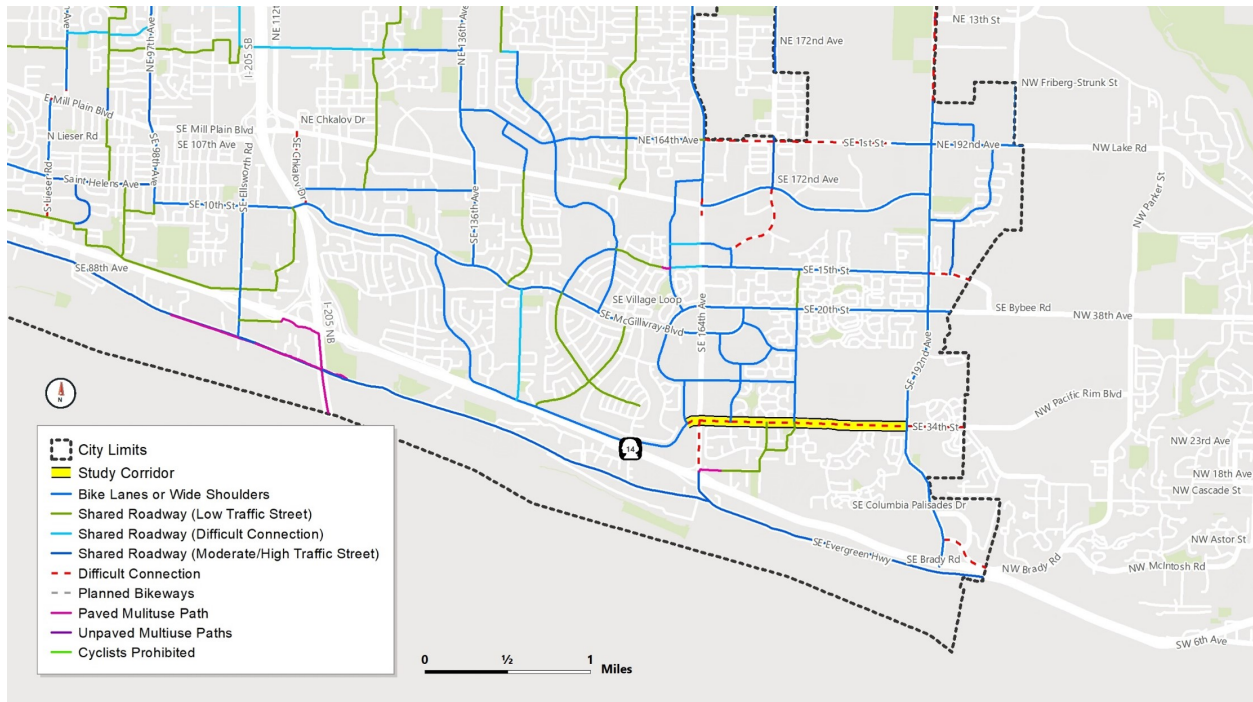


TO: Transportation and Mobility Commission **HEARING DATE:** 10/4/2022
FROM: Emily Benoit, Community Development
SUBJECT: Complete Streets – SE 34th Street Safety and Mobility Project



Report Date: 10/4/2022
Hearing Date: 10/4/2022
Proposal: Improve safety and mobility for all users on SE 34th Street.
Location: SE 34th Street between SE 162nd Avenue and SE 192nd Avenue
City Staff: Emily Benoit
Recommendation: Endorse the proposed design to repurpose a travel lane in each direction on SE 34th Street to provide mobility lanes with a buffer separation, as well as install vertical barriers, high visibility crosswalks, and modular bus platforms and construct a HAWK Beacon at the intersection of SE 162nd Avenue.

I. Background

The SE 34th Street Safety and Mobility Project has evaluated potential changes to improve safety and mobility in this corridor, between SE 162nd and SE 192nd Avenues. The project is recommending repurposing a travel lane in each direction to add dedicated space for people walking, biking, and using mobility-devices, and other safety improvements for all users, including drivers.

In addition to the Complete Streets policy goals, several corridor specific goals were identified for the SE 34th Street project and were used to align potential changes to the corridor with desired outcomes. The specific goals for the project are:

1. Improve comfort and mobility for all users, regardless of how they choose to travel
2. Prioritize safety for all users
3. Make improvements quickly and efficiently

II. Technical Findings

To understand how repurposing a travel lane would change conditions for people driving on SE 34th Street, a traffic analysis was completed for existing (2022), mid-term (2027), and long-term (2040) scenarios. Traffic analysis findings indicate that under the near-term and mid-term scenarios, the project goals can be achieved without substantially increasing travel time or delay experienced by people driving. Under the long-term scenario, improvements may be needed at the intersections of SE 164th and SE 192nd Avenues to maintain continued safety and minimize delay.

Technical findings also indicate that the proposed design can achieve the project goals by:

- Creating a new east-west mobility corridor
- Improving access to transit for people biking
- Not substantially adding to driver delays in the near-term and mid-term
- Slowing down vehicles to improve safety for all users
- Reducing the number of lanes people walking and biking must navigate at intersections
- Enhancing existing crossings to better connect key destinations
- Requiring no large capital investments in the near- to mid-term
- Including enhancements that could occur with pavement work
- Leveraging grant funding for additional safety improvements

III. Community Engagement

The Project had two touchpoints with the community. The first, completed in June 2022, included an online open house to share project information with the community and ask community members to share how they use SE 34th Street, what their barriers are and any concerns about the project. More than 500 community members completed the online survey. They identified safety, drive time impacts on the corridor and impacts to neighborhood character as key concerns about repurposing a lane. Community members also shared concerns about people driving too fast on the corridor today, how close the sidewalks are

to the vehicle lanes, and the increase in traffic volume from planned growth in the area surrounding the corridor.

The second touchpoint with the community began in September 2022 and will conclude in mid-October 2022. There were two main pieces to this touchpoint, which is to hear feedback on the proposed design elements.

One, this touchpoint had stakeholder and community listening sessions which included an overview of the proposed design and provided an opportunity for stakeholders and community members to ask questions and provide feedback on the proposed design in real time with the project team. The listening sessions were well attended by the local school, developers along the corridor, and leaders of the local neighborhood association.

Two, this touchpoint also includes an online open house where community members can review the proposed design elements and complete an online survey to share their feedback on the proposed design elements. The online open house and survey were promoted through postcards mailed to about 10,000 residents in the area, yard signs along the corridor with website information and on the City's social media. So far, feedback has been similar to the first touchpoint, where community members share about unsafe speeds and crashes along the corridor, adding safety with protected and separated pedestrian and bike facilities, and concerns around new development along or just off of the corridor that could impact traffic in the future.

IV. Transportation and Mobility Commission and City Council

In 2022 the project team has met with the TMC three times (February, April, and July) to discuss the project goals, traffic analysis and findings, community engagement process and input, and proposed design elements.

On August 15, 2022 the project team held a workshop with City Council to share about the project, traffic analysis, and community engagement. And on September 25, 2022 City Council passed a resolution to proceed with a proposed design to repurpose a travel lane in each direction on SE 34th Street to meet project goals.

V. Proposed Design

Based on the technical findings and the community input summarized above, the project team has developed a proposed design that will achieve the project goals of enhancing safety and mobility for all users while minimizing the increase in delay experienced by drivers where possible. The proposed design would provide one vehicle travel lane and a mobility lane with a buffer separating the two lanes. To enhance safety and access to transit, additional design features include:

- Installing a vertical barrier to provide physical separation between the mobility lanes and vehicle lanes.
- Installing high-visibility crosswalks to make pedestrians more visible and drivers more likely to stop for pedestrians.
- Constructing a HAWK Beacon at SE 162nd Avenue to allow people to cross safely.
- Installing modular bus platforms to maintain ADA access to buses and minimize potential conflicts between buses and people traveling in the mobility lanes.

VI. Recommendation

Based on the analysis findings, community engagement input, and City Council direction, and in accordance project goals to improve comfort and mobility for all users, prioritize safety for all users and make quick and efficient improvements, the Project Staff recommends the Transportation and Mobility Council endorse the proposed design to repurpose a travel lane in each direction on SE 34th Street to provide mobility lanes with a buffer separation, as well as install vertical barriers, high visibility crosswalks, and modular bus platforms and construct a HAWK Beacon at the intersection of SE 162nd Avenue.

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Attachments:

- SE 34th Street TMC Hearing Presentation (October 2022)
- SE 34th Street Design Concept Plans (October 2022)
- SE 34th Street Council Resolution (September 2022)
- SE 34th Street Council Memo (August 2022)
- SE 34th Street TMC Memo (July 2022)
- SE 34th Street TMC Memo (April 2022)
- SE 34th Street TMC Memo (February 2022)