

1st Ave NE Shared-Use Path



Frequently Asked Questions | Fall 2025

What is a shared-use path?

A shared-use path is a 2-way shared space for people walking, biking, rolling, and scooting. The path is typically 12-ft wide to allow space for people traveling in different ways to comfortably pass each other in both directions. A shared-use path can be a great option for getting to/from schools and parks where people may be walking alongside kids on scooters or bikes because it provides more space and has more separation from vehicles than a typical bike lane.

When will you build the shared-use path?

We will start construction of the path as soon as mid-2026. Once we complete the path design and bring on a contractor, we will share the expected construction schedule and work with the community to prepare for construction.

We previously planned to build the path in 2 phases and use SDOT crews for some sections of the path to reduce costs. After further review, we determined that the most cost-effective delivery method is to build the path in one phase using standard construction contracting processes.

Please note that construction schedules are subject to change. We'll keep you updated on upcoming construction and any changes to the schedule.

Why are you building the path on the east side of the street instead of upgrading the existing west side walking path?

When 1st Ave NE was built, it was not centered in the right of way, which leaves more space on the east side of the street to build the path. There is not enough space to build a standard 6-ft sidewalk with a planting strip and protected bike lane on the west side without rebuilding the street and centering it. The east side of the street has upwards of 19-ft of unimproved right of way that allows us to create this important connection to James Baldwin Elementary School, Northacres Park, and the future Pinehurst Station with the available funding.

Will parking be removed on the east side?

Yes, to make room for the path and maintain a buffer between vehicles and people on the path we cannot maintain parking on the east side of the street. Existing parking on the west side of the street will remain.

Will there be curbs between the street and the shared-use path?

In the section between NE 130th St and NE 125th St where there is no planted buffer, we will install curbs between the path and the street. In the section between NE 125th St and NE 120th where there is a planted buffer, we are not installing curbs.

I live on the east side of the street, what will happen to my driveway?

We will install standard 10-ft wide driveway connections across the shared-use path to connect to your existing driveway.

How will the path be separated from vehicles?

The path will be separated from vehicles by curbs between NE 130th St and NE 125th St and a planted buffer or the existing drainage ditch between NE 125th St and NE 120th St (no curbs).

Why did the southern project limits change from NE 117th St to NE 120th St?

Extending the path from NE 120th St to NE 117th requires building a retaining wall in that area that is not within our available funding. The all-way stop at NE 120th St will help people connect to the widened sidewalk on the west side of the street in front of James Baldwin Elementary and safely continue to NE 117th St.

Are you making drainage improvements?

Yes. Between NE 120th St and NE 125th St we are installing planted drainage buffers that help collect and filter stormwater. From NE 130th St to NE 125th St we are installing a curb and conveyance system that will help direct stormwater to the City's drainage system.

Will the path have lighting?

Yes, we plan to install lighting to improve visibility and safety for path users. The lighting type is still being reviewed and may include pedestrian-scale lighting, upgraded streetlamps, or a combination of both. Regardless of the type of lighting we install, they will be designed to focus light on the path and minimize lighting of adjacent homes.

Will you plant trees or bushes in the landscaped buffer?

We will plant mixed grass seeds in the landscaped areas between NE 125th St and NE 120th St. We are not planting trees in the landscaped area because there is a water line that runs under it and tree roots could damage the line.

Are you removing trees to build the path?

Yes, we are removing a limited number of trees near Northacres Park and along the project area to make room for the shared-use path. SDOT's Urban Forestry team will identify appropriate locations for replacement trees and we'll share that information when it is available. If we can't replant all replacement trees within the project area, we will identify other areas that would benefit from them across the city.

Northacres Park trees: We estimate removing 3 trees along Northacres Park. Arborists from SDOT and Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) are working together to identify which trees need to be removed and ways to adjust the project design to limit tree removal.

Street trees: We are removing approximately 12 trees south of Northacres Park that are in the right of way and, when possible, we will replant trees along the corridor. There are some limitations on planting trees in the new landscaped areas due to the proximity of an underground water main and to preserve sightlines around adjacent driveways.

Why aren't you connecting the shared-use path to the existing path inside of Northacres Park to limit impacts to park trees?

We explored connecting the shared-use path to the existing path through Northacres Park but did not move this option forward because of impacts on park operations and safety concerns for people traveling through the park when it is closed.

Are you relocating utility poles and/or mailboxes?

Utility poles: We are working with Seattle City Light to relocate any poles that conflict with the path alignment. Utility pole relocation is a common activity for construction, particularly when we are redeveloping unimproved right of way (shoulder space).

Mailboxes: Many of the existing mailboxes conflict with the path location and will need to be moved. We're working with the United States Postal Service to determine the new locations.