

May 7th NCNA Meeting Question Responses from the City Traffic Engineer

Comments were transcribed from written notecards and taken directly from emails that came in prior to the meeting. Community questions are in blue italic, and responses are in black/standard text.

1. Please change light timing for the 175th Street / I-5 southbound left turn lane from westbound 175th to decrease rage.

- This light is owned and operated by the Washington State Department of Transportation. The person in charge of the signal at the interchange happens to be my husband and I've shared this feedback with him. That said, I do not see opportunities for changes at this time – the light is timed to prioritize the movements from ramps. This is to mitigate the important safety concern of queuing extending back to I-5. Currently, the signal is also timed best it can be to account for a very significant increase in traffic stemming from the 145th interchange construction. I anticipate conditions will improve once the 145th interchange construction is complete.

2. Anything being done to stop the evening / night racing?

- This was addressed in the meeting. Feedback will be shared with Shoreline Police Department. We encourage you to call 911 to report street racing as you witness it so Shoreline Police can respond.

3. There are now more speed bumps on Seattle's arterials. Why not have them on Shoreline arterials too?

- As a large City, Seattle certainly leads the way with experimental use and application of various transportation tools. Shoreline generally tries to align closer to industry standards which generally discourage use of speed humps on arterials due to the following consequences:
 - Results in traffic rerouting to other streets (an undesirable and unfair outcome)
 - Speeds between speed humps tend to increase due to aggressive drivers compensating for lost time
 - Impacts to emergency response
 - Creates discomfort and delay for transit riders (who do not have the benefit of seatbelts)
- We certainly pay attention to what Seattle is doing and if at some point it becomes clear there is a benefit, we may follow suit.
- It is worth noting that we have been implementing raised crosswalks/speed tables in recent years. These are similar to speed bumps but place the bump (and associated speed reduction) at the key point of conflict (pedestrian crossing/intersection), where collisions are most likely to occur. As such,

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these devices do a better job of protecting vulnerable road users and mitigate risk where it's needed most. For context, Westminster Way between Aurora and 155th has these devices, as does 20th Ave NW on the way to Saltwater Park, if you'd like to look at examples. We will continue to implement these when opportunities arise via capital projects or development improvements, and if the roadway context is appropriate.

4. *New yellow lights at ped x-ing – are new pedestrian crossing lights monitored for usage? Do we know how many times the buttons are pressed? How are they working?*

- Pedestrian activated flashing beacons (which are technically called Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) are a proven safety countermeasure, as identified by FHWA. You can read more about how they work and why they are effective online at: <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/rectangular-rapid-flashing-beacons-rrfb>. We do not specifically collect data on how many activations occur at each as we are not resourced to do so, and there isn't a clear benefit of collecting this data.
- Many of these devices in our City are relatively new. We will know how they are performing as we conduct future system-wide collision review, but it is a bit too soon to tell currently. The limited devices that have been in place longer didn't have significant collision history before they were installed, and neither increase nor decrease in collisions is evident at these locations – these devices that have been in place longer were put in primarily to assist with school zone crossings (i.e. 155th/Wallingford, 175th/Wallingford).

5. *How do you identify operational changes before a fatality collision in a high-risk area like a walking route? Example: getting a crosswalk on an arterial route.*

- The [Annual Traffic Report](#) process helps us to identify the highest collision risk locations, and systemic treatments to address broader patterns. While the analysis is built on actual collisions (so may not feel proactive), the reality is that locations that historically and routinely experience collisions are the ones most likely to again. Focusing on these locations provides the best opportunity to mitigate future fatality collisions. Once locations or broader trends are identified, we look to proven safety countermeasures for applicability and select those most appropriate for mitigating the identified issue. Depending on the scope, strategies are implemented either through operational programs, or are described as projects in the Transportation Improvement Plan for potential funding opportunities, like grants.

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- Very soon we will begin work on updating/refining our collision review process. A new webpage will be created, so stay tuned for updates and opportunities to participate in influencing this refined plan.
- Additionally for context, crosswalks do not inherently improve safety. See <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/government/departments/public-works/traffic-services/traffic-services-frequently-asked-questions> - and click the question: “How can I get new crosswalk markings installed?”

6. *How do I request a change to existing streetlight on intersection? E.g., add a green/yellow/red left turn arrow to stop cars from turning left and almost killing my family once a week.*

- Via any one of the contacts available:
 - Directly, to the City Traffic Engineer (kdedsinsky@shorelinewa.gov)
 - By Phone to 206-801-2700
 - Online webform: <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/services/submit-a-service-request>

7. *Should greater emphasis be put towards road diets or speed cameras in order to achieve vision zero by 2030?*

- It is not necessarily an either/or scenario – both are important and useful tools. It is an interesting question though, recognizing that there is only so much resource and only so much we can accomplish in a given time frame. I frankly don’t know the answer! Even at higher levels (State/Region), I don’t think this question of which tools to prioritize has been answered, and it could be useful to do so.

