



Thursday, May 7, 2020

Dear South Park community members:

Thank you for your thoughtful and purposeful letter on April 27. We appreciate the time your community has put into developing the recommendation actions. Our team looks forward to working with you and the West Seattle community as we navigate this challenge together. I'm looking forward to meeting with you at your convenience.

While this is the continuation of an ongoing conversation and partnership, included below are answers to many of the important questions you raised. We have worked diligently to be as responsive and prompt as possible and acknowledge that this is only the start.

Below are the specific requests we heard from the South Park community with the status of each request:

- Transfer car trips from the West Seattle Bridge to transit, bike and walking trips to reduce pollution.
 - **Status/update:** We are working with regional partners and West Seattle neighborhoods to provide multi-modal solutions to address the closure of the West Seattle High-Rise bridge. Shifting some of the personal vehicle trips to other modes, including bicycling, taking public transit, or using the ferries or water taxis is a high priority during the closure. Right now, we are developing comprehensive traffic operations plans and targets for updated mode splits that would help people understand the kinds of travel shifts to reduce significant traffic congestion once Stay Home, Stay Healthy order is lifted.
- Increase access to bus service. If West Seattle buses are rerouted to the First Ave or South Park bridges, some portion need to stop in South Park to provide us with better, faster bus service if we are to bear the brunt of the impacts of additional buses here. We also recommend the use of electric busses to reduce pollution.
 - **Status/update:** We shared the idea of increasing service in adjacent neighborhoods with King County Metro. They are engaged in a transit planning exercise for West Seattle.
- Install lights for crossing at 10th Ave S or 12th Ave S and S Cloverdale St.
 - **Status/update:** Our team will look at how to improve crossing S Cloverdale St, including the possibility of adding crossing lights at 10th or 12th and Cloverdale. We will include follow-up in the neighborhood-specific plan we are developing to evaluate concerns like these. We should have a draft ready in as soon as two weeks.
- Install a light or highly visible crosswalk where Dallas Ave S and the bridge meet to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - **Status/update:** This will not be installed. A crosswalk at this location without a signal would not provide the level of safety that is appropriate. It is not an ideal location for a traffic signal given the proximity to the bridge and the nearby signal at S Cloverdale St. Pedestrians should use the nearest signalized crossing about two blocks away, at 14th Ave S and S Cloverdale St. We know this isn't a satisfying answer, but it is motivated out of concern for pedestrian and cyclist safety.

- Install a light or four-way stop on Dallas Ave S near RAM Mounts at Thistle/Dallas/12th streets.
 - **Status/update:** We're developing a neighborhood-specific plan to evaluate concerns like these and should have drafts ready to discuss with you in as soon as two weeks. We are responding to cut-through and safety service requests as we receive them from community members and based on observations by our traffic engineers in the field. We are also working to keep the arterial street network moving efficiently to encourage its use instead of the residential system some choose to use for longer trips. We are in contact with online map service companies and have let them know about our concerns about cut-through traffic. We are limited in our abilities to regulate this behavior since drivers are being sent to public streets accessible to all and not encouraged to break any laws or speed. That being said, we will continue to monitor and react to concerning and illegal driving behavior.
- Place crossing guards at 8th & 7th & Cloverdale for school children
 - **Status/update:** As part of the Safe Routes to School Program, flashing beacons were installed on S Cloverdale St for 7th Ave S and 8th Ave S crossings. SDOT does not determine where crossing guards are located, but we will share this comment with Seattle Public Schools.
- Make improvements at 14th & Henderson
 - **Status/update:** SDOT installed a Leading Pedestrian Interval at this intersection to improve safety on March 19, 2020. We are continuing to observe intersections on the detour route and make signal timing adjustments based on traffic patterns.
- Protected bike lanes on the 1st Ave to downtown corridor are especially essential if the low bridge closure were to cut off access from the Duwamish Trail to downtown.
 - **Status/update:** SDOT is analyzing a number of bicycle options for travelers in light of the West Seattle Bridge closure. We appreciate this input from the cycling community and will use it to inform our decision. We hope to have more information on pilot projects later this month.
- A protected crossing across East Marginal from (and to) the First Ave Bridge is immediately needed for this bike route. More people will be biking and this connection is crucial.
 - **Status/update:** Initial analysis of this section of the project included evaluation of whether a lane of traffic on SR 99 could be removed to allow construction of a protected bike lane, which is recommended in the Bicycle Master Plan. Due to traffic volumes on SR 99, removing a motor vehicle lane was not recommended. The East Marginal Corridor Improvement project has no plans to further evaluate this crossing.
- Continue the funding, planning, and development of the Georgetown - South Park trail project
 - **Status/update:** This project is funded through 30% design and will continue moving forward. The project team is currently working on securing grant funding to continue the project further.
- Police should do consistent traffic stops to address speeding.
 - **Status/update:** We are in near-constant contact with our partners at the Seattle Police Department about traffic control related to the bridge closure. And long-range planning about how people are going to get around both during and after the Stay Home, Stay Healthy order is in effect is a top priority. Additionally, we are briefing Seattle Police Department command staff to discuss traffic enforcement based on new travel patterns created by the West Seattle Bridge closure.

We know the closure of the West Seattle Bridge has had a significant impact in South Park, as well as Georgetown, Highland Park, and SODO. The West Seattle Bridge was really the center of many of our lives. We understand the concerns addressed in your letter, and we will work closely with you on traffic management and safety until these issues are better understood.

Please let us know if you have any additional questions or comments. Otherwise we look forward to continuing the dialogue with you and your community. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Heather Marx, Seattle Department of Transportation