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# September 17, 2015 SW Admiral Way Safety Improvements Open House #2

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## Meeting Summary

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Seattle Department of Transportation

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## Overview

On September 17, 2015 the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) hosted a second open house to gather feedback and update community members on its revised proposals for safety improvements along SW Admiral Way from 63th Ave SW to California Ave SW.

For this open house 6023 neighborhood invitations were sent out two weeks prior to the meeting and 1270 reminder postcards were sent out to properties adjacent to the project area a week prior to the meeting.

Project staff coordinated with Department of Neighborhood representatives to announce the meeting on the Community Listserv. Project staff gave a presentation to the Admiral Way Neighborhood Association in early September, and met with community members on site to better understand the dynamics of the area and surrounding neighborhoods. The West Seattle blog also posted stories about project updates on its Web site as they occurred.

Comments along with technical analysis will be considered in implementing the recommended traffic safety improvements.

## Demographics

Approximately 70 people signed the attendance sheet at the open house and 25 of them filled out the meeting inclusion sheet. From these forms the following demographic information was gathered:

### Gender

- 60% Female
- 40% Male

### Age

- 40-49: 4%
- 50-59: 24%
- 60-older: 68%
- No response: 4%

### Home

- 84% people own their homes
- 16% people rent their homes

### Language spoken at home

- English: 96%
- Japanese: 4%

### Race

- White: 88%
- Black: 4%
- No Response: 8%

### Zip code

- 98116: 92%
- 98126: 4%
- 98106: 4%

Results compare to census data and demonstrate neighborhood demographics in zip code 98116 as:

- Males 11,193
- Females 12,478
- White 86%
- Black 2%

## Comment Summary

The Seattle Department of Transportation is proposing to implement traffic safety improvements along SW Admiral Way from California Ave SW to 63<sup>rd</sup> Ave SW. After feedback received in spring 2015, SDOT staff revised its original plan and hosted a second open house where two options were presented to community members, these options were categorized as Option A and Option B. Option A proposes narrowing lanes to reduce travel speeds, the preservation of parking on both sides of the road, while removing the center turn lane throughout the corridor, except at busy intersections where left turn pockets would remain in place. Option B is similar to Option A, in reducing travel lane widths, but Option B maintains the center turn lane from SW Lander St/53<sup>rd</sup> Ave SW to 47<sup>th</sup> Ave SW. In this section, where parking utilization on the north side of the street is much lower, parking could be consolidated to the south side of SW Admiral Way in order to maintain the center turn lane. In all other areas the design would be similar to Option A where parking is maintained on both sides of the street, except at left turn pockets. Both options propose adding a buffered bike lane, on each side of the street.

A third option, categorized as Option C was proposed by attendees at the meeting. It consisted of preserving parking on both sides of SW Admiral Way, preserving the center turn lane, and installing a buffered bike lane in the eastbound direction while marking sharrows symbols in the westbound direction.

Approximately **44 comment forms** were turned in, either in person at the open house or via email during the public comment period. The content of these comment forms has been highlighted in Appendix A.

### Option preference:

- 32% (14 Respondents) showed preference for Option A
- 16% (7 Respondents) showed preference for Option B
- 25% (11 Respondents) showed preference for Option C – Not considered an option as it only suggested the installation of a buffered bike lane in the uphill direction (eastbound) and sharrows in the downhill direction (westbound).
- 27% (12 Respondents) didn't show preference for any Option

### Crosswalk location:

- 29.5% (13 respondents) showed preference for a crosswalk at 61<sup>st</sup> Ave SW
- 4.5% (2 respondents) showed preference for a crosswalk at 62<sup>nd</sup> Ave SW
- 66% (29 respondents) had no opinion on a preferred location for a crosswalk
  - 20.7% (6 respondents) with no opinion showed preference for crosswalks at other locations including: 57<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Garlough Ave SW, SW Lander St, and 53<sup>rd</sup> Ave SW

Approximately **44 emails** were received during the public comment period. These emailed comments have been highlighted in Appendix B.

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- 59% of emails (26 emails) expressed a positive tone in favor towards the implementation of safety improvements
- 18% of emails (8 emails) expressed a neutral tone in regards the implementation of safety improvements
- 23% of emails (10 emails) expressed a negative tone against the implementation of any safety improvements.