8. *Is there any push towards replacing traffic lights with roundabouts on arterials with greater frequency?*

- Yes! Shoreline’s engineering standards dictate that when the warrant for a new signal is met, or in considering major rebuilds of existing systems, we must first consider a roundabout as the preferred alternative. Unfortunately they are not always viable for a variety of reasons, but generally speaking roundabouts are a stellar choice for their ability to reduce the risk of injury collisions, while providing excellent mobility (reduced delay) for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. We do not have funding to proactively replace functional signal systems with roundabouts but as they reach their end of useful life, replacement with roundabouts will certainly be considered.

9. *The City has a recommended walking route for students walking from North City into Briarcrest or Kellogg/Shorecrest. This route crosses 168th with no safe and reliable crosswalk across this high speed street. Are there operational*

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changes we can make for a safe crossing for students and other walkers to Hamlin Park on 22nd Ave NE?

- There is zero reported pedestrian collision history along 168th east of 15th Ave NE (dating back to at least 2010). As noted in another response, crosswalk markings do not inherently improve safety. See <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/government/departments/public-works/traffic-services/traffic-services-frequently-asked-questions> - and click the question: “How can I get new crosswalk markings installed?” Crosswalk markings help with two things:
 - They can increase driver yield behavior, which can be particularly helpful on busier streets. It is important to understand that increasing yield behavior does not necessarily result in less pedestrian collisions.
 - They help pedestrians understand the best place to cross, and in some cases can help to concentrate crossings to a preferred location (which can increase safety and driver compliance). In the case of 168th, it is unlikely that a marked crosswalk would have the effect of concentrating crossings to a particular location (given the low volume nature of the street, pedestrians are likely to cross where it’s most convenient). Additionally, there is no particular location along 168th that is significantly better than another.
- Last, I don’t think I’ve seen a City-suggested school walk route map that shows crossings of NE 168th St. The Briarcrest map is available online at: <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/105/637014636639200000>. We do not have a map for Kellogg Middle School as far as I’m aware.

10. Who is responsible for the light timing at 185th + 5th Ave NE? The pedestrian x-ing to/from the light rail station doesn’t have right of way (you sometimes have to wait through 1 ½ cycles). It should let peds cross more often! It would be great if it was as responsive as some other ped x-ings.

- The City of Shoreline is responsible for this light. I have shared the feedback with my staff responsible for signal operations. A pedestrian should never be skipped in a signal cycle, so if this is happening it could be an issue of equipment failure. There is otherwise no way to let peds cross more frequently without providing for the ability to cross while a conflicting vehicle movement is green. While it is certainly common to phase signals for a permissive (green ball) left turn to occur concurrently with a conflicting pedestrian movement (i.e. left turn must yield to pedestrian), given the high

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activity nature of this area adjacent to the light rail station, the signal was designed and phased to keep these movements separate.

11. How do we prevent transportation safety projects from getting watered down or reduced in scope? For example, the NE 175th St Rechannalization (2020-ish) and 15th Ave NE between 175th and 180th (2007-ish).

- By participating and advocating support in public feedback opportunities! This includes sharing feedback during master planning and short-range planning outreach opportunities. Unfortunately, outreach can have the effect of incentivizing engagement from those opposed to change and does not equally incentivize advocacy. For example, most project outreach is framed as: *“The City is planning to _____ and wants your feedback”* – those opposed to the change will be inspired to chime and organize against a project. Conversely, those who are supportive of the change (or at least neutral) might take our word for it - that we are going to do the thing we are planning - and therefore are not incentivized to participate in outreach. There isn’t a good way around this dynamic. We don’t want to give the impression that every decision is democratic/based on layperson opinion, and for example, frame the outreach as *“The City is considering _____ or leaving the roadway the way it is and your feedback will decide which way we go”* instead as this wouldn’t necessarily be accurate. It’s a challenging dynamic that no government agency has figured out the perfect solution for. Additionally, there are challenging and well-known barriers to representative engagement – Council has set several goals in the interest of hearing from historically marginalized members of our community, but there is still much work to do. These members of our community are often the ones who could most benefit from safety projects, and we don’t hear from them enough.

