



Military Road South Improvements

Open House Public Comment Summary

February 10, 2005, 6pm to 8pm

Overview

The first City of SeaTac open house for the Military Road South Improvement Project was held on February 10th, 2005, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at SeaTac City Hall. Stations were set up in the Council Chambers to present background information and depict various options for improvements along Military Road South between South 176th Street and South 188th Street. The intent of the open house was to solicit the public's opinion on specific topics presented at the following stations: (1) Introduction, (2) Landscaping and Design, (3) Streets and Sidewalks, (4) Utilities, (5) School Access and (6) Next Steps. Project team members staffed each station to answer questions and describe project alternatives.

Handouts included a comment form, a summary of key issues and recommendations, and information about utility relocation. Public input was gathered through discussions with project team members, e-mails sent directly to Susan Sanderson (SeaTac's project manager), and on comment forms (either completed at the meeting or mailed at a later date). Approximately 16 comment forms and one email were collected.

There were 36 members of the public in attendance. Members of the project team in attendance included:

- ◆ City of SeaTac: Susan Sanderson, Tom Gut, Hans Knudsen, Florendo Cabudol, and Paul Slusser
- ◆ Puget Sound Energy: Doug Corbin
- ◆ Highline Water District: Tom Keown
- ◆ Pertect: Ross Heller, Sanjeev Tandle, Bryan Tuey, Weston Ott, Sam Anderson
- ◆ EnviroIssues: Sarah Brandt and Kathlyn Kocher.

General Summary

The following concerns and preferences were raised during the open house, and are organized according to the questions that were listed on the public comment form. This list is not all-inclusive, but attempts to capture the key points heard repeatedly from the public.

*Would you prefer to have grouped, locked **mailboxes** rather than the existing single mailboxes (even if you had to walk a little further to get your mail)?*

By a slight majority (7 vs. 5), residents preferred not to have grouped mailboxes.

What kind of **public amenities** would you like us to include as part of this project (e.g., landscaping, lighting, street trees, crosswalks, etc.)? Please be as specific as possible.

Meeting attendees most liked the opportunity this project offers to improve safety and beautify the neighborhood by including sidewalks, two-way left turn lanes, well-marked crosswalks, landscaping, streetlights, bike lanes, and plantings.

Where would **sidewalks and a pedestrian connection** to Valley Ridge Park be most useful?

Of the three pedestrian connection options to Valley Ridge Park, there was consensus that modifying the existing bridge and creating a new pedestrian bridge would be the best alternative. However, project staff talked to many open house attendees who liked the other two trail options and understood the bridge option might be too expensive.

Have you noticed **flooding problems** along or near Military Road South in this area? If so, where? Please be as specific as possible.

Most residents have not witnessed flooding, but two potential problem areas were identified between 172nd and 175th Street on the west side of the road, and at 186th Street near Military Road South.

Which of the three options to improve **access to Seattle Christian School** do you prefer? Why?

Of the three options to improve access to Seattle Christian School, most preferred option one (installing a light at 182nd and opening the school exit onto that street). Option three, installing a light at the school driveway was a close second, and residents who lived near 182nd Street commented that they would be impacted adversely by the other two options. No members of the public favored option two (installing a light at 182nd Street, allowing u-turns at the intersection, and limiting school access on Military Road South to right-in/right-out). The traffic congestion around Seattle Christian School has been a major issue and eight residents have signed up to participate in a separate focus group.

What I **like most** about this project:

- **Neighborhood beautification:** Most residents expressed excitement about the opportunity to beautify the project area and enhance the street's "neighborhood feel."
- **Safety improvements:** Residents in the project area often identified safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists, felt greatly affected by the increased traffic volumes along Military Road, and encouraged including two-way left-turn lanes, sidewalks, and bike lanes.

*I am **most concerned about:***

- **Safety:** See bullet above.
- **Increasing traffic volumes and cut-through traffic:** Many residents were concerned about traffic using side streets (182nd Street and 51st Avenue S.) to bypass Military Road, and the increasing number of large, heavy vehicles using Military Road.
- **Property Impacts:** Many residents were concerned about potential impacts to their property, landscaping, and driveway access as a result of the project.
- **Bus Route Impacts:** The Highline School District notes that the Military Road Project and the church's project on 42nd Avenue and S. 188th Street are scheduled to occur at the same time and will impact the Highline bus routes.

