CITY OF BELLEVUE
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SAFETY,
CONNECTIVITY &
CONGESTION LEVY

East Bellevue Demonstration Greenway

Evaluation Report



April 2022



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Contents

Executive Summary	4
Background	5
Project Goals	7
Design	8
Pavement Markings	8
Traffic Circles	8
Stop sign relocations and other traffic control signage	9
Wayfinding signage	9
20 mph speed limit	9
Project Timeline and Budget	10
Project communications	10
Community Feedback	12
Design Pattern Survey for Traffic Circles-pre installation	12
User Feedback Online Questionnaire–post installation	13
Other Public Correspondence	14
Evaluation	14
Before and After Data	14
Vehicle Data	14
Bicycle and Pedestrian Data	16
Questionnaire Results	17
Conclusion and Next Steps	17
Observations	17
Staff Recommendations	18
Next Steps	19

Executive Summary

The East Bellevue Demonstration Greenway (Greenway) was the first neighborhood bicycle greenway installed in Bellevue. Installed in summer 2021, the project was intended to make it easier for people to bicycle and walk around the neighborhood and reach nearby destinations. The two-mile long greenway was implemented primarily along 166th and 165th avenues, between Southeast 14th Street and Northup Way. The city used quick-build, low-cost treatments to create the greenway route including wayfinding signs, decorative art traffic circles, bicycle shared lane markings and a lower speed limit.

Nearby residents and interested members of the public provided feedback about the project through several mediums between May 2021 and January 2022. Additionally, traffic data was collected before and after installation to compare the impacts of installed treatments.

The goals of the Greenway were to reduce vehicle travel speeds, increase bicycle and pedestrian usage along the route and create an outcome that was deemed generally favorable by the community.

Based on data and public feedback, many of the project goals were met and public sentiment about the initiative was generally positive. As such, next steps for the greenway include making the route permanent, enhancing design features along the corridor and establishing an ongoing Neighborhood Greenways Program within the City of Bellevue.



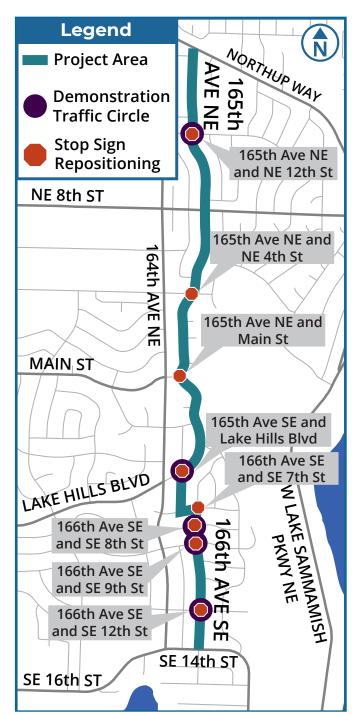
Background

The route for the East Bellevue Demonstration Greenway (Greenway) builds upon city plans and efforts to improve the corridor for bicycling, including the 2016 Bicycle Rapid Implementation Program (BRIP) and the 2020 Healthy Streets pilot project.

