Summary of Open House 2 – SR 522 (Ballinger Way)

**Meeting Details**

November 14, 6 - 8 pm

​Lake Forest Park City Hall Council Chambers

17425 Ballinger Way NE

**Meeting Purpose**

The purpose of the second public Open House was to hear community feedback on

* Access control and cross-section options for SR 522;
* Potential changes to the 522/145th intersection;
* Non-motorized access improvements for SR 522; and
* The project’s public process, schedule, and Guiding Principles.

**Attendees**

The event was attended by 71 members of the public and staffed by the following members of the Project Team:

Kendra Breiland – Fehr & Peers
Chris Grgich – Fehr & Peers
Neil Jensen – City of Lake Forest Park
Carmen Kwan – Fehr & Peers
Rebecca Fornaby – 3 Square Blocks

Pete Rose – City of Lake Forest Park

Amanda Ruksznis – Perteet

Sarah Saviskas – Fehr & Peers

Marcia Wagoner – 3 Square Blocks
Cory Roche – City of Lake Forest Park
Daniel Dye – Fehr & Peers

**Agenda**

6:00 pm Open House

6:15 pm Presentation 1

6:45 pm Presentation 2

7:15 pm Presentation 3

8:00 PM Adjourn

**Project Background**

In 2016, the Lake Forest Park City Council adopted a Strategic Plan that identified the need to proactively plan the SR 522 and SR 104 corridors to improve safety and community mobility. In November 2016, Lake Forest Park and regional voters passed Sound Transit 3, a $54 billion package to expand transit in the Puget Sound region through 2041. Sound Transit 3 includes funding to improve SR 522 to accommodate planned bus rapid transit (BRT) service by 2024.

The Safe Highways Study is a product of the City’s 2016 Strategic Plan. The Study is documenting preferred cross-sections and treatments along the SR 522 and SR 104 corridors. It is the City’s intention that this Study’s recommendations will

* Be informative to Sound Transit in the planning of the SR 522 corridor;
* Aid in the identification of non-BRT improvements requiring regional investment; and
* Provide a starting point for regional investment along SR 104.

**Presentation**

After Mayor Jeff Johnson welcomed attendees to the Open House, Fehr & Peers gave a brief presentation on the SR 522 corridor. The presentation provided attendees an overview of

* The Safe Highways Study, which is a comprehensive corridor study striving to create complete connections for all modes of transportation through an implementable and community-supported plan;
* Materials on display at the Open House, including preferred cross-section concepts, an SR 522/145th Street intersection concept, and non-motorized access improvements (available on the lfpsafehighways.com Project Files page);
* Sound Transit 3 Regional Transit System Plan as it relates to SR 522;
* Key findings from stakeholder interviews (including business groups, residents, and interest groups) conducted at the outset of the project (available on the lfpsafehighways.com Project Files page);
* SR 522 Guiding Principles (available on the lfpsafehighways.com Project Files page);
* Planning Context Report (available on the lfpsafehighways.com Project Files page);
* Existing conditions along SR 522; and
* Project schedule.

**Public Comment Summary**

Attendees were provided a comment form with discrete sections for providing feedback on four topics that corresponded with the Open House exhibit stations: the overall project, non-motorized access improvements, the 522/145th intersection, and the SR 522 corridor cross-section concepts.

A total of 27 comment forms were collected.

## Cross-section concepts presented:

* Concept 1: Turn lane + Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes + buffered sidewalks on both sides (96-100’ wide)
* Concept 2: 8’ median + BAT lanes + buffered sidewalks on both sides (92-96’ wide)
* Concept 3: 4’ median + BAT lanes + buffered sidewalks on both sides (88-94’ wide)

In addition a fourth sub-option, which considers option 3, but with removal of the BAT lane on one side was considered. This option would be 76-82’ wide, but would be inconsistent with the representative project approved by regional voters.

