



Route 40



Route 40 Transit Plus Multimodal Corridor

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

August 2023

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: What are the benefits of the project?

A: Route 40 TPMC upgrades will reduce transit travel times, improve transit reliability, and increase safety and transit access along the Route 40 corridor.

Improvements made as part of this project will include:

- ▶ Making bus trips faster and more reliable
 - We will add dedicated Business Access and Transit only lanes (BAT lanes) and complete updates to traffic signals to help buses move quicker. In Westlake, we will also install new Freight and Bus only lanes (FAB lanes) as a trial program to ensure people and goods can move quickly along this corridor.
 - Our traffic analysis shows that transit travel times would be reduced by 8% in the studied areas of the project
- ▶ Making it safer and easier to get to and on the bus
 - We will make improvements to help people get to bus stops more easily and safely including new traffic signals, extended sidewalks and curbs to create shorter crossings for people walking, and enhanced pedestrian crossings and signals in select areas of the corridor.
 - At select areas, we will repave sidewalks and upgrade curb ramps to become ADA-accessible
 - At some bus stops, we will install new bus stop amenities, such as real-time bus arrival displays, ORCA readers, and enhanced lighting.

Q: How has ridership been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Route 40 was the highest ridership King County Metro bus route outside of the RapidRide system.

As of summer 2023, Route 40 remains one of Metro's top ridership routes, serving an average of more than 7,500 riders each weekday. By the time this project is complete in 2024, we expect ridership to be higher than today, and for it to continue to increase. As service on this route improves, it will attract even more riders who are looking for a more reliable and convenient way to travel.



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Q: How will this project impact general traffic?

A: Our 2021 [traffic analysis](#) indicates that we can meet our project goals and expect a decrease in transit travel time with minimal impacts to general purpose traffic. While the data was collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, our team expects similar results once the project is completed, due to the expected increase in volumes for all modes of transportation, including both transit and general-purpose vehicles. Specific details for the Fremont neighborhood are provided below.

Q: How will this project impact freight traffic?

A: Keeping freight moving is important to us. That is why we have decided to test and evaluate new “Freight-and-Bus lanes” (FAB lanes) to be included along select areas of the Route 40 corridor. The FAB lane is planned to be on Westlake Ave N where bus-only lanes were previously included in our earlier designs.

Q: How will parking and commercial loading zones be impacted?

A: Some parking will need to be removed or converted to load zones as part of this project in order to accommodate new bus bulbs, curb extensions, and widened sidewalks. As best as possible, existing load zones along the project corridor will be maintained or relocated nearby. We can modify the type of load zone signs if requested.

We recognize that street parking removal or relocations can be impactful. We work with our Curbside Management team at all project phases to help us make decisions on how to best use the limited curbside space throughout the corridor. When making curbside management decisions, we consider various and often competing demands for the curb, whether from transit riders, goods/services deliveries, and customers, restaurant-goers, etc. SDOT works actively to ensure that building critical access needs are met nearby to restaurant, retail, and residential buildings as we are planning and improving transit and multi-modal corridors.

Q: Why is some parking being converted to paid parking?

A: The Fremont business district has high demand for street parking, especially in the afternoon and evenings. Our interest is to promote good vehicle turnover on city streets to provide better customer access to nearby businesses as well as load zones for urban goods delivery. Converting a few blocks to paid parking will improve access to businesses by improving parking turnover. Adding a payment option will also allow us to better enforce time limits for parking, ensuring that people are not parking in spaces all day long.

Parking on Fremont Ave N north of N 36th St, as well as along N 35th St, west of Evanston St, will remain unpaid.



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FREMONT

Q: Why is a bike lane being added on Fremont Ave N if this is a bus project?

A: During our comprehensive review at the beginning of this project, Fremont Ave N between N 34th St and N 35th St was identified as a priority street in all our modal plans (i.e., Frequent Transit Network, the Bicycle Master Plan, the Freight Master Plan, and its designation as a Pedestrian Zone). Given our unique opportunity with this project to completely rebuild the right-of-way on this block, and our commitment to fulfilling our modal plan goals, we are including a new northbound bike lane on this block in our design plans. This block has been a gap in the bike network and adding the bike lane will enhance the safety and efficiency for those who bike across the Fremont bridge and up the Fremont hill. You can learn more about our comprehensive review by checking out our [Complete Streets Story Map](#).

