

HIGHLAND PARK WAY SW AND SW HOLDEN ST

Intersection Improvements

May 2019

BACKGROUND

Highland Park Way SW is one of the major north-south routes into and out of West Seattle, providing access to SR 99, SR 509, I-5, and the Duwamish Trail. The intersection currently serves more than 22,000 drivers and 1,400 transit riders daily along with pedestrians and bicyclists. The intersection is currently controlled on SW Holden Street via a stop sign while there are currently no traffic controls on Highland Park Way.

In late 2018, we made some near-term improvements by updating the channelization with new painted areas to narrow vehicular lanes, remarked turn arrows and stop bars, and new yield and advance lane configuration signs.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

People using this intersection are confronted with several challenges. Sight lines, while currently acceptable, are constrained by the 11% uphill grade approaching the intersection. This makes left turns from SW Holden St to Highland Park Way challenging when vehicular traffic is heavy during peak hours. During morning peak hour traffic, there is more demand than capacity for vehicular traffic. The demand is significant enough to cause eastbound traffic on SW Holden St to divert to non-arterial streets which creates safety issues in the neighborhood. The intersection also lacks standard pedestrian facilities like sidewalks and curb ramps.

Since 2013, the Highland Park community has made proposals for improvements at this intersection. We have been working with the Highland Park Action Committee to develop two conceptual designs for the intersection (traffic signal and roundabout).

DESIGN CONCEPTS

An improvement for Highland Park Way & SW Holden Street is not fully funded at this time.

Two concepts have been considered at this intersection. Concept A is a new roundabout, which will require grading on the north approach, so vehicular traffic can circulate on level grade. Concept B is a new traffic signal, which includes new sidewalks and marked crosswalks.

Since 2016, SDOT has applied for state grants three times without success.

Current funding

\$500,000 of Levy to Move Seattle funds were set aside for early design, grant matching, and near-term intersection changes (implemented late 2018). Currently, \$350,000 remains for this project.

Next steps

A proposal was submitted by the community to be considered for the Neighborhood Street Fund (NSF). Projects to be selected will be announced August 2019. NSF may provide up to \$1 million towards an intersection improvement.

SDOT has been involved with the community about improvements at this intersection since 2013. This location is still important as SDOT continues to pursue grant funding.



Seattle
Department of
Transportation

CONCEPTS

Both concepts address the primary crash pattern at this intersection – northbound left vehicles turning against southbound vehicles going straight.

Roundabout concept



\$7.3 million (cost estimate updated based on latest 2019 design)

Benefits

- Improved traffic flow (compared to traffic signal)
- Slows vehicles down to 20-25 MPH at the intersection
- Provides visual gateway into West Seattle

Considerations

- Higher cost due to additional roadway grading needed on north approach (traffic circulating within roundabout should be on level grade)
- Current funding ability makes this concept a long-term solution

Traffic Signal concept



\$3 million (estimated cost)

Benefits

- Lower cost and current funding ability make this concept more constructible in the near-term
- New marked crosswalks
- Provides dedicated time for people driving, walking/rolling, or biking through intersection

Considerations

- New traffic signal may increase vehicle delays
- More pedestrian and vehicle conflict points (compared to a roundabout)