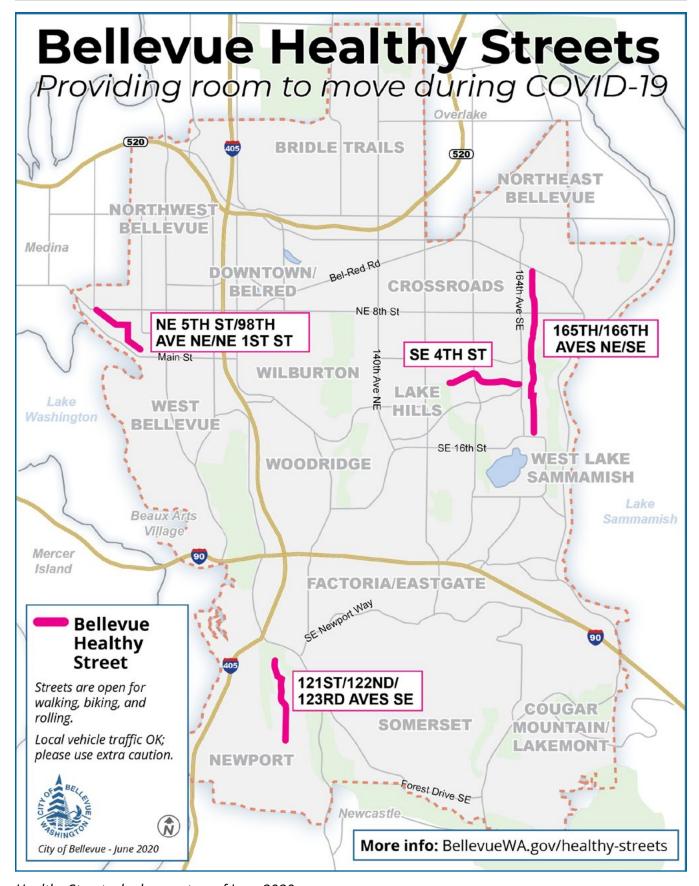
City Council approved the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan in 2009, which identified preliminary routes for potential future improvements and aimed to make Bellevue a great place to walk and bike. In 2015, work began to update the 2009 Plan. This update, called the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative (PBII), pivoted from a long-range planning vision of Bellevue's pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to actionoriented efforts that advance project designs and programs identified in the 2009 Plan. The BRIP was a task identified within the wider PBII scope of work. The BRIP identified routes where low-cost materials could be quickly installed to build a connected and protected bicycle network in Bellevue. Numerous projects were identified, including four neighborhood bikeways.

As defined in the BRIP, neighborhood bikeways at minimum would use signs and pavement markings such as sharrows to clearly identify the bike route to all road users. Additionally, traffic calming measures to manage speed and volume would be considered to provide a safe and comfortable bicycling environment for people of all ages and abilities.

A neighborhood bikeway in east Bellevue was envisioned along a route of neighborhood streets between SE 14th Street and Northup Way. This route was selected because of its contiguous nature (1.9 miles) that would provide access to parks and schools along low-volume, residential streets. Additionally, the route connects with to the Lake-to-Lake trail—a priority bicycle corridor at SE 14th Street—along with bicycle network connections at Main Street, NE 4th Street, NE 8th Street and Northup Way.



Map of East Bellevue Demonstration Greenway



Healthy Streets deployment as of June 2020.

Momentum for creating the Greenway was catalyzed in 2020 during the Healthy Streets pilot project. Healthy Streets was launched by city in April 2020 as an initiative to provide space and to encourage physical distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Four Healthy Streets corridors in Bellevue were activated, including the greenway alignment along primarily 165th and 166th avenues in East Bellevue. The corridors were open to people walking, biking and using the street for local access but were closed—with the use of traffic barrels and signs—to people driving through the neighborhood.

The East Bellevue alignment was selected because of the vision outlined in the 2016 BRIP and because of proximity to other bicycle connections, such as the Lake-to-Lake trail. The Healthy Streets pilot concluded in October 2020 due to seasonal equipment and maintenance needs.

Staff evaluated traffic observations and public feedback collected during the Healthy Streets pilot. The traffic observations showed a significant increase in the number of pedestrians and bicyclists using the East Bellevue route. Additionally, public feedback to the Healthy Streets treatment along this corridor was positive, and many respondents indicated a desire to see enhancements.

In early 2021, staff looked at ways to advance building out the bicycle network in East Bellevue, using funds from the 2016 voter-approved Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity and Congestion Levy. The increase in both pedestrian and bicycle use, positive community feedback about the 165th and 166th avenues Healthy Streets corridor, plus the neighborhood bikeway vision outlined in BRIP, led to the development of the Greenway.

Project Goals

The primary goal of the Greenway is to make it easier for people to bicycle and walk around the neighborhood and reach nearby destinations. The project also aimed to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase the number of bicyclists and pedestrians along the corridor.
- Raise awareness about people walking and riding bicycles.
- Lower vehicle speeds along the Greenway route.
- Improve perceived safety along the Greenway route.



Additionally, the project sought to gain community sentiment regarding the treatments installed as part of the Greenway.

Approaching the project as a demonstration also allowed for several benefits:

Provided a low-cost, real-world opportunity to test a neighborhood greenway in Bellevue, and to implement improvements more rapidly and efficiently than traditional project delivery would allow.