What are bus bulbs and why are they being added?

A: Bus bulbs are curb extensions that widen the sidewalk to meet the traffic lane, allowing buses to stop and board passengers without ever leaving the travel lane.

Bus bulbs help buses move faster and more reliably by decreasing the amount of time lost due to merging in and out of traffic.

Bus bulbs also provide ample space for passengers to wait without obstructing the sidewalk.

Q: Why is the bus stop on Fremont Ave N being split into two stops?

A: There are two primary reasons why the existing bus stop will need to be split into two stops:

1. Improving travel times and reliability for all routes that serve the existing stop
2. Increasing safety and predictability for all travel modes, whether you are biking, taking the bus, driving, walking, or rolling

The bus stop on the east side of Fremont Ave N between N 34th St and N 35th St serves Routes 31, 32, 40, and 62. It is heavily used by all types of riders, including commuters, students, or people wanting to visit and shop in the Fremont neighborhood. Near this bus stop, you can find:

- ▶ An average of 5,250 transit riders across all routes on an average weekday
- ▶ An average of 9,630 total vehicles driving by this stop each day
- ▶ An average of 360 bikes traveling northbound on this block each day

All of this traffic makes this one block highly congested, particularly in the afternoon peak period and after bridge openings.

The high volumes of traffic and high frequency of buses pose challenges for all users, whether you are walking, biking, taking transit, or driving a car. Our data shows that the various routes can arrive at the singular stop at the same time, causing the buses to “bunch” at this stop. Bunching causes all traffic to be delayed. With the existing stop, buses also need to weave in and out of the curbside lane to rejoin traffic. These movements slow down traffic for all users on this block. Splitting this bus stop into two separate stops will reduce congestion on this block and reduce travel times for all modes of travel.

Additionally, we want to increase safety and limit the number of conflicts between people biking and other modes of transportation. With the proposed northbound protected bike lane on this block, we have explored several options for designing a street where the existing bus stop could be maintained. However, a shared bus stop and bike lane design on this block would not work due to limited street width, increased travel delays, and a higher level of conflict among all who travel on Fremont Ave N.



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Q: Why was the location on Fremont Pl N chosen for the new bus stop serving Route 40?

A: By relocating the bus stop for Route 40 onto Fremont Pl N, all traffic can flow through the N 35th St intersection more efficiently and we will be able to reduce the potential for conflicts. Bus bunching on Fremont Ave N will be eliminated and buses will no longer need to pull in and out of general traffic to make stops.

The proposed location for the bus stop on Fremont Pl N closer to N 35th St is ideal because it is located far enough from the intersection so that a single vehicle can also wait behind the bus without blocking the crosswalk. The location is also close enough that a stopped bus would be visible to northbound vehicles on Fremont Ave N, allowing people driving to better predict if or when they will be able to drive through the intersection.