*Do you have any **additional questions,** suggestions, or concerns?*

- Several questions were raised in the comment forms on many topics, including construction schedule and impacts, private property impacts, project costs, utility impacts and costs, and design particulars

Attachment 1. Public Input

The following section includes comments captured verbatim on comment forms returned at the open house and by mail, emails sent to the project manager, and observations by project team members who attended the open house. Responses to questions on the comment form are roughly grouped by topic. Numbers in parentheses (#) indicate the number of people responding similarly to the same question.

Landscape & Design

Would you prefer to have grouped, locked mailboxes rather than the existing single mailboxes (even if you had to walk a little further to get your mail)?

- Yes (5)
- No (7), with one person adding: I've spent many hours keeping 3 mailboxes looking good over the years

What kind of public amenities would you like us to include as part of this project (e.g., landscaping, lighting, street trees, crosswalks, etc.)? Please be as specific as possible.

- I want to include that I want sidewalks on Military – A bike lane is great
- Landscaping – looks well year round
- If we're going to do it ... let's make it look good. Landscaping, lighting and street trees
- Landscaping, lighting and street trees would make it very pleasant and attractive
- I would want adequate street lighting
- 1. Sidewalks, 2. Street Light, 3. Two way left turn lanes, 4. crosswalks
- I spent a considerable amount of time, money and effort to put in some bushes in my front yard and to make the front look nice. I would expect that it would be undamaged or replaced with the exact size and style of shrub if damaged. I also spend money on decorative rocks and would hope the same would apply to those
- Two way left-turn, bicycle lanes, signs at intersections reminding people not to block side streets when traffic is stopped; i.e. traffic backed up from lights at 188th.
- Sidewalks, 2 way left turn lane, lighting and lighted crosswalks
- 1. Night time lighting and marked crosswalks
2. Landscaping
- Yes, landscaping, lighting, street trees, crosswalks wherever possible and proper.
- Lighting and crosswalks are important, but landscaping should be limited to minimum maintenance requirements.
- Nice (colored) block for retaining wall. Quaint lighting and trees would be nice.
- All of the above. Landscape to enhance neighborhood feel and slow traffic. Crosswalk at school, 182nd St. Sidewalks, walkways or paths to promote walking. Devices to slow traffic yet permit flow safely. Promote neighborhood concept.

Streets and Sidewalks

Where would sidewalks and a pedestrian connection to Valley Ridge Park be most useful?

- Walking along Military Road is dangerous because there are no sidewalks (except just at Valley View Elementary School), cars often exceed the speed limit and cars often do not stop at marked crosswalks with people waiting. I drive my son to Valley View Elementary every day even though we could walk. I have personally waited at the crosswalk at S 182nd and Military many, many times waiting for a car to stop, then worry if some speeding car will decide to go around the stopped car to bypass on the shoulder to hit us. Cars often bypass on the shoulder at the crosswalk at S 170th as well! As my children get older I'm sure (despite what their mother wants) they will want to independently cross Military Road to go to school, ride bikes and play with friends.
- A path from 186th is a good idea, but I don't know if you need sidewalks. But I would like a sidewalk all the way down Military Road
- Option 1: modify existing bridge/new pedestrian bridge
- Option 1
- Of the 3 options, I prefer option 1, modifying the existing bridge so that there is access from the city hall continuing on Military Road
- I prefer pedestrian sidewalks over the ridge
- There is already access, so I would say it doesn't need to change there. The problem here is that there is not a safe way to cross the bridge to city hall (on foot)
- Sidewalk across bridge allowing access to bus stop, city hall, and valley ridge would be best
- Over the bridge – pedestrian sidewalk (option 1)
- I like Option 1, sidewalk and pedestrian bridge to city hall and S. 188th, opposed to option 3
- At least add a pedestrian/bicycle bridge parallel to the bridge over I-5. This will also join the sidewalk leading to Orilla Rd. Very necessary!
- Install sidewalk from the northwest corner of the bridge to 188th for pedestrian safety and access to the park and transit system
- Option 1: no, too expansive. Better bargain combine 2 and 3, promote pedestrian usage, access and neighborhood – this has a lot of merit in my view.

Utilities

Have you noticed flooding problems along or near Military Road South in this area? If so, where? Please be as specific as possible.

- In the 172nd to 175th streets on West Side (2)
- Flooding occurs at 186th and Military from the stop sign to the center line on Military. The storm drains were not installed in the correct places.