- Encouraged residents to provide feedback before, during and after installation.
- Granted staff flexibility to make quick design adjustments and monitor traffic conditions.
- Emphasized data collection to better understand project benefits and impacts that could help guide the implementation of future greenways elsewhere in Bellevue.
- Helped to identify appropriate next steps before making potentially more expensive, permanent investments.

Design

The elements incorporated into the Greenway were based on national best practices on neighborhood greenway design. The limited budget and demonstration aspect of the Greenway also informed tactical elements such as paint-and-posts and signage in lieu of more substantial asphalt or concrete work. The key design features of the Greenway include pavement markings, traffic circles, traffic control changes, wayfinding and a lower speed limit.

Pavement Markings

The primary marking for the Greenway was the shared bicycle marking, also known as a sharrow. Sharrows were generally installed at 250-foot intervals. Opposite direction markings were placed at the midpoint of the first direction such that alternating directional sharrows are encountered at 125-foot intervals along the greenway. The Greenway also included special sharrows with a modified chevron design to inform people of a turn along the greenway route. In total, 72 sharrows were installed.



Traffic Circles

Demonstration traffic circles were installed to function as a traffic calming tool along the greenway. Similar to roundabouts and concrete traffic circles, the demonstration circles interrupt continuous travel along the route and force vehicles and bicyclists to traverse around the central island.

Standard demonstration traffic circles were installed at four intersections. The circles were designed to allow for adequate sight distance and provide enough intersection width for emergency response vehicles to traverse safely. The circles are 22 feet



in diameter and include a decorative, thermoplastic pavement design. The circles also include interior raised, plastic curbs that were spaced at a 10-foot diameter. The center of the traffic circle contains a traffic post with yellow diamond signs for further visibility.

One modified demonstration traffic circle was installed at the intersection of SE Lake Hills Boulevard and 165th Avenue SE. At this location, an oval shape was installed to pair with the skewed design of the intersection. The oval was also paired with a directional change along the greenway.

Stop signs were repositioned at traffic circles to allow for traffic to move continuously without stopping along the corridor. The street that crosses the greenway includes stop-control for both movements.

Stop sign relocations and other traffic control signage

In addition to repositioning stop signs at the traffic circles, two all-way stops were installed when there was a directional change in the greenway or to increase sight distance and safety.

At cross streets with busier traffic, additional bicycle markings were added to increase visibility of the greenway crossing. At SE 14th Street, a northbound bike lane and bike box were added to the intersection approach, as well as green markings across the intersection.



At NE 8th Street, short approach bike lanes and green markings were installed in both directions in addition to standard pedestrian crosswalk signs that were replaced with combination pedestrian plus bicyclists crossing signs to accompany the crosswalk.

Wayfinding signage

Wayfinding signs were placed along the greenway to show destinations, distance and direction. The signs were placed in advanced of directional changes and along various access streets to the greenway. Additional route signage labeled "East Bellevue Greenway" are intended to confirm to bicyclists and pedestrians they are on the greenway.

20 mph speed limit

The posted speed limit along the Greenway corridor was reduced from 25 mph to 20 mph and all of the existing speed limit signs were replaced. The 20 mph speed limit signs were often paired with wayfinding route signs to reinforce the intent and unique shared environment of the Greenway. The corridor also had four existing 25 mph pavement markings, made of thermoplastic, that were removed and replaced with 20 mph markings.





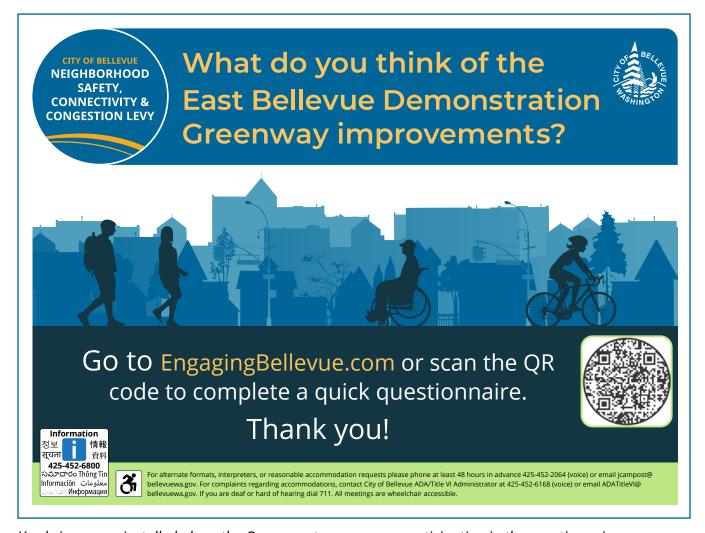
Project Timeline and Budget

The project was designed by city staff and began in January 2021 and was completed in July 2021. Construction of the greenway began on August 23, 2021 and lasted approximately two weeks.

The Greenway was installed using a city "on-call" contractor. This allowed the project team to advance the design into construction more quickly than using traditional procurement methods. The total cost of the construction contract was \$153,209.14. Funding for design and construction came from two of the city's Capital Investment Plan (CIP) programs: Neighborhood Safety and Connectivity Levy (PW-R-199) and the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (PW-M-7).

Project communications

Community residents residing adjacent to and near the vicinity of the Greenway were engaged to varying degrees at different stages of the design and construction of the Greenway. The characterization of communication ranged from notifying nearby residents of the project's schedule to being able to provide pre- and post-construction feedback for the project team to consider. Both print and digital communications were used to inform the community about



Yard signs were installed along the Greenway to encourage participation in the questionnaire.

the project and engage them to provide feedback. The timeline below reflects the type of communication and when the project team communicated this information.

- April 2021: A project webpage was created to provide background, schedule and funding information.
- April 2021: A mailer was sent to over 2,300 addresses near and along the corridor to introduce the project and encourage recipients to select their preference of a pavement marking design by visiting EngagingBellevue.com or by emailing the project manager. The mailer also reflected the project schedule.
- August 2021: A second mailer was sent to the same addresses notifying neighbors of the planned installation of greenway treatments in late August/early September. This mailer informed recipients that an online user feedback questionnaire would be launched after installation to provide an opportunity to share how they experience the Greenway.
- September 2021: A third mailer was sent to the same addresses to encourage recipients to visit EngagingBellevue.com and give feedback on their experiences and observations of the Greenway. This mailer contained basic information translated to Spanish, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Telugu and Hindi. City GIS data show these languages are spoken by residents within and near the project area.



Mailers were sent to over 2,300 addresses.

■ "Take the questionnaire" yard signs: To encourage Greenway users to share their experiences, approximately 20 yard signs were installed along the corridor. These signs were on display from September 2021 to January 2022.

To communicate information, promote the various forms residents could provide feedback regarding their experiences using the Greenway and to encourage participation in providing feedback, city staff advertised the various methods residents could do so via social media and other media forums:

- Social media (2021)
 - □ Nextdoor: (Aug. 23; Sept. 8; Oct. 5; Dec. 8)
 - Twitter: (Aug. 23; Sept. 8; Oct. 6; Dec. 8)

- Facebook: (Aug. 23; Sept. 8; Oct. 5; Dec. 8)
- Instagram: (Aug. 23; Sept. 8)
- City publications/announcements (2021)
 - News Release (Sept. 8)
 - Neighborhood News (October)
 - It's Your City (June and October editions)

Copies of project communications material can be found in the appendix.

Community Feedback

Community feedback played a vital role in the design and evaluation of this first-ever neighborhood greenway. The city encouraged feedback from those who lived and travelled along the corridor. Online engagement was hosted on EngagingBellevue.com. Residents were also able to ask questions regarding the project and design on the EngagingBellevue.com platform.

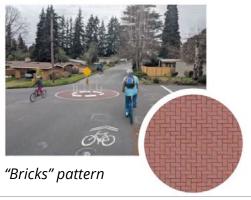
Design Pattern Survey for Traffic Circles-pre installation

What decorative treatment design would you like to see at the traffic circles?

The first online engagement occurred where neighbors and corridor users (people walking, biking, rolling and driving) selected their preference for the pavement marking design for five planned traffic circles. From April 19 to May 7, 2021, an online survey was available at EngagingBellevue. com where survey participants selected one design out of four as their preferred design. The four design patterns to choose from were bike, leaves, bricks or wheel spokes patterns. The "leaves" pattern received the most votes and was installed. The background color of the leaves pattern was changed to a lighter tone for better visibility.









Number of visitors	Number of surveys submitted	Ranking
94		22 votes leaves
	80	20 votes for bricks
		15 votes for bike
		18 votes for wheel spokes

User Feedback Online Questionnaire-post installation

The second online engagement occurred following installation where neighbors and corridor users were asked to share their observations and experiences in different modes of travel (walking, biking and driving) with the treatments that had been installed along the corridor.

The online questionnaire was launched immediately after installation in early September 2021 and closed in early January 2022. The questionnaire asked respondents to identify their most typical mode of travel in Bellevue, their neighborhood, how close they live to the corridor and what mode of travel they typically use along the corridor. It also asked if users felt safer and comfortable with the greenway treatments (per mode of travel). Respondents were asked if they preferred to keep, remove or refine the treatments, and asked about their general interest for additional and permanent greenway treatments.

In addition to being available in English, the user feedback online questionnaire was translated to: Spanish, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Telugu and Hindi. Of the 251 submittals, one response was received in Simplified Chinese.

Analysis of the feedback is described in the Evaluation section and the full list of questions and responses can be found in the Appendix.

Number of visitors	Number of questionnaires submitted*	
793	251	

^{*}Number of respondents varies per question.

Other Public Correspondence

Project staff attended a Lake Hills Neighborhood Association meeting on September 2, 2021 to discuss the Greenway and present the demonstration project approach. Staff provided outreach materials and answered questions from community members that were in attendance. Several emails, phone calls, and letters were also submitted to provide feedback on the Greenway.

Evaluation

Before and After Data

Traffic data was collected before and after Greenway installation to compare the effects of the project design on vehicle speeds, bicycle volumes and pedestrian activity. Traffic tubes were placed to collect vehicle data, while video cameras were placed to observe pedestrian and bicycle data. Tubes and video cameras were deployed simultaneously during both rounds of data collection.

Pre-installation data was collected August 19-22, 2021. Post-installation data was collected September 23-26, 2021, approximately three weeks after construction was complete.

Vehicle Data

Traffic tubes were placed at six locations to collect vehicle speeds and volumes. There were four tube locations placed along the Greenway corridor and two tube locations on nearby parallel streets to compare changes to neighborhood traffic patterns. Video cameras were placed at three locations. All cameras were placed along the greenway route.

Tube Site	Site Description	Tube Location
1	165th Avenue NE north of NE 15th St	Along Greenway route
2	165th Avenue NE north of Main Street	Along Greenway route
3	Lake Hills Blvd west of 165th Ave SE	Along Greenway route
4	166th Avenue SE south of SE 12th St	Along Greenway route
5	168th Ave SE south of SE 4th Place	Parallel to Greenway route
6	164 th Ave SE south of SE 12 th St	Parallel to Greenway route

Video Site	Video Location		
1	Intersection of 166 th Avenue NE and NE 8 th Street		
2	Intersection of 165 th Avenue NE and Main Street		
3	Intersection of 166 th Avenue SE and SE 12 th Street		

Traffic tubes collected vehicle speeds before and after Greenway treatment installation. The project team was interested in collecting average vehicle speeds at each location. Additionally, the project team was interested in seeing if the percentage of all vehicles traveling over 25 mph changed after Greenway installation.

According to the tube data, average traffic speeds decreased in both directions at Site #3, decreased in the southbound direction at Site #6, and decreased in the northbound direction at Site #2 and Site #4. Average speeds increased at other locations.

Site Direction	Before	After		
	Direction	Average MPG	Average MPG	Difference
1	Northbound	22	23.1	5.0%
1	Southbound	21.8	22.1	1.4%
2	Northbound	19.8	19.0	-4.0%
2	Southbound	20.2	20.7	2.5%
3	Northbound	22.7	20.4	-10.1%
3	Southbound	23	21.7	-5.7%
4	Northbound	21.3	19.6	-8.0%
4	Southbound	21	21.9	4.3%
5	Northbound	19.9	20.7	4.0%
5	Southbound	19.6	22.4	14.3%
6	Northbound	26.1	26.7	2.3%
Ь	Southbound	27	24.3	-10.0%

Although average traffic speeds were variable per location, the percentage of all traffic that traveled faster than 25 mph decreased along the Greenway route. This indicates that treatments installed with the Greenway project may have reduced the likelihood of speeding vehicles on average along the full corridor.