Extensive public input was provided by Sheridan Beach members, which included:

* Do not need sidewalks on both sides of the street. Between 39th and Vet hospital, want it on east/lakeside only
* Desire to maintain two-way-left-turn lane access wherever possible
* Consideration of noise levels/sound mitigation
* Desire to reduce speed limit on SR 522 to 35 miles per hour (MPH)

Other input received:

* Do not include two-way-left-turn lane as it is dangerous and serves a limited number of residences
* No sidewalks at all – DANGER, NOISE
* Would like to see better sidewalks between the Vet and the Town Center
* No changes should be a choice
* Build a lid over SR 522 with a park on top!
* Separate through traffic from local traffic – tunnels and/or flyover lanes?
* Bus Queue Jump vs BAT Lanes - Consider bus queue jump on SR 522 instead of completing BAT lanes.
* Close access to SR 522 from 47th Avenue NE – too dangerous
* Cross-sections should be low impact development (LID) –draining to center with vegetated medians and using pervious pavements for sidewalks
* No need for lakeside sidewalk immediately west of SR 104, since the Burke Gilman trial serves as a reasonable alternative and there is no business access.
* Desire to maintain parking & access over medians
* Trees in medians should be applied with caution – sight distance for vehicles & also concerns about maintenance and visual blight
* Sidewalks on the westside of the street would be utilized by people who don’t have a car
* Concern about safety for drivers entering SR 522 from 38th Avenue and 39th Avenue– danger merging across BAT lanes, bad sight distance
* Ensure sidewalk is provided on at least one side of road for entire stretch, provide pedestrian crossings at < ¼ mile spacing
* For the 80 foot section, providing one sidewalk is most important, followed by completion of the BAT lanes, followed by providing sidewalks & trees on both sides

**In response to the above feedback,** Fehr & Peers is looking at ways to update the proposed cross-sections to minimize right-of-way requirements, while ensuring safety and ADA access. Clearly, the community has diverse desires for the corridor (ranging from no changes to building a lid over the corridor with a park on top), so final recommendations will combine our best interpretation of community desires with professional judgement of what is needed along the corridor and meets the spirit of what voters passed with ST3. Locations where the public has requested sound mitigation will also be highlighted. Traffic operations within the corridor are also a major consideration.

## 145th Intersection option presented:

At the 11/14 meeting, Fehr & Peers presented an option that showed modifications to the 145th intersection with SR 522 to include an additional eastbound left turn lane, as well as modifications to the bus stop locations and conversion of the southbound right turn lane to be a shared bus queue jump/right turn pocket.

Input:

* Leave as is – nothing is wrong with it
* Why no options with grade separated solutions?
* Need a dedicated bus lane on 145th all the way to the station
* Move transit stops further to south beyond the 7-11.
* Move bus stops away from the intersection
* Give pedestrians a head start on signals – all-way diagonal crossings?
* Separate bus stops for King County Metro routes (at 7-11) and SR 522 (along 145th)

**In response to the above feedback**, Fehr & Peers has explored three options for this intersection that will be presented at the December 4th public open house:

* **Option 1:** Redesign southbound approach to include the following:
	+ Additional southbound bus only lane between the curb and right turn lane
	+ The additional lane is added so that the SBRT and EBLT can have an overlapping phase and so SBRT traffic will not be blocked by a southbound bus
* **Option 2:** Consolidate the southbound stop south of the intersection and the westbound stop west of the intersection to a near side stop about 100’ north of the intersection
	+ Buses will use the shared bus/right turn lane
* **Option 3:** Shift southbound stop 100’ south of the current location so queues won’t spill back into the intersection

Each of the above options has been evaluated in terms of its ability to improve congestion for cars and transit, pedestrian environment, and cost/right of way needs. These findings will be presented on December 4th.

## Non-Motorized Access Projects:

At the November 14th open house, Fehr & Peers presented 11 potential projects to improve non-motorized access to transit. Participants were asked to place a dot by their favorite three and also suggest additional projects they believed were missing.

