

Georgetown to Downtown Safety Project

60% Design Virtual Public Meeting—Questions and Answers

July 2023

1. How will cyclists be protected from trucks crossing the bike lane to enter and exit driveways?

At each driveway, we will use durable green paint to let people biking and driving know to look out for each other. At some of the busier driveways, we will also add new signage to further improve visibility and predictable vehicle movements. We are working with all the businesses along the project route to discover the best driveway solutions for each.

2. Will interim materials on 6th Ave S between S Spokane St and S Forest St be placed before other segments of construction for this project? Will these interim materials be replaced by concrete in the future?

Sound Transit and Seattle City Light need to do construction on 6th Ave S shortly after our project is completed. We don't know what their construction plans are, so we will use interim materials, including paint and flex posts, that are easier and less costly to remove if needed. Once Sound Transit and Seattle City Light complete this construction, they will likely replace the interim materials with concrete barriers between the bike lane and the street on 6th Ave S between S Spokane St and S Forest St.

Construction of the Georgetown to Downtown Safety Project will take place in 2024, and construction of the Sound Transit and Seattle City Light project will occur from 2025 to 2026.

3. How does SDOT plan to keep cyclists safe when biking south of this route, where there are gaps in protected bike lanes?

Since 30% design, we have added a receiving lane which allows more space between vehicles and cars. At the S Lucille St intersection, cyclists will cross the intersection using a bicycle crossing signal with a short leading bicycle interval, which allows cyclists to begin crossing the intersection a few seconds ahead of people driving and creates more space between vehicles and bikes.

We recognize that there will be a gap between the Georgetown to Downtown Safety Project and the Georgetown to South Park Connection and we plan to fill this gap as soon as possible. The area between the two projects goes directly through the heart of a commercial district, so finding the best option for this area will require a higher level of outreach with businesses, cyclists, and community members than we would have been

able to provide if combined with either of these projects. We are considering a couple of different options to fill this gap in projects during the next round of transportation funding.

4. Will this project provide an alternative route for cyclists while the SoDo Trail is closed for several years as part of the West Seattle-Ballard Link Extension construction work?

Sound Transit will be required to provide a trail detour, so we do not plan to provide one as part of this project. While we do not know when their project will begin construction, we will work with Sound Transit to design a detour route when the time comes.

5. How does the design safely separate cyclists in the bike lanes from vehicles at conflict points like the right-turn slip lane from 6th Ave S onto S Spokane St?

There are some changes to the design at this intersection since 30% design. Now bikes will move onto the sidewalk, where they will have their own crossing signal to protect them. At this turn, vehicles will now be required to stop to help make the crossing safer for people biking, walking, and driving.

6. Please describe the changes at S Forest St according to the 60% design plans.

Right now, the SoDo trail ends at S Forest St, and people have to travel through S Forest St without a designated biking area to get to Airport Way S. This area is a main loading dock for the two businesses on this road, so this gap between the SoDo trail and the adjacent route it is not safe for people biking, walking, or operating vehicles.

To fix this, we are proposing a short extension of the SoDo trail which connects the trail to the pavement in front of Franz Bakery just east of the loading dock. There will be additional signage, pavement icons for wayfinding, and a six-foot buffer between Franz Bakery and the trail.

7. Can you explain SDOT's plans to connect the northern segment of this route to downtown?

We are working with another project to connect the north end of the SoDo trail to the start of the downtown protected bike lane network at 6th Ave S and S Dearborn St. This will include short, protected bike lane upgrades for both Seattle Blvd S and 6th Ave S.

8. What have you heard from the businesses in this industrial area?

Most of the local stakeholders and business owners we have engaged with have been supportive of this project. Their main concern is safety and access of truck drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. We have been able to address many of these concerns, and we are continuing to work with individual businesses to create design plans that improve

safety for everyone without disrupting access to business loading docks and freight areas.

9. Why did you choose to change from a two-way protected bike lane to one-way protected bike lanes north of Industrial Way S?

Two-way protected bike lanes can make it more difficult for people driving to see bicycles as they turn into and out of driveways. The transition from a two-way bike lane to one-way bike lanes happens at S Nevada St because there are many more driveways north of S Nevada St than there are to the south.

10. Will additional lighting be installed?

The lighting analysis we conducted shows that the current lighting meets our Vision Zero safety standards. As of 60% design, the entire route will be street-level, so the existing street lighting will provide sufficient lighting to the new route.

If you continue to see the need for additional lighting in a particular section of the route, please message the project inbox with details.

11. Regarding the SoDo trail extension on S Forest St, will the path be paved asphalt like other multi-use trails, or will it be more like a sidewalk that both cyclists and pedestrians will use?

The SoDo Trail extension on S Forest St will be an asphalt path that all people walking, biking, and rolling can use.

12. Does the project offer any improvements to east-west connections, like to the West Seattle Bridge or the Lander Bridge?

At this time, the project is limited to the north-south route. Outside of this project, SDOT and other organizations are looking into ways to help make these east-west connections in SoDo.

13. How will SDOT address truck parking along 6th Ave S?

There is not enough room on this section of 6th Ave S to install a bike lane while preserving the trees, two lanes of parking, and two vehicle travel lanes. We are leaning towards removing one lane of parking to accommodate these changes. We know that this may be difficult for truck drivers, so we are looking into nearby areas that can be added as new parking for trucks.

14. Why is this project called the Georgetown to Downtown Safety Project when it only connects the northernmost area of Georgetown to north SoDo?

With a strict time-limit to complete this project in 2024, we were not able to include Central Georgetown in the route. This route will connect the north side of Georgetown into downtown Seattle, and link directly with the downtown protected bike lane network. The Georgetown to South Park Connection Project is on a similar timeline, so after these projects, we plan to link the two routes through Georgetown.

This will be quite costly and time-consuming, carrying significant community impacts and significant community benefits, so we will need to be engaging very deeply with business owners and stakeholders in the area. We will also need to make significant changes to existing traffic signals and install permanent, high-quality concrete treatments, which is not possible in the time frame of our current project funding.