

ROUTE 40 TRANSIT-PLUS MULTIMODAL CORRIDOR PROJECT PUBLIC FEEDBACK ON PROJECT DESIGN



OVERVIEW

Beginning as early as 2023, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) will begin construction for the Route 40 – Transit-Plus Multimodal Corridor project. As part of this project, we will make improvements in the Westlake, Fremont, Ballard, and Crown Hill neighborhoods to reduce travel times, improve transit reliability, and increase safety and transit access along the Route 40 corridor.

In summer 2021, we shared our preliminary design concepts (30% design) with the community using an online survey. Participants provided feedback on the proposed design concepts for each neighborhood. Key topics of concern included the locations of bus-only lanes, impacts to general traffic, and safety for people walking, biking, and driving.

Since we last shared an update with the community, the project team has been working on refining the preliminary design concepts based off the community's feedback and additional technical analysis. We've summarized the feedback below and have provided responses to the key concerns and issues expressed by the community.

GENERAL FEEDBACK

Theme: Wider travel lanes may encourage speeding

Throughout the project, there are areas where travel lanes are consolidated to reduce the overall number of lanes on the corridor, but the width of the new lanes are increased. Some stakeholders shared concerns that the widened lanes would encourage people driving to speed through the corridor.

Our response: We decided to adjust the width of some travel lanes in order to better accommodate the buses, which will help create a better flow of traffic and visibility for all users. This helps us meet our goal of creating a safer corridor. Additionally, some of the existing lane widths are between 9 - 9.5 feet wide, which are substandard by our guidelines. These lanes are being redesigned to meet or exceed the 11 feet standard for arterial lanes according to our [Streets Illustrated Standards](#).

WESTLAKE AVE

Theme: Questions about bus-only lane restrictions along Westlake Ave

Some responses indicated that it was not clear if the bus-only restrictions would be in place 24/7 or only during peak hours. Additionally, there were concerns about the benefit of a bus-only lane on this street.

Our response: Bus-only lanes keep traffic moving through the corridor, as they will not be impeding the main traffic in the other lanes. This will also keep the buses moving at a better rate for on time arrivals and departures. The bus-only lanes will be active 24/7.

Theme: Confusion over placement of transit lane near Westlake Ave and 9th Ave

In the last design concept, the southbound bus lane switches from the curbside lane and then towards the center once it reaches the 9th Ave intersection.

Our response: The street markings (“channelization”) have been updated to provide a continuous curb side bus lane to the intersection. The bus will make the left turn from the curb side bus lane using a designated transit-only left turn signal.

FREMONT

Theme: How to enforce parking restrictions in loading zones and bus stop zones

Our response: By enforcing parking restrictions in loading zones and bus stop zones, we will mitigate any delays for buses, creating a better flow of traffic and accessibility. Parking enforcement officers will monitor parking and loading restrictions.

Theme: Desire for more bike facilities on the corridor

With the proposed upgrades, the community wants to include additional bike facilities along the corridor and ensure that existing bike lanes and bike parking are maintained.

Our response: Bike facilities will be maintained, and final bike lane designs will be presented at the next design milestone (60%) this summer. Existing bike lanes and parking will be maintained to the maximum extent feasible.

Theme: Concerns over safety of a new two-way center turn lane

On N 36th St between 1st Ave N and Fremont Ave N, there were concerns about the narrow two-way center turn lane. The turn lane would only be 8.5 feet wide and would replace a general travel lane.

Our response: The center turn lane would provide turning vehicles a place to safely make their turn movements. The adjacent through lanes will be 0.5 feet wider than existing conditions.

Theme: Concerns over enforcing bus-only lanes

In Fremont, there were concerns that general traffic would travel in the bus-only lanes during peak hours.

Our response: We will continue to work with our partners at the Seattle Police Department to identify and alert their enforcement teams to areas of high noncompliance with the bus-only lanes. We expect the red paint markings and signage for 24/7 bus-only lanes to deter people driving in the lanes. Most areas of the City have a high compliance rate.

BALLARD

Theme: Pedestrian safety near 15th Ave NW is a concern and the proposed pedestrian signal timing is insufficient

Our response: The signals for people walking across 15th Ave NW will be modified to improve the crossing experience and time. Any modified signals will reflect the new pedestrian crossing policy with updated crossing times.

Theme: Apprehension that the new channelization – particularly the proposed left-turn restrictions for eastbound traffic turning onto 15th Ave NW – will alleviate traffic congestion.

Our response: Based off of community feedback and additional technical analysis, the updated design has been modified to keep the channelization similar to existing conditions. This design will be shared as part of our updated preliminary design (30%) outreach.

Theme: A desire to relocate the bus zone closure to the new Ballard Food Bank at 14th Ave NW
Many residents use this resource and having a bus stop closer would be imperative to good community outreach

Our response: For all potential bus stop relocations, we work with our partners at King County Metro to evaluate the needs and benefits of moving an existing bus stop. We will continue to evaluate this bus stop location with them as the design for this project continues to be refined.

Theme: A desire to remove the parking between 20th Ave NW and 15th Ave NW to make room for other improvements, such as a bike lane, wider sidewalks, or a bus lane

Our response: As with all our proposed design changes, we need to balance community feedback with our technical analysis. We have completed a traffic analysis which shows that our proposed design best meets our goal of balancing our needs within the corridor.

Theme: There is a desire for protected bike lanes on Leary Ave NW between NW Market St and 20th Ave NW

Our response: SDOT's [Bicycle Master Plan](#) (2014) does not include Leary Ave NW as a part of the Recommended Bicycle Network and there are no planned bicycle projects on the corridor in the most recent Bicycle Master Plan Implementation Plan (2021). Given the objectives of the Route 40 TPMC project to improve transit operations, including protected bike lanes on Leary Ave NW was not studied as an alternative.

CROWN HILL

Theme: Concerns that proposed changes would be confusing or disruptive for drivers making left turns

Our response: As part of this project, we will place signs along the corridor to help educate people on the new lane markings (channelization) and restrictions. We will continue reaching out to neighbors and nearby businesses about these design changes prior to the new channelization being installed.