## Appendix A

- I prefer this option as a regular bicyclist up and down the street. Anything to provide a more adequate spacing between me and the motorized vehicles means a lot.
- This is the best option.
- I am not in approval (x2). Please leave Admiral Way alone!
- Maintain Parking. Keep turn lane. Eliminating turn lane would create bottle neck.
- Roundabout at Lander!!
- A fair compromise, allowing residents to retain needed parking and bikers a safe travel lane in both directions.
- Lose the center turn lane with pockets at high turn intersections. It needs to change and I support it. I like the addition of a bike lane on both sides.
- A good compromise between first schemes and "do nothing". Not acceptable to do shared lane downhill for implementation of BMP.
- No center-turn lane/parking on both sides. Best option. Slows traffic and bikes are accommodated.
- Please add a left turn lane and crosswalks on 57th Ave SW and on Garlough. Safety and will encourage alternatives to cars : )
- Keep a large pocket turn lane at 57th Ave SW. A 5-way stop at 59th is a great idea, it would slow vehicles at dangerous intersection.
- Best compromise for a safer Admiral Way. I believe this project will help reduce the reckless car behavior and the noise from drag-racing.
- Must leave parking on both sides of street for pedestrian safety. Have had my car hit 3 times due to narrow streets. I need a car -a bicycle is not an option
- Fix the pot holes/sink holes and cracks. That way we don't have to swerve around protecting the bikes.
- No brainer, option A for safety SW Stevens to Lander.
- This is the way to go! Bonus would be a crosswalk at Lander - This is the access to the beach.
- Between Stevens and 47th we need center turn lanes to prevent rear end collisions.
- Option B between Stevens and 47th Provides safety for left turns when going westbound.
- Prefer this to option A. We need a left turn lane at 57th Ave & at Garlough. Much preferred to sacrifice parking for the turn lanes.
- Option C. Sharrows on downhill side is my favorite option. Even a beginner rider can go 20 mph down the hill. A bike lane at higher speed on a bike, unless very generous, like Dexter is scary, scarier than moving in the road.
- Prefer, as it moves traffic with less risk taking.
- Option C. No Change.
- Option C = No change!! Save my tax money.
- Why not a left turn lane here? This is an arterial to Beach Drive! (61st)

- The percentage of bikers to cars doesn't warrant these changes (x2). Use enforcement and narrow the car lanes and include the bike lane on the street. Leave the center turn lane and all the parking this will slow cars down and allow for more comfortable biking, etc.
- I've lived in the immediate area for 10 years. The vast majority of bikes go around Alki on the flat. Only those who live somewhere along the top of the hill actually ride down Admiral.
- Option C. Make it like the East Side of Admiral Way need turn lane at 45th Ave SW for schools. Use Lander for bikes from 48th and California.
- Option C. Shared lane down the hill 5' bike lane up the hill.
- Shared lane down the hill, 5' bike lane up the hill.
- Option C, do nothing. Please preserve the block long, two lanes eastbound approach to California!
- My preferred option is C, shared lane down the hill.
- I vote for option C!
- Option C. You don't seem to be looking out for pedestrians! Feels like a war on Cars.
- Don't see the need to impact 10,000 cars for 50-150 bikes per day. Two bike/car collisions in 4 years (one out of area) do not indicate a danger to bikes.
- Option C No Change.
- I am against this. Don't waste the money. Save the money stop this.
- Stop the war on cars! What an absolute joke!!! There is no option of no bike lanes!!! With the very small number of bikes. If a bike lane is required at all it should only be on the south uphill route! Stop the war on cars!
- Parking on both sides is required! Best Plan: Paint the street with "bike logos" and arrows found on most streets. Keep parking, turn lane "as is".
- I understand the use of "radar reminder display units" Why not just install one, on the downhill where speed is the highest? Then re-test, to see if it has solved the speeding issue. Removal of the center turn lane is not a good option. Yes! Let's make Admiral useful for bicyclists, but isn't there a method to do this without blocking access to one's own neighborhood?
- Narrow road - yes! Bike lanes, not so much. Where are the pedestrian crossings?
- If the project does proceed with eliminating the left turn at 57th, this would then result in many drivers using the protected left turn at 59th. Please consider reconfiguring the odd intersection pavement markings that currently exist because of the divided nature of 59th and the proximity of the next street south SW Hanford. Potentially the stop bar could be moved south on 59th to create an intersection with just Hanford SW and 59th.
- You can't engineer away accidents. Why fix what isn't broken? This is a solution in search of a problem. Please reconsider the whole idea. Option B is better than nothing. But better yet, don't do anything - don't fix what isn't broken.
- I am not for these improvements. I don't like any of these options. To me the Admiral "improvements" are a waste of tax payer dollars and will not improve the safety of this roadway.



- I find it absolutely laughable that this project is being proposed through via a public process without true diligence. You are making decisions that will impact our area for years based on so called "studies" that have been conducted on only a few days.

## Appendix B

- Seattle Neighborhood Greenways supports and encourages the timely implementation of Seattle Department of Transportation's plan for the safety rechanneling of approximately one mile of SW Admiral Way between California Ave SW and 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue SW near Alki Beach. Admiral Way is a residential street arterial that needs to be made safer for people walking and biking. Supplemented by restrictions on parking near the corners of busy intersections and curves, these changes will provide the additional right-of-way needed to include safe bicycle infrastructure. We encourage its speedy implementation.
- I am writing in support of SDOT using the most effectively protective rechannelization of this road. Please choose the most pedestrian/bike/car friendly version of your plan. The convenience of the parking shouldn't outweigh the safety of the road users. I want to ride up and down Admiral with my kids. I won't if it isn't done right. I don't want to use the sidewalk. Also please consider improving crossing opportunities across Admiral at/near 45<sup>th</sup> Ave SW. Thank you for moving this city forward. Adding curb cuts at all the intersections along Admiral. I would like to see a plan for it.
- I believe that building functional and safe bike lanes on Admiral Way is key. I would like to keep the middle lane if at all possible, but if not, then the turn lanes at intersections are acceptable. Please don't fall victim to noisy neighbors who want as much parking as possible in front of their house. These are public streets and should be used primarily for transportation.
- We support the project design proposed by SDOT for SW Admiral Way, either option A or B. The revised design without a continuous center turn lane preserves the on-street parking that was a concern for some residents on Admiral. This seems like an acceptable compromise. If we are going to grow the number of people willing to use a bike for normal transportation, then bike lanes are needed on arterial routes.
- We need SDOT to implement the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan with the buffered bike lanes called for on the portion of SW Admiral Way. I want to live on and use a safer street for pedestrians, bus riders, drivers and bike riders of all ages and abilities.
- Just a short note to let you know my full and unwavering support for the new proposal for reducing the speed of vehicles on this Admiral Way through safety improvements. Please continue with this proposal. I assure you these changes can come not soon enough. I wish not to become a casualty / victim of the drivers on this road, or anywhere else for that matter.
- I support the design. WE need safe connected streets for all users, motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. This would be one step closer to implementation of the master bicycle plan. I was a little surprised at the high speed of traffic. It's just not acceptable and one reason I avoid this route when biking around West Seattle.
- Option A is preferred. Note: Speeding is common in all level grade areas of the Alki neighborhood.
- I can still legally make a left turn off of SW Admiral Way onto 46<sup>th</sup> Ave SW and have the added benefit of becoming a "slower down" to the traffic behind me. Bike lanes? Yes. If you give bicyclists 5 feet of space, they may ride in tandem, which is dangerous. I would think that a

consistent width along the whole path would be safest. Thanks for a very informative session tonight.

- The revision to retain the center turn lane from 47<sup>th</sup> Ave Westward to SW Stevens, Option B is a great improvement. It has little impact on parking while greatly increases the safety for vehicles making left turns to the many side street that feed to the local neighborhood. Also the center turn lane provides a refuge for pedestrians crossing from bus stops.
- The idea of a bicycle lane would provide two essential benefits. First, it would allow cyclists some peace of mind as they climb up or down Admiral Way. Second, by taking up some of the current automobile lane space the resulting new lanes will become narrower. This will have a calming effect on automobile drivers. SDOT has channelized Delridge Way, Fauntleroy Way and now 35<sup>th</sup> Ave SW and Roxbury. Before channelization I didn't dare ride any of these roads. Now I can. I encourage you on my behalf and those of all other cyclists and persons who desire safety over speed to continue with your brave effort at making our streets safe and useful for all citizens whatever mode of transportation they choose to use.
- I fully support the Option B recommendation. To be clear, I do not support Option A, as I find it extremely likely to increase rear-end accidents along that stretch.
- I just wanted to email to show support of the Admiral Way project proposed by SDOT to make Admiral Way safer for people on bikes and pedestrians. I think this is a vital connection to shopping, schools and the beach.
- I wanted to express my gratitude. I cannot wait for the buffered bike lanes!! I am so excited! Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
- I am looking forward to this project getting underway. To reduce the lane sizes, add more parked cars, etc to slow down the traffic is awesome – can't wait for you to get started. How about installing a crosswalk at Stevens so people can access Schmitz Park? I think more people would use the trails if they had a way to more safely cross over Admiral. Someone once said to me: "I don't recall when it became the city's priority to provide parking for people living along Admiral"
- I believe SDOT has done a good job incorporating people's concerns into the plan. We heard from bikers who claim we don't need a downhill lane. I noticed these were all men. I worry they might become a statistic if they feel they are so invincible. I spoke with one who said he never rides Admiral Way at night or in the rain.
- I am wondering if it's possible to install APS on 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave SW and SW Admiral Way because there are traffic lights there and I have to cross 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave SW at my own risk. I am deaf-blind so I always go to Starbucks or Metropolitan Market which requires me to cross the street – on 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave SW all the time. We will need 4 APS devices to cross on either side of 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave SW. Is this possible?
- The latest proposal for this project causes our major concern at the intersections of Admiral Way, 53<sup>rd</sup> Ave SW and SW Lander St. We have lived at this intersection since 1975 and have seen far too many accidents even deaths. Since the center turn lane was installed, the number of problems has been reduced, but to eliminate the lane at this intersection will surely cause increased accidents.

- We know a left turn pocket is planned at 59<sup>th</sup> and we agree that one is needed, so we thought we'd compare it to 57<sup>th</sup>. I counted 20 cars at 59th, while he counted 15 at 57th during the exact same period. In other words, 57th get 75% of the turning that 59th gets. I think this could justify putting a pocket at 57th. Besides, there is poor visibility for the approach to 57th because you come around a curve on the Schmitz Park Bridge and there you are. Add to that the fact that it is a gateway to Genesee Hill, and I think there are ample reasons for putting a pocket there.
- 57<sup>th</sup> is such a busy turning street. It is the gateway to Genesee Hill for those using Admiral. It needs a left turn pocket.
- If we are going to make Admiral Way narrower, thus slower, it makes sense to do the narrowing at the top, rather than part-way down the hill. Option A, then is best. But what about Option A.01 – take away the parking anyway as you would have in Option B, for some future use!
- I wanted to put in my vote for Option A. My main reason is that I think getting rid of the center turn lane will be an effective way to make Admiral Way into a narrower street that will be easier for pedestrians to cross, and that will encourage motorists to slow down. I'm not against taking the parking away as Option B would do. There really does need to be a left-turn pocket at 57th Avenue. I urge you to please consider this left-turn pocket. My husband and I ride our bikes up Admiral several times a week and are very excited at the prospect of having bike lanes, and slowing down autos.
- A left turn pocket would be sorely needed at 57th Ave. SW. At least as many cars turn left there as at 59th, where you have a pocket on your map. In addition, it is a dangerous turn, as cars have just come around the curve by the Schmitz Park bridge and are of course going downhill and fast. Please please please consider a turn pocket at 57th. I was also sorry to see that the city is preserving all of the parking. I feel that safety has been sacrificed (i.e. giving up safe left turns) for storage of automobiles.
- The alleys on both sides of the street between 60th and 63rd are heavily used, especially on the north side between 60th and 61st. Left hand turns are frequent in both directions. If there is going to be only 1 additional crosswalk location it should be 61st as more people board the bus there.
- SDOT With regard to your new proposals for Admiral Way. Lander & Admiral Way in both locations is hard on pedestrians. At the 3 way stop cars will sail by & not stop for clearly marked pedestrian crossing. At 7:30am [...] At the Lander that goes down the steep hill. Cars make a right turn with little regard for walkers crossing. I walk ... every day from Lander & California SW to Alki by Starbucks, I think we have a problem with too many cars around Alki. Wish traffic & number of cars located be controlled there.
- As a cyclist, I am opposed to eliminating any of the left turn lanes. I do not believe a dedicated bike lane is needed or safe for the downhill direction. Uphill, a bike lane is a good idea, but only if it has a buffer area on both sides.

- The possibility of removing the center turn lane leaves no place to go as an in-between safety option if there are cars coming eastbound. Please eliminate at least one if not both of the parking spaces between the bus stop and the alley. A speed radar sign needs to be placed westbound between California and 47<sup>th</sup> because that is where the cars pick up speed after a relatively flat drive from California to 46<sup>th</sup>.

*(IN FAVOR OF OPTION B, ABOVE)*

- I am vehemently opposed to the proposed safety improvements that will eliminate the center turn lane on Admiral Way. I concurred with the city's original report that the parking along Admiral Way is underutilized and could be removed. I might be able to support the proposal if there were an additional left turn pocket added for the Lander/53<sup>rd</sup> area.
- I am against your plan for the following reasons: There are not very many bicycles that use Admiral Way. Your plan does not take into account many senior citizens and young families in this area who are unable to ride bikes most of all on the Admiral hill. It is not necessary to have a bike lane descending the Admiral hill from California to 63<sup>rd</sup>. Removing the center turn lane will contribute to rear end collisions to cars turning left and right off Admiral Way. Place a crosswalk at Lander St and Admiral Way. This would also allow senior citizens and mothers with small children a safer place to cross Admiral.
- Why change what's existing? Traffic moves fine and allows turns from center lane to all side sidestreets, alleys, Schmitz Park and driveways, etc. At worst provide a turn lane at 57<sup>th</sup>. Please reconsider these changes and put money elsewhere.
- I'd like to ask for the consideration of two features to be added to the Admiral Way safety improvement – roundabouts and a boulevard divider. Roundabouts at 63<sup>rd</sup> Ave, 61<sup>st</sup> Ave, 59<sup>th</sup> Ave, Stevens St, and 49<sup>th</sup> Ave (replacing the new stoplight). A boulevard divider could be added from 49<sup>th</sup> west to 63<sup>rd</sup>. I'd be willing to give up some of the bicycle lane buffer to accomplish this, or even consider moving the bicycle lane to the outside between the sidewalk and parking. I'd like to see the street parking removed on the north side of Admiral Way between Lander St and 49<sup>th</sup>. It is very lightly used and the increased space simply encourages faster driving along that section.
- The new plan is terrible because you are getting rid of the turn lane where it is needed most. Between 47<sup>th</sup> and Lander is where most of the cars speed. Remove the parking for this middle stretch of Admiral and keep the turn lane. Even your parking study shows that very few people use the parking along this stretch. And add at least one crosswalk between 47<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup>. Lander St would be a good location since it is the first street to access the beach from and has a high pedestrian use.
- My observation of this section of Admiral Way and 59<sup>th</sup> warrants special attention due to all the traffic converging as you already know. There are negative impacts with no center turn lane for

westbound left hand turning cars on to southbound 59<sup>th</sup> Ave SW. I understand this is a complex design and that safety is the underlying requirement.

- I am strongly in favor of leaving Admiral Way as it is. The proposed changes would have minimal effect on safety, and would in many ways make Admiral Way less safe. Removing the center turn lane is very dangerous. It will inevitably cause rear-end collisions. It makes no sense to eliminate the existing center lane on Admiral. The recent concerns about the Aurora Bridge are directly related to the too-narrow lanes. Yet you want to narrow the lanes on Admiral. This makes no sense. A bike lane on Admiral is really unnecessary and a waste of money. The bicycle traffic on Admiral Way is practically nonexistent. These improvements are a waste of SDOT funds.
- I am bicycle commuter most of the time and appreciate any efforts to promote bicycling or any alternative to cars more viable for more people but even for a cyclist, plan A and B are bad ideas.
- I would not allow my kids to ride on Admiral. Three feet of paint is not going to protect them. While I had not heard of the Plan C (sharrow downhill, bike lane uphill, keeping the parking and center turn lane) mentioned by the other commenters at the meeting, it really does seem like a reasonable middle ground. It may not be perfect for bikes, but it would be better and it would keep all the facilities available to cars.
- God forbid that you are going to eliminate the existing two lanes, eastbound approach to California. Right turners would be stuck in this single lane when they could have used the right lane to make a free right turn and be on their way and out of the way of those going eastbound. The single pedestrian collision has already been addressed by the extensive modification at 47<sup>th</sup> and Admiral. We have a bloated traffic safety department that justifies its existence with overdone projects that reduce mobility and livability of our city.
- I am pretty much opposed to the project because it seems like a solution in search of a problem. Is there any chance that this proposal can just go away and the money used to improve the pavement on Admiral? Removing the center turn lane will make turning left onto 57<sup>th</sup> an adventure.
- Over 1,000 signers of the petition online have made their position clear: Make no changes on Admiral Way SW. Leave it completely 'as is'
- Scrap this project. We say please leave us alone. West Seattle is the last best place in Seattle. Don't screw it up.
- I do not agree with the safety plan for Admiral Way. Postpone this project and redirect the funds to making the Aurora Bridge safe. SDOT has been focused on 3% of commuters, please rethink this.
- Have arguments on better bike data, accuracy and about counters' time and location.

- I have a feeling that this is just a “check the box” exercise and you’ll go right on doing what you planned. I did not appreciate comments by Ms. Woods to me during the open discussion before the meeting when I voiced my concern to her about the parking study being done on only a few days. Our parking issues on Alki are all summer – 3 day events (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) for anywhere from 3 to 4 months based on how nice mother nature is being to us and giving us sunny days. Not quite the same thing so more a more in depth look would be warranted.