Top 5 projects selected by open house attendees:

* Project 3a/b – Pedestrian bridge over SR 522
* Project 2 – Pedestrian paths identified between Town Center and Transit Stops
* Project 4 – Improved NE 170th / SR 522 pedestrian crossing
* Project 5 – Add sidewalk along 37th Ave NE
* Project 6 – Traffic calming along 37th Ave NE

Input:

* Pedestrian bridge over SR 522 needed either at NE 170th Street or Ballenger Way
* I question the basic concept of providing for all modes – what is the cost/benefit
* Consider emergency fire access routes when proposing traffic calming on 37th Avenue NE; some didn’t like the idea of speed bumps on this street
* Be conscientious of sign clutter that can ruin user experience on the trail for Project 10.
* West sidewalk on SR 522 north of NE 165th Street may not be needed. Consider sidewalks on 39th Ave instead.
* Tunnel - Some expressed a desire for a SR 522 tunnel between Brookside and NE 155th St.
* Find and exploit routes that are not along existing routes – look for ways to use undeveloped rights-of-ways for trails connections
* Cyclists at NE 165th Street do not stop. Consider some sort of rumble strip on Burke Gilman Trail approaching stop sign?
* Brookside and 170th Street - Consider revisions to SR 522 at Brookside Boulevard and NE 170th Street. The Fire Department expressed concerns about queueing in front of the Fire Station, which blocks access. Explore changing roads to one-way. (This may be addressed in the Central Subarea Plan/Safe Streets.)
* Do not use access improvements to facilitate transit oriented development (TOD)
* The street by Brookside needs a sidewalk
* Move crosswalks on 165th and 160th Streets to east side (lake side) of SR 522

Proposed New Projects:

* Project 1b - Have an improved bike/pedestrian facility along Brookside Boulevard/44th Avenue NE behind the Town Center as opposed to Project 1 on the west side of SR 104.
* Project 12 – upgrade current extruded curb walking path to sidewalks on Hamlin Road (Brookside Boulevard to 37th Avenue NE)
* Project 13 – formalize existing goat trail connection from 41st Ave to Burke Gilman Trail
* Project 14 – improve walking conditions on 39th Avenue NE from NE 165th Street north to street end / pedestrian trail near Veterinary clinic / gas station.
* Project 15 – improve pedestrian crossing of SR 522 at NE 165th Street. If grade separated crossing is not possible, improve at-grade crossing. Consider enhanced striping, signal timing change
* Project 16 – staircase maintenance and improved lighting at existing stair case near 39th Ave NE southbound bus stop and to NE 165th Street north of 39th Avenue NE.
* Project 17 – South East City Traffic Calming to reduce cut through traffic on 37th Avenue NE to 148th Street to 153rd Street.
* Project 18 – Sidewalk extension on 147th Street east of SR 522.
* Project 19 – On-street parking monitoring program near BRT stations. Consider time limited parking or Residential Permit Zone parking to discourage “hide-and-ride” behavior.
* Project 20 – Pedestrian overpass at NE 165th Street to facilitate the Sheridan Beach Club Community

**In response to the above feedback**, Fehr & Peers will present the top 5 supported non-motorized access projects and the new projects proposed by the community at the December 4th open house and seek further input on preferred investments.

## Where residents want to access SR 522 BRT:

* Most attendees wanted a stop near the Town Center and at NE 165th Street. However, it is likely higher representation of residents near NE 165th Street attended the Open House.
* The stop pair at NE 153rd Street and the stop at 39th Avenue NE were identified as lightly used.

## Other Comments on the Overall Project:

* Want park and ride at 145th or on DejaVu lot rather than town center
* Desire to build two 150-space garages: one at 145th and one at town center
* Why did it take six months to have a public meeting?
* Concern that this project is too focused on safety and not enough on traffic congestion
* Noise and air pollution (dust, diesel) conflicts between buses and single family neighborhoods
* Missing environmental goals about tree canopy maintenance and surface water pollution

**Appendices**

Handout

Comment form
Exhibits