



MLK Protected Bike Lane

Creating a bicycle facility that connects people to businesses and community destinations along Martin Luther King Jr Way S

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

April 29, 2021 Online Drop-in Session

Community Member/Question	SDOT Answers
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
<p>You had a slide on the MLK/Rainier intersection. I thought the plan was to uncross those two and completely redo that intersection, but ped improvements imply that that plan has been canceled. Is that true?</p>	<p>These improvements are the near-term Accessible Mount Baker improvements. These are improvements we can implement within the next couple of years because they are relatively affordable, and they address some of the most pressing safety problems. Adding a crosswalk near the pedestrian bridge is an important piece of these improvements as three people have been killed recently at this intersection. Most of the longer-term Accessible Mount Baker work was paused last year due to budget impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. We are looking at ways to resume some of those efforts again soon. One of the top priorities will be to relocate the Mount Baker Transit Center from the east side of Rainier Avenue to the west side for easier connections between buses and the Link Light Rail. The Office of Housing is redeveloping a site into affordable just west of the light rail station, so we are coordinated with the Office of Housing on these efforts.</p>
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
<p>Are mature trees going to be affected by this plan?</p>	<p>This project is not going to impact any trees or landscaping along the project area. Most of the improvements are staying within the existing paving and sidewalk areas.</p>



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<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
Is the City of Seattle thinking about adding bike tool stations? Perhaps at light rail stations? There was one that used to be at my local climbing gym that was super useful to tune my bike or pump the tires.	We have had a lot of challenges with bike tool stations in the past. Most specifically, it is hard to get a pump that is really reliable in our climate year-round. We have had a couple around in the past but haven't held up to heavy-duty use. There have been some installed by developers outside of their buildings that have been more successful. This is a comment that either we or you as a community member could pass along within the area. Sound Transit could be interested in this.
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
The parking study was held during the winter. Parking would be lowest during the winter months. It doesn't appear the timing accurately reflects parking or resident parking at this time from the Mass to Judkins section.	We conducted the parking study in January 2020 while waiting for the project to begin. We picked a week with no holidays to hopefully represent a more typical week. We went out and counted how many cars were out there in the middle of the day, at 10:30pm on a weeknight, and on a Sunday morning. We have not done an updated parking study since the COVID-19 pandemic. Anecdotal observations near Sam Smith Park seem to suggest that parking use in that area is higher. We could get updated parking counts moving forward.



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<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
How will construction equipment and the school be handled?	We have been in coordination with the school, so they are aware of the project. It is too soon to know where the contractor may stage their equipment during construction, we sometimes don't know until the contractor is selected. Our construction management team will solidify these details and we will share them with the school and other community members closer to when we begin construction.
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
The bike lane on McClellan heading east doesn't start until 30th or 31st. Can/should this project look at tying into this existing bike lane to connect to the water and park to the east?	Our project is not proposing changes to McClellan Street more than a few feet away from the intersection. Those two blocks though between MLK Way and 30th could be incorporated into a related project as a basic bike lane, likely uphill only given the slope that's there.



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<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
<p>This plan has a bike lane terminating at S Irving, how will that be tied into existing bike lanes or will it merge into MLK?</p>	<p>The design continues a bit north of South Irving Street so we get riders to South Judkins Street. We are focusing on the section between Judkins and Rainier because it's where both high speeds and collisions happen most frequently. We are ending near South Judkins Street because you get to the Central Area Neighborhood Greenway just west of MLK on 25th Ave S. The section of MLK north of Judkins is in the City's long-term transportation plans to build protected bike lanes, but the section we're working on now is the highest priority. There is also a bit of budget dedicated to early planning for MLK south of Rainier along the Link Light Rail line. This is likely the area of MLK we'd be focusing on next. If you are riding MLK after the project opens, your best bet would be to turn left on S Judkins St or the I-90 trail. On MLK today, there are basic bike lanes from an older design. This older design may not be comfortable for all riders, but the lanes do exist on MLK currently.</p>
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
<p>Does this plan close Sam Smith Park during construction if so, for how long? It would be good to have connectivity continued to the I-90 tunnel.</p>	<p>We are too early in design to know construction impacts, but there are not any intentions to close the park during construction. We wouldn't be closing the park, but there will likely be changes to how pedestrians and bikes will route their way through the area during active construction, making sure that it's a safe area for people to get through. The contractor will provide pedestrian and bicycle access routes in their construction plans.</p>



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<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
Will landscaping be enhanced along the MA to Judkins sections which consists of mostly Sam Smith Park. This could compensate for the loss of parking.	Landscaping in this area is not currently in the project scope. We can look to see if there are ways to improve that if something is lacking.
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
Will you have community outreach and input in the future protected bike lanes north of Judkins, before the project is started?	The section between Judkins and Union streets isn't a project at this point, but is in the long-term City plans, specifically the Bicycle Master Plan. This is not on the near-term plans to build in the next few years. In this case, planning, design, and outreach likely won't begin until after 2024, which is when the current short-term plan ends. As with all of our bike lane projects, we will conduct community outreach from the beginning of the project. In the meantime, we recommend providing feedback through the city-wide efforts.
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
Where is the Judkins light rail? And how can bikers get from there to MLK bike lanes? Does the Judkins light rail intersect with the Mt Baker light rail at any place?	The Judkins Light Rail Station is under construction right now, and it is between 23rd and Rainier. To access the station from MLK via bike, take the I-90 Trail.



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<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
Will there be modification to the bus overhead lines or bus stop locations?	There is only one change to the bus stops. At the I-90 trail, the southbound bus stop just south of Judkins will move south to the I-90 trail to pair with the existing northbound bus stop. We are coordinating with King County Metro for the overhead trolley wires. Shifting the lanes on MLK will require some adjustments to the overhead lines. We're still developing those plans but we expect that some of the overhead lines will need to be relocated between Massachusetts and Plum Streets.
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
Is there any discussion for permit street restrictions to keep neighborhood parking open for residents?	This project will not be adding permitted parking or a residential parking zone. When new light rail stations open in Seattle, our curb space management team conducts detailed parking studies to decide whether there should be residential parking put in place to stop people from just driving/parking to take the light rail. They look at which streets and how many streets would be covered in the new parking zone. The parking team is planning on starting this work in late 2021 or early 2022. Typically, they work between one-quarter mile and one-half mile from each entrance of a new light rail station, which would cover most of this project area.



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<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
What was the justification for bike lanes on South Beacon?	We are doing planning and design work for both Beacon Avenue S and MLK Jr Way S based on community feedback gathered from Bike Master Plan outreach efforts in 2019. We heard from community members that people are interested in new bike facilities in South Seattle - Southeast Seattle specifically. The best options for these bike lanes would be Rainier Ave, MLK, and Beacon Ave. Rainier Avenue S has proved to be very challenging place to put in a bike facility. It's a corridor where we really need to keep transit and goods and people moving and there isn't a lot of spare capacity that can be replaced with a bike lane. But both Beacon Avenue and MLK have spare capacity that was available and can provide these bike connections in Southeast Seattle.
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
Does the study actually include proposed biking to see the practical hills and existing features. Could this be a video which is shared?	We take hills into account when working at the citywide planning to determine which routes people would want to bike. When doing modeling and trying to figure out what streets bike lanes go on, we take things like hills, existing capacity, safety, how many people are biking there already and would benefit from an improvement into consideration.
<i>An attendee asked:</i>	
Are there bicycle master plans in places like Laurelhurst and Magnolia?	The bike master plan is a citywide program and includes neighborhoods across the City. It includes places SDOT is working in, but also includes other trails and parks such as the 520 and I-90 trails.