12. For residential street – can residents help collect data (ex. Speed of cars or # of pedestrians/day) in order to make a case for a need for safer street? Can residents offer to help fund work? (ex. Crosswalk or roundabout)

- You are certainly welcome to, but it is unlikely to influence decision making. Some neighborhoods do not have the resources to do this sort of thing, and prioritizing actions for neighborhoods that do would be unfair. The City does consider data on all streets in prioritizing its limited supplemental safety improvement resources, so there are not streets slipping through the cracks.

13. Recognizing the data around low collisions on local streets, I just also want to raise the point that local streets where speeding is common, pedestrians like me and my family avoid the roads altogether. IN a community as ours we lose the opportunity to play, bike and walk on the roads, and I don’t feel as

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connected with our neighbors either. Is there an opportunity to expand the view of road projects/traffic slowing to include opportunity to connect communities and neighbors? Perhaps include new data to also account for when road conditions are a deterrent for pedestrians and bikers?

- This is a great point and it articulates the overwhelming community feedback we hear daily – there is significant interest in changing streets to improve our quality of life. I fully recognize and support this interest, however we simply are not resourced to tackle both the very difficult problem of real injury collisions occurring routinely on our streets, and incremental (and fair) progress improving quality of life on local streets. Until we achieve the goal of zero fatal and serious injury crashes on City streets, our priority must be aimed at mitigating the serious and fatal injury crashes that are happening every year. To be clear, local roads are not excluded from the process of safety analysis nor transportation master planning; if safety issues were identified through these processes, mitigation strategies would be identified. Local streets just haven't typically risen to the top given the relative issues we see on arterial streets.
- For local streets, on street parking can be a great way for neighborhoods to influence speeds – if cars on local streets are parked in a way that effectively creates a yield street (where opposing traffic must yield to one another), this can significantly reduce speeds, and also can have the effect of discouraging cut through traffic. Sometimes residents feel uncomfortable with the issue of parked cars being in spaces where pedestrians could otherwise be walking, so this is a tradeoff to consider – organizing your neighborhood to experiment with on street parking may be something to explore.
- I invite you, when thinking about ideas you would like to see in your neighborhood, to consider what the time and budget implications would be if residents along every similar street were interested in the same treatment (as most would be) and we are expected to treat everybody equally. Here is some context in case you would like to explore this as a thought experiment:
 - There are approximately 274 lane miles of local streets in Shoreline. A map showing streets by classification is available at: <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/45928/638200870934670000>.
 - You can assume approximately 1000 hours of staff time can be budgeted for discretionary traffic safety activities.
 - Assume approximately \$100,000 budget annually for short-range plan associated traffic safety mitigation actions.

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- There are approximately 75 injury collisions occurring on arterial streets annually, often in the same locations year after year.
- You receive approximately 450 complaints annually from residents on local streets requesting traffic calming measures. You are expected to respond to all of them. You should assume an average of approximately 45 min per response in consideration of many inquiries resulting in several exchanges or a need to perform a site visit/collect traffic data/etc. This response time is deducted from the 1000 hours of budgeted staff time for safety activities, resulting in about 667 hours of staff time left for advancing actions.
- Any recommendations must be able to be implemented fairly:
 - They should be based on a clear correlation to data and/or programmatically available fairly for all that meet certain criteria.
 - They cannot be on the basis of advocacy/organization (i.e. complaint, petitions, etc) since not all neighborhoods have equal resource to advocate.
 - Actions must not result in unfair or negative implications to other nearby streets.

As an example, Seattle's Play Streets program would not be considered fair by these criteria in that they rely upon community members having the resources to organize, advocate, and oversee them (not all neighborhoods hold this privilege). Furthermore, they result in implications to parallel streets (if one street block is closed, it places more traffic on adjacent streets and we can't assume residents on the impacted street have the ability to organize and implement their own closure).

I would absolutely love to engage with community members that are interested in this thought experiment and have ideas. There is no doubt plenty of opportunity for improvement, and I suspect we have community members with data and analytical expertise well poised to help explore this – reach out! kdedinsky@shorelinewa.gov.

14. It's time to install a lane divider on 15th Ave NE between 175th + 180th to stop the increasing number of hazardous, illegal left turns. Or a road diet 4 to 3 with a middle turn lane.

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- Thanks for this feedback. Staff will review collision data as part of the next cycle and will consider whether physical restriction is warranted. We did recently install curb on the south side of the intersection, related to some collision patterns at the Safeway driveway – this was identified within the Annual Traffic Report.

15. I'm curious about my neighborhood – east of 15th on 175th to 25th Ave NE. To what degree has this area been studied for roadways/road use/safety and can you share some of the data results of this study?

- Comprehensive/citywide studies like the Transportation Master Plan/Transportation Element and the Annual Traffic Report do consider all streets. You can access these at:
 - <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/government/departments/public-works/transportation-services/transportation-master-plan/tmp-update>
 - <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/government/departments/public-works/traffic-services/annual-traffic-report> - there have been 7 collisions east of the Safeway driveway since 2010 (~.5/year). One of these was a minor injury collision occurring in 2015. No pedestrian collisions have been reported. These numbers are relatively low compared to other locations in the City, which is why the street has not been prioritized for supplemental safety improvements.

16. What are cheap/quick ways to increase the walkability of light rail to downtown North City?

- One action the City will be recommending as we work through a post-light rail opening study with Sound Transit is to restrict parking from one or both sides of the street along 10th Ave NE and along NE 180th St where there is no existing sidewalk. This will allow the shoulder space to remain open for pedestrian use. We recognize that this doesn't serve pedestrians with mobility constraints, and ultimately sidewalk is needed to make the route(s) between the light rail station and North City accessible. A currently unfunded project has been identified in the City's Transportation Improvement Plan recognizing this important need. See: <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/61203/638542245148100000> - Project name: North City Light Rail Connector.

17. Can police law enforcement aid in control of speed? Pre covid, Shoreline had police traffic enforcement division. 5 officers. Went to zero. As of 2 weeks we have 1 officer dedicated to traffic.

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- Certainly enforcement is a key component influencing driver behavior. Staffing levels are improving and we have been increasing enforcement compared to the years immediately following the pandemic. We hope to continue filling vacant positions.

18. Are speeding cameras being considered for the North City area? 175th east of I-5?

- Not at this time. Currently, we have only discussed school zone automated enforcement which is not applicable in this area. Additionally, State Law restricts where they can be used, and likely the east side of 175th wouldn't meet these criteria. See:

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=46.63.250>

19. Does Shoreline have “Slow Down” signs like Seattle does?

- Sort of – we distribute “Drive Like Your Kids Live Here” signs, and also a “All Intersections Are Crosswalks – Stop for Pedestrians” sign. If you are interested in obtaining these for your neighborhood, please contact us via one of the following options:
 - Directly, to the City Traffic Engineer (kdedinsky@shorelinewa.gov)
 - By Phone to (206) 949-5182
 - Online webform: <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/services/submit-a-service-request>



20. Does the City provide safety flags for crosswalks in a high pedestrian area?

- Yes – we can install these at existing marked and uncontrolled crossings. We generally do not install them at signals or all way stop controlled intersections. It is worth noting there are no studies documenting a benefit (nor detriment), nor industry standards/guidelines about their use. We rely on community members to notify us when restocking is needed since we do not have adequate staff resource to proactively monitor these. If you would like to request these for an existing marked crosswalk, please contact us:
 - Directly, to the City Traffic Engineer (kdedinsky@shorelinewa.gov)

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- By Phone to (206) 949-5182
- Online webform: <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/services/submit-a-service-request>

21. If a block of neighbors wants to pay for a sidewalk, can they?

- Yes. Local Improvement Districts are a mechanism for this – see: <https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/facilities/districts/local-improvement-districts> for context, and Shoreline’s code specifically at: <https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Shoreline/#!/html/Shoreline03/Shoreline0340.html>

22. Are there plans to re-evaluate (new traffic counts, etc.) the 188th cut-through between 19th and 10th?

- Yes, coming soon via a Sound Transit study. I’m not sure how the outcomes will be shared yet – perhaps via Currents, email distribution list associated with Sound Transit or other mechanisms. We should have more info by September – stay tuned.

23. Now that the light rail is here, much more traffic is being routed through and the road has no painted lines or safe shoulders for folks who walk there, including down to the school bus stop at the corner of 188th and 10th.

- Similar to the response on question 10, we will be considering parking restrictions where that makes sense to facilitate pedestrian use of the shoulder as we work through the post-light rail station opening study with Sound Transit. I’m not certain where the school bus stop at NE 188th Street - assuming it is on the NE corner, does the following image reflect the “painted lines” of interest (to better delineate the corners)? Please reach out via email and let me know specifically where the stop is and if this kind of edge line striping is what you are interested in. For context, we generally don’t paint edge lines around the corner when there is no striping on the side street, and it is not always advisable to put edge line striping on local streets as it can be a visual invitation to drivers (who may assume/interpret the street as an arterial to do the lines) to use the street, and to drive faster than they should as the lines clearly delineate the roadway for cars. But we can consider it in certain contexts, like better delineating the shoulder space for school bus stops.

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