

July 6, 2017

Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Committee Meeting (#9)

5:30-7:30 pm, City Hall 1E-121

City Staff Liaisons:

- Marie Jensen, East Link Outreach
- John Murphy, Neighborhood Traffic Safety Services (NTSS)
- Karen Gonzalez, NTSS Program Manager
- Tim Kariel, East Link Project Manager
- Darek Jarzynski, Senior Transportation Engineer
- Darcy Akers, Transportation Engineer
- Police Sgt. Dave Sanabria

Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Committee (NTMC): Notes in attendance

| Beaux Arts Village | Bellecrest | Enatai | Surrey Downs |
|---|---|--|---|
| Tom Stowe <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Mike Koehn <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Kevin Paulich | Kerri Patterson |
| Eugenia Yen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Tricia Thomason <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Rebecca Sears <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Ed Nugent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Kim Moloney <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Liz Hale <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Katherine Christopherson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

Agenda:

- 1) **Intro/Welcome** – Marie Jensen welcomed Committee members and introduced Kim Moloney who was selected by Cynthia Hudson to replace her on the Committee. Staff and committee members introduced themselves; as did audience members. Marie acknowledged three (3) emails related to the NTMC that are contained in the packet.

A brief statement was made about the context of the Committee:

- Traffic mitigation comes with tradeoffs; although mitigation is intended to target commuter traffic, what is imposed can impact residents.
- The East Link Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Plan has always been intended to be fluid.
- The NTMC expressed interest at the January meeting to monitor traffic within the impacted neighborhoods and respond with appropriate mitigation.
- Committee members are conduits to the community in that they are to share information about the Committee’s work with their neighbors and neighbors are to share their concerns and questions with the Committee.
- Per the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and Sound Transit, mitigation is to be tied to neighborhood traffic impacts resulting from East Link construction activities along Bellevue Way and 112th Ave SE.

- The goal of the Committee’s Traffic Mitigation Plan is to discourage the increase of commuter traffic related to construction.
- 2) East Link construction coordination and activity on Bellevue Way and 112th Ave SE – City Transportation Department and Sound Transit
- **Tim Kariel, Bellevue Transportation Department**, described his role as an East Link Project Manager for the City. He is a liaison between the City and Sound Transit and ensures commitments within agreements between the agencies are kept by Sound Transit. He explained that East Link is a large, complex construction project and the construction is fluid in that the timing of activities often changes.
 - **Jason Hampton, Sound Transit, East Link, Community Outreach Specialist** for the South Bellevue segment, shared that the baseline construction schedule was recently approved by Sound Transit. He described some upcoming key construction activities. Some NTMC members expressed interest in seeing the construction schedule; a synopsis of future key activities will be developed by the City and Sound Transit to share with the Committee.
 - **112th Ave SE Traffic Control between SE 8th St and Bellevue Way (existing lane capacity of four lanes to be reduced to two)** to begin as early as July 17; but likely July 24. Later in the construction, the contractor will be constructing a bypass road on the west side of 112th Ave SE (the start of this bypass road is not currently known). Construction of the road-over-rail is estimated to take three (3) years.
 - **Bellevue Way Traffic Control:** Bellevue Way has been reduced to one lane northbound (with associated I-90 ramp closures) for the past several weekends. In the future, starting as early as mid-August, Bellevue Way will undergo a traffic control scheme that allows for two lanes of traffic into downtown during the morning peak commute and two lanes of traffic toward the I-90 during the afternoon peak commute. This traffic control is sometimes referred to as the “3 lane reversible configuration” or 3R.

The next full weekend closure of Bellevue Way and the I-90 ramps is planned for July 15-16. Residents along Bellevue Way will have access to their homes.

Impacts to sidewalks: Sidewalks on the eastside of Bellevue Way have been closed from the Wye and south. On 112th Ave SE, the eastside sidewalks will be closed at first, then the sidewalks on the west will close. During construction activity, sidewalk on at least one side of 112th Ave SE will remain open.

- 3) **Traffic Study Overview & Analysis** – John Murphy gave an overview of parking patterns in the neighborhoods since the South Bellevue Park and Ride closed on May 30 and of the traffic study that was completed in May/June. Since the South Bellevue Park and Ride closed, the following happened:
- Orange residential area “Local Access Only” signs were installed at seven (7) locations
 - Traffic data monitoring occurred from around the time of the closure through mid-June at 11 locations

- An overview of parking
 - No significant clustering of commuter parking in neighborhood areas
 - 107th Ave SE behind the Triangle Pool— increased since closure but not significantly; this street exhibited commuter parking patterns since before the South Bellevue Park and Ride closure. While there has been concern by residents about this parking in the past, staff have initiated the review the process with residents but have never received back the requisite materials from the concerned residents to continue the review.
- City has been monitoring parking in Enatai and off of Bellevue Way
- Weekend lane closures on Bellevue Way and I-90 ramps started in early June
 - City has received limited community feedback about concerns/impacts.

Sound Transit is now messaging about the upcoming work on 112th Ave SE. (There could be overlap of work on 112th Ave SE and on Bellevue Way). For the 112th Ave SE work, the traffic control will be similar to the traffic configuration used in 2015 for the City’s utility project on 112th Ave SE wherein four lanes of travel was reduced to two (the northbound lanes will close resulting in one lane of travel in each direction in the existing two southbound lanes). This work caused traffic diversion on 108th Ave SE between Main St and Bellevue Way. Sound Transit’s closure (to occur this month- July 2017) is the first of several closures along 112th Ave SE (future closure dates not known at this time).

Traffic Study

The Committee seeks to recommend mitigation based upon better known impacts from East Link construction on Bellevue Way and 112th Ave SE. Starting in June, Sound Transit’s contractor initiated a series of lane closures for utility work; these closures have involved I-90 ramp closures as well.

The City’s traffic study—conducted May 22-June 18, 2017—involved speed and volume collection at eight (8) locations: four (4) in Bellecrest and four (4) in Enatai. Volumes were collected at three (3) entrances to the Surrey Downs neighborhood. The City hired a traffic consultant firm to the conduct the study.

Key activities that may have impacted traffic during the study were noted:

- Week 1/May 23-20: Orange residential area signs with “Local Access Only” message were installed
- Week 2/May 30-June 5: South Bellevue Park and Ride closed; several weekday (evening and daytime) sports games in Seattle noted.
- Week 3/June 6-11: Partial weekend closure of Bellevue Way lanes. Several weekday Bellevue High School and Seattle sports games noted.
- Week 4/June 12-18: Partial weekend closure of Bellevue Way lanes; Bellevue High School Senior Finals

Traffic Study Locations. [See Location Map in Slideshow](#) (slide 10)

A- 110th Ave SE south of Main St

- B- SE 2nd St east of 108th Ave SE
- C- SE 11th St east of 108th Ave SE
- D- 108th Ave SE north of SE 2nd St
- E- 108th Ave SE south of SE 2nd St
- F- 108th Ave SE north of SE 14th St.
- G- 108th Ave SE south of SE 16th St
- H- 104th Ave SE south of SE 10th St
- I- 108th Ave SE south of SE 20th St
- J- 112th Ave SE north of SE 31st St
- K- 113th Ave SE north of SE 34th St

Traffic Study Findings [See Location Map in Slideshow](#) (slide 11)

- Speeds decreased slightly across most sites, most directions
- Following SE 4th St closure, more motorists are using 108th Ave SE to access interior streets in Surrey Downs
- Where increases in volume occurred from 4-7 pm, the increases were:
 - a. North of Bellevue Way: southbound direction (toward Bellevue Way)
 - b. South of Bellevue Way: northbound direction on 112th and 113th Aves SE (toward Bellevue Way)

More specifically, the traffic study shows

- Volumes generally higher north of Bellevue Way
- Increases north of Bellevue Way partially related to SE 4th closure
- Total volumes (from) pre-closure (to) post-closure: volumes were relatively flat south of Bellevue Way (104th Ave SE is outlier)
- Evening commute: Increases in many key directions with exception of 104th Ave SE south of SE 10th and 108th Ave SE south of SE 20th St
- 108th Ave SE south of Bellevue Way carried more traffic on weekends, likely serving residential traffic during Bellevue Way closures
- Volumes down in Surrey Downs
- Impact along 108th Ave SE north of Bellevue Way to come in form of lane reductions on 112th Ave SE

Comments from Committee

- Killarney Way needs to be monitored
- New housing in downtown must be increasing traffic along Bellevue Way; more information on that would be helpful to the Committee
- How long does it take for driver behavior to change?

- 4) **Revisit Pilot Program: Turn restrictions at SE 16th St/108th Ave SE and SE 16th St/Bellevue Way** – Karen Gonzalez spoke to the issue of commuter traffic in neighborhoods which is a citywide problem and how concerns are often heightened during construction. When

addressing commuter traffic, there is an inherent tradeoff: while traffic mitigation tools may discourage commuter traffic, they often come with at the expense of resident's alternating their normal travel patterns. It's been the experience of the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Services group that residents typically don't support traffic mitigation until they are personally impacted by neighborhood traffic problems. This pilot is moving forward because of the timing of the forthcoming work on 112th Ave SE (and the traffic diversion that is likely to occur as a result of the work) and because of traffic increases already seen on 108th Ave SE north of Bellevue Way.

Note: Committee member Christopherson left the meeting.

The pilot program, introduced at the April meeting, would help to discourage commuter traffic from using neighborhood streets to access Bellevue Way by restricting movement during the PM peak (4-7 pm, Monday through Friday). The intent is to implement the pilot before school begins. The pilot would be for three (3) months.

Features of the pilot include: See [Pilot Project Handout](#)

- No access to 108th Ave SE south of SE 16th St from southbound 108th Ave SE through the use of a flashing beacon
- No access to southbound Bellevue Way or westbound SE 16th St from westbound SE 16th St at Bellevue Way
- Advanced warning of restrictions at Main St and 108th Ave SE through use of a sign
- Advanced warning of restriction for southbound 108th Ave SE traffic approximately 300' north of SE 16th St through the use of a flashing beacon and sign
- Transit and bicycles are exempt from the restrictions
- Pilot program is enforceable
 - Pilot is supported by Police Department
- Navigation apps would reflect change
- Data collection would occur during pilot
- Community can give feedback on pilot

Committee Comments on pilot

- What are the metrics for effectiveness of pilot program?
 - No significant increase in traffic
 - Traffic monitoring data
 - Community input
- Is it possible to implement multiple pilots?
 - With 112th Ave SE lane closures in July, it's time sensitive to move forward now.
 - This doesn't preclude piloting other efforts in other neighborhoods (e.g. in Enatai)
 - The Committee's work has always been framed as fluid and responsive throughout East Link construction
- Pilot would increase travel time to/from Enatai.

- Numerous access points remain for Enatai residents to get to the neighborhood.
- Recommend a shorter pilot time.
 - Three months is actually shorter than other pilots done in the City. There needs to be sufficient time for driver behavior to adapt, police to enforce the restriction, and for navigation apps to reflect the change.
- Request for regular data collection during the entire pilot.
 - This will be done and monitoring will show impacts
- Revisit other ideas based on experience with pilot
- Data collection requested at 104th Ave SE southbound, south of SE 16th St

A meeting with the Committee will be scheduled three weeks following the implementation of the pilot. The Committee will meet following the pilot's conclusion.

- 5) **Communications & Implementation Plan for Pilot Program** – Marie Jensen reviewed the draft Communications & Implementation Plan in the meeting packet noting outreach will be done with neighbors located adjacent to the restrictions as a first step. The City will send a mailer, create a webpage, and use city communications tools to inform the public about the pilot. The timing of communications will depend on when sign materials can be delivered.