- Runoff down the street over the damaged ridges
- Don't recall, but will pay closer attention.
- No (6)

School Access

Which of the three options to improve access to Seattle Christian School do you prefer? Why?

- I prefer option 1, Open the back driveway because traffic would not back up on military. Do not do option 3
- Option 1 makes the most sense. Option No. 2 is asking for trouble with a U-Turn (too close quarters with traffic on 182nd)
- Suggestion 1 since there are back-ups during morning and afternoon times
- Option 1, with stoplight 182nd
- I prefer option 1 at school. Will also assist east and west traffic on S. 182nd St. (Lots of accidents here. NOW).
- Option 1! Options 2 and 3 are not complete improvements for Military Rd S. U-turn can be unsafe. School driveway signal creates congestion.
- Option #1, never felt Military should have been used, as it created too much congestion.
- I would like to see a traffic light, speed bumps, and a 25mph speed limit sign at S 182nd. A blinking yellow light at the crosswalk at S 179th and Military that will turn to a solid red after a pedestrian presses a button
- Option 3. I live at 18047 Military Road So. Traffic will back up in front of my house with options 1 and 2
- Option 3
- Prefer stoplight at the school intersection (option 3).
- Install a signal at the school driveway (timed). Left turns on 182nd at the 182nd street entrance, would be an extreme traffic hazard.
- Option 3 – Traffic light in front of school. Light benefits Seattle Christian School users; option 2: residents there assume the liability of increased traffic, safety, change/impact to their neighborhood, increased lighting, aesthetic impacts. Designate a cross walk at 182nd. Allow traffic to also exit school on 182nd.
- I'd like to see the speed limit reduced on Military up to S. 164th to 30mph because of the many schools (Seattle Christian, Bow Lake, Valley View, McMicken Heights, etc) and residences
- I'd like to see the road widening removed at the crosswalks to prevent cars from passing cars that may be stopped for pedestrians (especially at S 182nd and at S 170th)
- None. It needs to be circular in one way out another. Left turn lane down past 182nd, light at 182nd to blink in non peak hours. No stupid U-turn at 182nd. Speed Limit signs added on 182nd (We already have speeders) and free right on red 182nd to S. Military Rd.

- Depends on how the proposed signal is programmed. There needs to be adequate room for the amount of cars at school time to fit into the [queue?] if option #1 is to be used.

What I like most about this project:

- That it should look better and improve the value of the neighborhood.
- The beautification of the neighborhood. It really makes it more of a neighborhood. Thanks.
- Sidewalks will make it much safer for pedestrian traffic plus enhance the look of our neighborhood
- Putting in the middle turn lane on Military is a very good idea. It should run from Safeway intersection all the way to 188th intersection.
- I enjoy walking in the neighborhood and safety is always a concern
- Sidewalks and street lights
- Hopefully the smoother flow of traffic on Military and possibility the ability to cross the bridge to the bus stop without taking my life in my own hands.
- Sidewalks will provide greater pedestrian safety
- 2-way left turn lane will ease congestion.
- Two way left turns down middle of history road. Will expedite North and South traffic and prevent back up.
- Two way left turn lanes and the separate pedestrian bridge over I-5 to allow joining to Orilla Road, of course to 188th St. Bicycle lanes can reduce car traffic, especially in good weather when people want to ride their bicycles. Less pollution too.
- Added Curbs
- Power lines under ground, left turn lane, sidewalks
- Safety improvement, potential for real improvement of neighborhood feel, improved traffic flow, aesthetics, make area more pedestrian/ non motor friendly. Would help make area more cohesive neighborhood rather than poor schmuck drive through area. Need left turn lanes, landscaping, speed read out signs and other ideas shown at open house have much merit.

I am most concerned about:

- I have concerns that the amount of traffic on Military has increased. Delivery trucks from the airport (Fed Ex, UPS etc) and Semi Trucks come down Military several times daily. It seems to me Military is now an arterial and needs more traffic.
- Cars often zip around the corner from northbound Military to eastbound S 182nd St (in front of my house) then speed down the hill to turn left onto 51st Ave S (a short cut to S 178th)
- Cars do not stop at the crosswalks at 182nd, 179th, 170th! They do stop at 176th because there is a light
- Don't cause backups on 182nd just to get them off Military. The school was supposed to go around up to 42nd to 182nd and then south on Military

- 1. Damage to my property to accomplish goal and 2. Traffic backing up in front of my house
- Damage to the ivy along the front of our property along with the split cedar fencing and plans
- Possible damage to landscaping along our driveway to hook up power
- Traffic going and coming on 176th street down to shopping area in the valley. Bridge is too narrow for additional lanes, so slow the traffic down.
- The safety of walking across the bridge that goes over the freeway exit.
- The Military Road Project occurs at the same approximate time as the church's project on 42nd Avenue South at S 188th Street. Because of the timing, the combination of both projects negatively impact the school bus transportation around both Tyee High School and Chinook Middle School, besides some impact on Bow Lake Elementary. There are between 15 and 20 Highline buses at these schools. There are additionally up to 6 school buses from other school districts transporting students to and from these three schools. PLEASE allow school buses through the construction areas with first priority, as you have done in the past.
- Need sidewalks and more street lights
- Tearing out my landscaping I spent so much time and money on. "Pulling out" access from my driveway. There is no way to pull out once the project is completed (Safely). Doing the project right and not having to come back and redo or modify things later on.
- Creating more foot and car traffic on 186th. Currently my driveway is used daily by people doing u-turns. We do have transient foot traffic wandering around the neighborhood. 186th from Military up pass my house has become very worn from semi's, buses and other large and heavy vehicles pulling up and then attempting to make a U-Turn.
- Accidents involving pedestrians
- The use of Military Road S. as a truck route and an alternate to I-5 during rush hours. This section of the road is perhaps one of few major streets that is surrounded only by residential homes. No businesses. It should remain that way, quite and uncongested.
- Driveway Access
- Water Run off
- The looks of the retaining wall on the front property line of my home.
- Increased traffic on 182nd St, impacts to residents there with increased traffic, safety associated with it, loss of privacy, light at 182nd will encourage more traffic there in an area that is more residential and will increase traffic to adjoining residential streets. Military road is geared for traffic, 182nd isn't. It changes that neighborhood and could adversely affect it and our property values.

Do you have any additional questions, suggestions, or concerns?

- I think the light in front of the school will provide the safest solution, allowing safe entry and exit from the school, as well as safety for those traveling on Military. Another solution to traffic flow at SCS would be to open the gate on 186th from 3 to 3:30 each day for Southbound elementary parents only.

- What hours will the road crews be working? You might need to increase the length of time on green for MLT and 188th
- Getting job done on a timely basis with minimal damage to existing landscape and driveway
- We look forward to this improvement
- How much is this going to cost me
- What will the daily construction schedule be?
- Where will left turn lanes be constructed? Which streets?
- Will sidewalks be continuous, including going over the S. 188th off-ramp?
- Where will new crosswalks be placed and will they be lighted?
- How much of my property will be used, how far in from the existing street?
- What will happen to drainage ditch in front of my yard?
- Will any changes be made to my driveway from the street?
- Will I need to relocate my mailbox? If so, who pays for this?
- What utilities will be affected and where underground will they be placed?
- Will power or other utilities be interrupted for any length of time?
- I'm on septic tank. Will sewer lines be available and at what cost?
- Will trees on my property be removed if they are too near the proposed sidewalk?
- During construction, will I be able to use my driveway? If not, where will I need to park?
- Are there plans to do this same sort of construction on Military Rd between 164th and 176th?
- The speeds of the road currently allow for 15 over speed limit (50mph). I would like to see this greatly reduced to say only 5 mph over the limit (40mph).
- Financial concerns to myself regarding utilities going underground and the connection from the street to my house
- I would like to be part of any group of homeowners (if a group is to be formed) to review projects and give input as this project proceeds.
- I am in favor of this project and hope there will be another phase to deal with 164th to 176th.
- In addition to the pedestrian bridge over I-5, also build a trail connection to Valley Ridge Park. Remember, this project will impact the neighborhood for the next 15-20 years or more. Do your best! Employ vision, initial high cost may be wiser in the long run.
- Add left turn lanes at 179th and 182nd north bound. Reduce speed at 179th to 30mph.
- I would like to be able to talk with someone and give my personal input concerning my property.
- To open up more traffic options unless this creates too much traffic on 182nd. Use light only during school unless clearly shown that it is needed more often. School should share in cost – it benefits them, they need to support and do their role to be good neighbors. Thanks for your efforts to seek neighborhood comment/input.