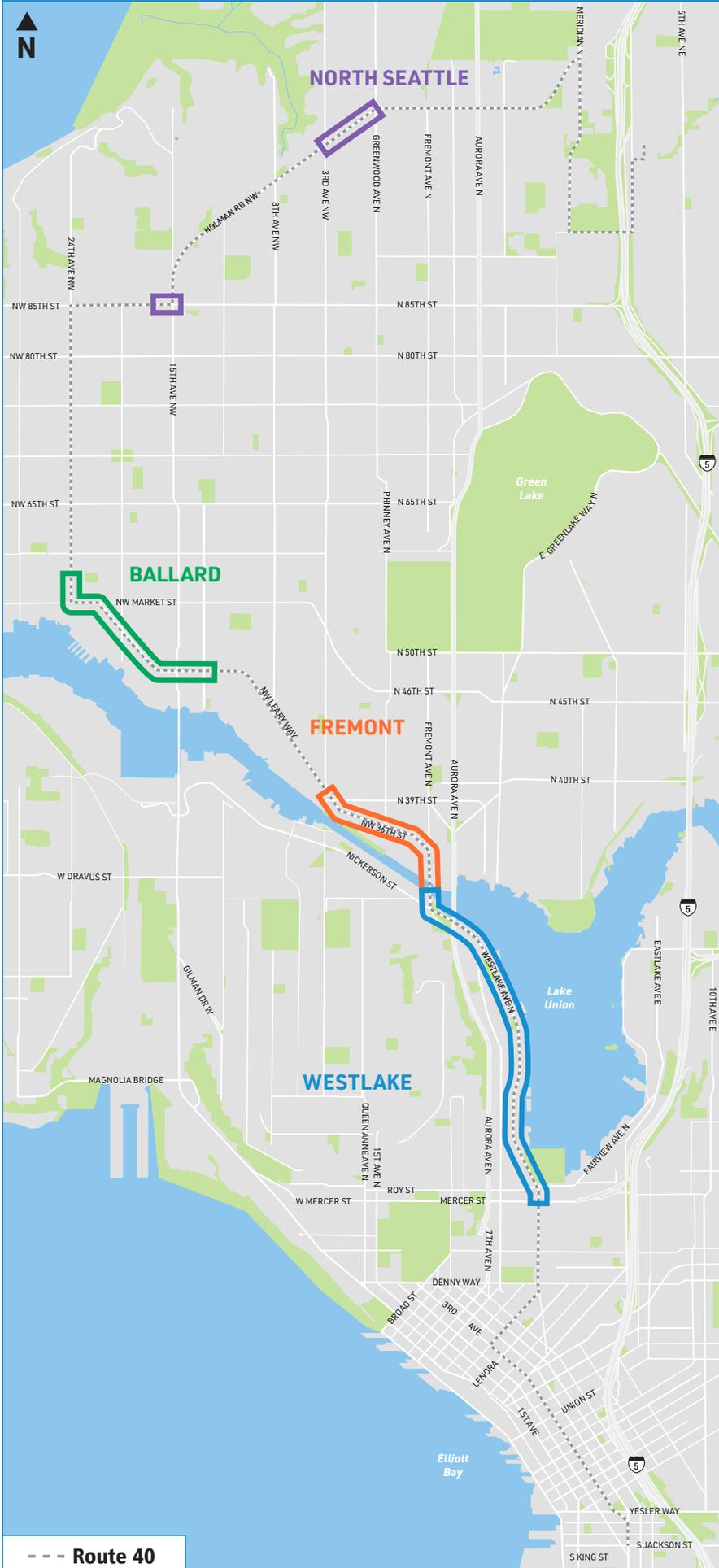
The location also creates the best transfer experience for riders transferring between routes. Moving the stop further towards the Lenin statue would increase travel distance and time for people wishing to transfer to Routes 31, 32, or 62. Creating a smooth transfer experience is a key goal for our transit mobility team since it will help maintain the idea that transit is safe, reliable, and easy to access, especially for people with mobility concerns.

Additionally, we want to create a better experience for people walking on sidewalks and waiting for buses. By moving the stop to Fremont Pl N, we will be able to build a new bus bulb and create a new dedicated waiting area for people wanting to ride Route 40. People walking on sidewalks will no longer need to share space with people waiting at the bus stop. This new bus stop location will also have less crowding than the existing bus stop since it will be dedicated to Route 40 riders.



Representation of proposed bus bulb, not to scale

Route 40 TPMC Focus Areas



Funding

This project is being funded by a combination of local and state funds. The source of the local funding is the 9-year Levy to Move Seattle, approved by voters in 2015 to improve safety for all travelers, maintain our streets and bridges, and invest in reliable, affordable travel options for a growing city. SDOT is also seeking additional grant opportunities to allow more investment in the corridor. Learn more about the levy at www.seattle.gov/LevyToMoveSeattle.

For translation and interpretation, please call (206) 775-8731.

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GET INVOLVED

SDOT and Metro are committed to keeping you informed throughout the project.

Learn more about this project and sign up for email updates at www.seattle.gov/transportation/Route40

CONTACT INFORMATION

(206) 775-8731
Route40@seattle.gov



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The Levy to

MOVE SEATTLE



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