	Before	After
Percentage of vehicle traffic traveling faster than 25 mph along the Greenway (Sites 1-4)	20.5%	18.4%

It is notable that post-installation data was collected during a closure of West Lake Sammamish Parkway—a major north-south arterial—due to the ongoing Phase 2 construction project. During this closure, the official construction detour route was identified as 164th Avenue for southbound traffic. Traffic data may have been impacted due to this detour – for example, 168th Avenue SE (Tube Site #5) saw increased vehicle speeds and volumes during this closure as drivers found alternative detour routes from 164th Avenue. At another location, though volumes increased by 23%, the number of people traveling 25 mph or greater decreased by 17%.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Data

The project team used video cameras to observe bicyclist and pedestrian use along the corridor before and after Greenway treatments were installed.

Bicycle Volumes Comparison

Video Site	Location	Before (8/19 - 8/22)	After (9/23 - 9/26)	% Change
1	166th / NE 8th	35	75	114.3%
2	165th / Main	35	84	140.0%
3	166th / SE 12th	15	62	313.3%
CORRID	OR TOTALS	85	221	160.0%

Pedestrian Volumes Comparison

Video Site	Location	Before (8/19 - 8/22)	After (9/23 - 9/26)	% Change
1	166th / NE 8th	101	112	10.9%
2	165th / Main	141	171	21.3%
3	166th / SE 12th	105	127	21.0%
CORRID	OR TOTALS	347	410	18.2%

The observed increase in bicycle and pedestrian data after installation demonstrates that treatments and marketing of the Greenway helped increase route usage.

Questionnaire Results

The user online questionnaire was open for responses on the Engaging Bellevue platform from September 2021 through January 4, 2022. A total of 251 questionnaires were completed.

Questionnaire results were noted at various times during the months-long evaluation period. In order to compare sentiment over time, questionnaire results were analyzed at several times during the four-month period the questionnaire was open. Checking cumulative questionnaire results at different times allowed project staff to assess public sentiment shifts over time as the Greenway became more established in the neighborhood.

In general, sentiment for treatments along the Greenway improved with the passage of time. Questionnaire results showed a slight increase of support for keeping or refining certain treatments when comparing the October and January results. For example, 55% of respondents liked all or some of the treatments during the October checkpoint; however, this improved to 61% at the close of the questionnaire in January. This increase in support over time may indicate growing acceptance of the Greenway throughout the evaluation period.

A detailed review of questionnaire results can be found in the Appendix.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The Greenway was the city's first attempt to create a dedicated neighborhood bikeway in Bellevue. The approach to launch this greenway as a demonstration allowed both city staff and members of the public to experience an initial design and provide continuous feedback on the outcomes. This approach differed from a traditional project delivery method, where outreach occurs before projects are constructed and little follow-up occurs.

Observations

- **Bicycle and pedestrian usage increased after greenway treatments were installed.**Bicyclist counts increased an average of 160% while pedestrian counts increased an average 18%. All observation sites noted increases in pedestrian and bicycle activity.
- Public feedback reflected favorably to the reduced posted speed limit, but demonstration treatments did not sufficiently reduce observed vehicle speeds. According to the public questionnaire, 65% of respondents noted support for keeping or refining the 20 mph speed limit. However, recorded traffic tube data did not show corresponding speed reductions at all locations along the corridor. Additionally, a majority of pedestrians did not feel safer with the added greenway treatments. In order to match the intent of the greenway, future design modifications on the corridor should focus on encouraging slower vehicle speeds.
- Public sentiment reflected support for the Greenway. According to the questionnaire, a plurality of respondents expressed support for all treatments along the corridor including modified stop signs, pavement markings, wayfinding signage, and traffic circles. More than 50% of respondents expressed a desire to keep and/or refine most of the treatments for

the corridor. Additionally, 61% of respondents indicated that they liked all or some of the Greenway treatments.

- More public engagement will be required to add neighborhood greenways in Bellevue. The project questionnaire reflected some support for making additional bicycle connections and creating a network of neighborhood greenways in Bellevue. Each potential greenway route would need to be vetted with the community to proceed.
- The approach to launch this project as a demonstration was successful. The low-cost, rapid-build model allowed the design to progress from initiation to installation in less than nine months, and construction occurred in less than two weeks. Traditional project delivery methods for a project this size would typically take a minimum of 2-3 years and would result in a longer construction timeline.

Staff Recommendations

City of Bellevue staff were actively engaged in the development and observation of the Greenway. Based on received data and public feedback, project staff have developed a series of recommendations:

■ Make the East Bellevue Demonstration Greenway a permanent greenway route.

The demonstration achieved most of the original goals, and public feedback showed support for keeping or modifying various treatments along the route. To build on the success of the demonstration, additional treatments can be installed to slow vehicle traffic and enhance the environment for people who bicycle and walk. Potential future treatments could include:

- Chicanes these curving, vertical elements, sometimes formed by curbs or planter strips, narrow the roadway in strategic locations, resulting in slower traffic speed near the device.
- Permanent traffic circles the demonstration circles functioned as a proof-of-concept and helped slow traffic in some locations. Permanent traffic circles should be made of concrete, with landscaped planters when opportunities arise and funding becomes available.
- Speed humps these raised pavement features can be installed with slots that allow for easier navigation for standard bicycles and emergency response, while continuing to reduce driver speeds.
- Median islands these raised features can be installed parallel to the greenway route to encourage traffic diversion. They can also be installed perpendicular to the greenway route at busy intersections to restrict left-turning movements onto and from the greenway itself.
- Diagonal dividers As stated by the Federal Highway Administration, these are "barriers placed diagonally across a four-legged intersection. The barrier creates two unconnected intersections. Traffic approaching the intersection is restricted to one receiving leg, rather than three." These dividers can be effective at reducing cutthrough traffic, but careful consideration is needed for the siting of these treatments as they can permanently impact traffic flows in the greater neighborhood.

- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) existing marked crosswalk locations at SE 14th Street, NE 8th Street and Northup Way can be enhanced with RRFBs to improve driver yield compliance. These RRFBs can be installed with new technology to detect both bicyclists and pedestrians at the intersection.
- Establish a dedicated Neighborhood Greenways program for the City of Bellevue

Neighborhood greenways have proven to be low-cost projects with relatively high benefits. The city would benefit from a network of greenways on low-volume streets as they would help create new bicycle and pedestrian connections to existing streets and trail networks. Additionally, some traffic calming features and reduced speed limits are popular with the community and can be easily applied to other routes in Bellevue through Neighborhood Greenway projects.

Next Steps

City staff are collaborating to make refinements along the Greenway. Several adjacent efforts may provide opportunities to enhance the greenway.

- Coordinate with Utilities projects The Bellevue Utilities Department is leading a water main replacement project that might impact several blocks of 166th Avenue SE near the south end of the Greenway. If the project advances, the demonstration circles may be upgraded to permanent concrete traffic circles as early as 2023 in conjunction with pavement restoration work.
- **Bicycle Network Planning** Bellevue will be evaluating potential bicycle network enhancements in the greater area in coming years. As part of that project, the Greenway may be used as a reference corridor when describing potential additions to the neighborhood greenway network.
- Incorporate Greenways into the TIP the East Bellevue Greenway route, as well as the future effort to evaluate new greenway locations, will be added for consideration into Bellevue's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Referencing greenways within the TIP will allow the city to apply for future grant opportunities.
- Vision Zero Coordination Bellevue recently completed its a strategic plan for Vision Zero, an effort to eliminate serious injury and fatalities collisions on city streets by 2030. Adding enhanced and connected bicycle routes within the city are included as a strategy under the "Safe Streets" framework. Future funding opportunities may arise for additional enhancements to the East Bellevue Greenway corridor.

APPENDIX

PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS

- Project Webage
- April mailer
- August mailer
- Sept mailer
- News release
- N'hood news article Oct 2021
- Its Your City article June & October

EB.COM ANALYSIS REPORT

public feedback (questionnaire results)