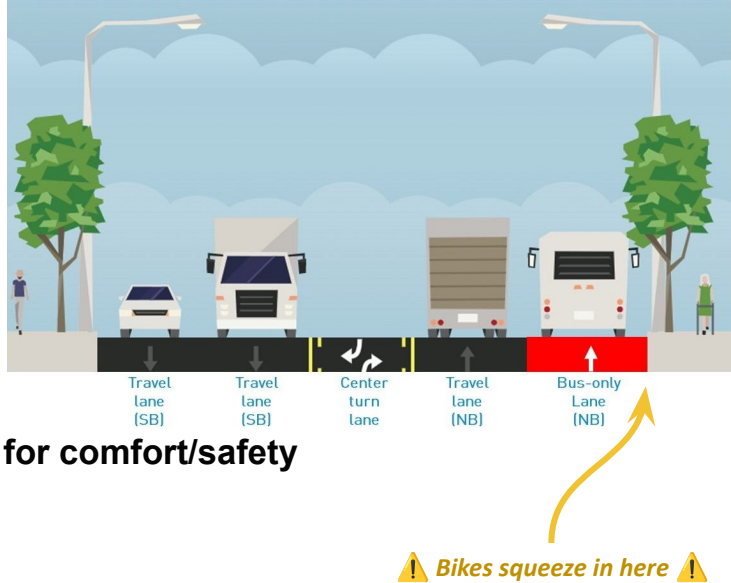


These phases laid the **foundation for the RapidRide R**, but fell short of multimodal integration

But What About Biking?

Rainier Ave South Today

- ⊘ No current dedicated or protected bike lanes
- ✓ Neighborhood greenways remain only option
- ⚠ Bus lanes are open to cyclists - but are not protected or designed for comfort/safety
- ⛔ No bike upgrades tied to R Line through 2031



Historical Context

- In earlier planning (2018), protected bike lanes were considered alongside transit lanes for segments of Rainier Ave S; ideas were eventually dropped in favor freight needs, safety concerns, and right-of-way limitations
- The **2014 Bicycle Master Plan** recommended protected bike lanes north of MLK Jr Way S, but SDOT has cited high traffic, freight and transit priorities, and limited space in deciding not to move forward with them on Rainier

R Line: Big Investment, Missing Modal Balance



- **R Line** opens in 2031
- Significant long-term capital and infrastructure improvements
- No current plans to upgrade or incorporate bike infrastructure into Rainier Ave S corridor

➤ **Opportunity to advocate before designs are locked in**

Recs | How we Can Influence Design

Short-term (2024 - 2025)

- Request SDOT consider a feasibility study for protected bike facilities alongside RapidRide R design
- Ask SDOT for detailed multimodal integration plan, not just greenway detours

Mid-term (2026 - 2028)

- Monitor RapidRide R design phases and participate in public engagement sessions
- Coordinate with equity and disability advocates on shared mobility priorities

Ongoing

- Continued push for more safety improvements for cyclists in bus lanes
- Push for Rainier Ave S to be re-integrated into the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan

Rainier Levy Projects

Focused View of Updates in the
2025 STP



Current STP Rainier-related Projects (1 / 2)

1. Vision Zero Safety Improvements (Program Area 1)

- **Rainier Ave S (North Segment)** | Start Design in 2025 under the Vision Zero Safety Corridor Program
- **Rainier Ave S (S Bayview to S McClellan)** | Start Construction under the High-Collision Safety Projects
- **Rainier Ave S (S Charlestown to S Andover)** | Start Construction under the High-Collision Safety Projects
- **Rainier Ave S and S Othello St** | Start Construction under the High-Collision Safety Projects

2. Street Maintenance and Modernization (Program Area 2)

- **Rainier Ave S: S Walden St to S Jackson St** | Start Planning for arterial paving and modernization

3. Transit Corridors and Connections (Program Area 4)

- **Rainier Ave S (S Walden St to S Jackson St)** | Start Planning for transit improvements on high-rider routes
- **RapidRide R Line** | Start Planning under same section

Current STP Rainier-related Projects (1 / 2)

4. Pedestrian Safety (Program Area 5)

- **Rainier Ave S and S Henderson St** | Start Construction for crossing improvements
- **Rainier Ave S and S Cooper St, S Kenyon St, S Norfolk St, S Redwing St, S Spencer St, S Thistle St** | Start Construction for multiple crossing improvements
- **S Massachusetts St (between Rainier Ave S & 19th Ave S)** | Start Construction for sidewalk safety repairs
- **Rainier Beach HS – S Henderson St Safety Project** | Start Construction under Safe Routes to Schools
- **Genesee St and 43rd/46th Ave S** | Crossing Improvements near Rainier corridor

5. Bicycle Safety (Program Area 7)

- **RapidRide R Bicycle Facility Alternatives Analysis** | Start Planning for bike facilities on Rainier Ave S between MLK Jr Way S and S Jackson St

6. Climate & Resiliency (Program Area 9)

- **Rainier Ave S – Spot safety tree pruning** | Start Pruning under Urban Forestry Maintenance

Questions: