

DENNY WAY ITS

(INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS) PROJECT

Denny Way ITS Project
Online construction drop-in session
Q&A summary
November 3, 2021

Total Questions Answered: 36

Q: Who is funding this project?

A: This project is funded in part by the 9-year Levy to Move Seattle, approved by voters in 2015, and by funds from the Federal Highway Administration. Using Intelligent Transportation Systems is a cost-effective way to optimize transportation operations without investing in large projects to modify the infrastructure.

Q: How will access to my business be maintained during construction?

A: When planning detours, traffic closures, and alternative walking and biking routes, the project team considers business access and the multimodal needs of the traveling public. One of our priorities is to notify businesses in advance of work, and to mitigate any potential impacts as much as possible. Access to businesses will always be maintained.

Q: Will there be construction activities at Denny Park?

A: This project will include construction activities at the southeast corner of Denny Park located at Denny Way and 9th Ave N, on Seattle Parks and Recreation property. These activities include:

- Installation of new Accessible Pedestrian Signal (APS) push buttons on a 4.5-foot push-button post
- Replacement of existing signal cabinet at this location with a new signal cabinet equipped with a new service disconnect cabinet
- Replacement of curb ramps at this corner and restoration of sidewalk pavement

Q: What impacts should I expect during construction?

A: During construction, expected impacts include:

- Dust, noise, and vibration
- Sidewalk closures and pedestrian detours
- Advance notification to businesses and residents of driveway closures
- Business access will be maintained. Adjacent trees will be protected during construction and any disturbed vegetation will be restored.
- Off-peak traffic restrictions and detours
- Temporary pavement surfaces and steel plates in roadway

Q: Will there be any nighttime or weekend work?

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A: Work most impactful to traffic will be done during off-peak hours on nights and weekends, when possible. The reason for this is to avoid creating traffic backups along Denny Way.

Q: Will there be signage in the area to help with detour routes and business access?

A: Yes, signage will be placed in active construction zones and in surrounding project area(s). If you have questions or feedback about the signage once work begins, please email the outreach team at DOT_DennyITS@seattle.gov or call (206) 257-2243.

Q: How do we access the slides after the webinar?

A: The full presentation including the Q&A session will be available on our project webpage within the next 2-3 weeks.

Q: Are these improvements one of the City's efforts to address the influx of traffic to and from Climate Pledge Arena? If yes, will SDOT use ongoing analytics to adjust the traffic light sequencing?

A: This project was planned long ago because of the heavy use of Denny Way. The ITS software will adjust the cycle signal links and timing for all different modes of travel in real time. We'll be able to use this data for events and have a baseline of data to start from.

Q: I live at a Retirement Community at Denny Way & Fairview Ave N. What are you doing to assure a long enough time for challenged seniors to cross the street? All cannot keep the pace that younger, more agile citizens can.

A: We will find out about the phasing and timing for the crosswalk and check in with our design team.

Q: Will construction proceed west to east? East to west? Phased? Segmented?

A: We have had meetings with the contractor, and they will start west to east. We haven't seen their actual plan yet, but as far as phased work, several crews will be doing work at 2-3 intersections at a time with underground utility work, demolition, etc.

Q: How do we know what times will be noisy?

A: We do not have specific times for this right now. As construction begins, we will know more, but most of the noisy work will be done during the day. A lot of the work on Denny Way is restricted to non-peak hours (peak hours being 6 to 9 AM and 3 to 6 PM). Weekend work is restricted to 9 AM to 9 PM.

Q: What is the best way to get notified about work ahead of time? Is there an email to sign up for?

A: We will send out construction-related info and updates regularly once the work begins. You can sign up to subscribe to the project on our webpage.

Q: How has SDOT adjusted its planned use of adaptive signals on Denny Way after the previous rollout of that technology on Mercer St?

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A: We are implementing “lessons learned” from the Mercer Street corridor and we know to adjust the signal link to accommodate all the different modes using this corridor. We should see efficient paths whether you are driving, walking, or biking.

Q: Today, when I drive from 2nd Ave and Broad St to I-5 northbound, Google maps often tells me to take Denny Way to Fairview Ave N instead of over to Mercer St to get to I-5. What, if anything, will change along Mercer St to support Denny Way closures?

A: Until we see the detour routes the contractor will use, we don’t know the specifics of alternate corridors. The Traffic Operations Center will be available to monitor specific movement and signal timing and will be aware of when we have detours to adjust the flow of traffic. They will know in real time when our project is closing intersections and/or streets.

Q: Do we have an end date?

A: Start date: Between now and end of year with light work like utility verification, potholing, saw cutting, and other low impact work. Crews will mobilize in January 2022. End date: Around September 2022.

Q: Once we sign up for updates, how soon before will we get notified of road closures? Our business entrance is on 9th Ave and Denny Way.

A: Before we start with the construction, we will be doing outreach to all businesses and residential properties to notify any work that will be impactful. None of the work will close access to businesses. We try to give at least a week's notice. We have upcoming work in early December, so we will be in touch in-person, most likely doing door-to-door.

Q: What kind of models were used when developing the ITS plan? Are there other cities using this kind of system? Is it being used in any other part of the city?

A: Cycle signal links will be adjusted to accommodate volumes regarding biking, walking, and driving. Traffic Operations will monitor that in real time. An ITS system is being used on Mercer St and at 1st Ave S and S Michigan St. The same system is being used in other cities as well.

Q: What is the expected impact of adaptive signals for pedestrians crossing the corridor during the post-event "garage flush" at Climate Pledge Arena? / **Q:** How will adaptive signals affect pedestrian crossing times near the arena after events? Are the signals programmed with maximum cycle times?

A: The Split Cycle Offset Optimization Technique (SCOOT) system will be recording event traffic data. We’ll be able to use that data to plan future events.

Q: Are there contingencies should the construction contractor discover any potential historically significant artifacts during their dig?

A: Yes, but we don’t expect any historically significant discoveries as we are not excavating deep (3 to 4 feet at most). If we do uncover something, we have an environmental team that will assess the situation. If needed, we would contract an archeologist, and they would come out and document the area before proceeding.

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Q: How do you detect pedestrians?

A: We are installing APS buttons (Automated Pedestrian Signal) along the corridor. The APS tells the traffic signal that a pedestrian is waiting.

Q: Who is the contractor? If procured by bidding, was the contractor significantly below #2?

A: Titan Earthworks. They have done work within the City of Seattle and have been around since 2007. They were the lowest bidder.

Q: What's the best way to stay updated during construction?

A: To learn more about the project, please visit our webpage at www.seattle.gov/transportation/dennyits and sign up to receive email updates. If you have questions or feedback during construction, the best way to get in touch with our team is by emailing DOT_DennyITS@seattle.gov or calling (206) 257-2243. We'll also post periodic updates on our webpage.

Q: Will any intersections have automatic pedestrian recall installed, since the location is within an urban center?

A: We will need to confirm with our traffic engineers, but we think there would be a minimum pedestrian recall.

Q: How do ITS tools work?

A: While ITS tools aren't visible to the public, they provide several benefits to all travelers, including:

- Improving safety for people walking, biking, driving, or rolling
- Reducing congestion during peak hours
- Helping travelers to effectively plan their trips throughout the city (using the Traveler's Information Website)

Q: When is construction going to begin and how long will it last?

A: Construction could begin as soon as November 15 and last 7 to 10 months. We'll begin with smaller tasks like mobilizing equipment and staging materials and start the larger tasks in the new year.

Q: Which improvements are a part of this project?

A: Activities will include demolition and trenching at street intersections and sidewalks to install electrical conduits, signal/Dynamic Message Sign foundation and pole work, building new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant curb ramps, and paving. Construction will also include installation of a 19-foot dynamic message board (near Wells Fargo) on the sidewalk. We will also install traffic signal cabinets at 6 intersections.

Q: Since adaptive signals will be able to detect demand and adapt automatically, does that mean there will be no need for traffic control police after arena events?

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A: You will still see Uniformed Police Officer directing traffic. The SCOOT system is great during the day, but we still need to collect data and adjust accordingly during events because the traffic needs of each event are unique.

Q: Will trees be removed as a part of this project?

A: Adjacent trees will be protected during construction and any disturbed vegetation will be restored. If tree removal is necessary, the project team will post a notice with information about the public comment period.

Q: Why is SDOT doing this project now?

A: Denny Way experiences some of the city's heaviest traffic volumes. To reduce congestion, this project will upgrade traffic signals and pedestrian push buttons along Denny Way between Western Ave W and Minor Ave.

Q: What are Intelligent Transportation Systems?

A: Intelligent Transportation Systems, or ITS, are a suite of technology tools SDOT uses to improve the way people drive, walk, bike, or roll across the city, including upgrading traffic signals. ITS tools play a key role in a safe, efficient, and innovative transportation system that works for all travelers.

Q: How do ITS tools work?

A: ITS tools include monitoring devices like cameras, push-button sensors, and wires and are installed in the pavement to detect vehicles and bicycles on the road, as well as pedestrians at crosswalks. The monitors send real-time information to SDOT's Transportation Operations Center, enabling the operations team to effectively respond to traffic incidents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and communicate to the public and the media via the Travelers Information Map and SDOT Twitter feed. Real-time updates allow commuters to make more informed travel choices.

Q: Where is the project area located and will you be impacting any of the nearby neighboring streets?

A: Project is located on Denny Way between Western and Minor. Work will be done along Denny Way at each signalized intersection, beginning at Western Ave and moving east. There will be some smaller pieces of work that occur on some of the intersecting streets.

Q: What is the most impactful work and what types of activities does it include?

A: The most impactful work is demolition and trenching (digging in the street). There will also be impacts from work trucks, steel plates covering trenches, lane restrictions, sidewalk closures and some detours. We'll provide advance notification before this work takes place.

Q: Will there be parking impacts? Where will the contractor stage their equipment? Where will the contractor park?

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A: The contractors generally park their work vehicles in the job site area. Private cars are not allowed. Staging will be needed but we are not sure where that will be at this time. We will work with the contractor to make sure that we have as little impact on parking as possible. Staging may move throughout the project based on the work area.

Q: How will the adaptive signals be used to prioritize transit?

A: We will follow up with our traffic engineers, but the buses will be detected by the pavement loops or cameras depending on which intersection transit is located at. Information will be recorded and used to inform and program the cycle signal links for the future. We will have more information moving forward and will post updates on our website.

Q: How was the design determined?

A: This project is part of several other ITS areas that were identified as part of the center city gateway program. Our team studied 3 different areas to install ITS elements. Due to heavy traffic along this corridor, Denny Ave was identified as the priority for these updates.