

14th Ave NW Visioning Project

Project Description

1/18/06

Project Area Description

14th Ave NW between the ship canal and 65th Ave NW is a 20 block, 1-mile long, 100' wide right of way consisting of two opposing lanes of traffic separated by a parking median strip with planting strips and sidewalks on either side. It is a regular route for cars, trucks, school busses, bicyclists, joggers and pedestrians. There are two schools, two churches and numerous businesses. North of NW Market there are mostly multifamily apartments and town homes with a small percentage of single-family residences. This stretch is mostly zoned multifamily. South of NW Market are mostly business and commercial type properties (zoned commercial and industrial). The 14th Ave boat launch into the ship canal is at the south end as well. Traffic is moderate to heavy due to this route often being used as an alternative to 15th Ave NW and often travels at unsafe speeds. Larger delivery and construction vehicles frequent the lower half of this roadway serving the many businesses in this area. A loose gravel parking area, about 25' wide, occupies most of the 20 blocks along the length of the entire road. For 5 blocks along this length (2 blocks at the 65th Ave end and 3 at the NW Market end) there is a central planted median with parallel parking. There is also parking on either curb. There are traffic lights at the Leary Way and the NW Market Street intersections (with turning lanes that take up the central meridian area). There are also stop signs at the 3 intersections south of Leary Way. Other than these places there are no other traffic control devices along the length of 14th Ave NW. All streets leading into this thoroughfare are posted with stop signs at the corner and yield signs at the median parking area. There are school crossing signs at 58th (St Alphonsus K-8 Elementary School). Street lighting is highway standard sodium from tall poles. North of Market has a greater density of light standards than South of Market, where the road way is less uniformly lit.

14th Ave NW is an unsafe, unattractive roadway and is a poor use of precious open space. There are frequent accidents at almost all of the intersections due to poor visibility as well as poorly restricted high traffic volumes. Crossing the road, as a pedestrian and or riding a bicycle along 14th Avenue NW is very dangerous due to these unsafe conditions.

The very wide ROW is a poor use of a valuable open space resource. In total it measures approximately 528,000 sq ft or 12 acres. High traffic volumes, noise, dirt, and unsightliness affect the quality of the community in general, equally impacting both residents and businesses. Storm water runoff from the roadway goes directly into the ship canal, increasing contaminants and endangering our valuable local environment.

The gravel parking area and wide paved roadway is very unattractive. Many disabled cars and trucks are parked for long periods in the gravel strip and along the curbs. Vehicles for sale, junk and used furniture, transient camping vans and trash are all too common along this stretch. Highway standard sodium lighting is not residential in character, attractive or even the safest option. The long straight shot down from the high school is unrelentless and offers no relief in view (also encourages higher traffic speeds).

Scope of Work and Project Deliverables

The main focus of this project is to develop an action plan for implementing improvements along 14th Avenue NW between the Lake Washington Ship Canal and NW 65th Street. The consultant will be responsible for organizing the community into a shared vision for the project area and developing that vision into a workable Action Plan. This plan shall be organized into phases (short, medium and long term). An implementation plan shall be provided that includes a conceptual cost plan. Funding mechanisms for the desired goals shall be considered and discussed. An overall site plan of the project area showing 10 and 25 and 100 year overlays will be included. The plan shall include detailed illustrations of key areas for the various elements of the plan such as critical street intersections, parking arrangements, vehicle access, storm water treatment, pedestrian safety, bicycle use, open space, etc. Input by traffic, civil and landscape

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consultants as necessary.

Neighborhood Involvement / Community Building

There is a very strong community group active in this neighborhood. In just the past year there have been a number of community gatherings to promote the ideas for this plan and to solicit support. Meetings have been held at local community centers with residents and businesses, many folks have pledged support hours for volunteer services for all sorts of activities. The Community has been involved in the Sustainable Seattle Indicators project and has documented conditions along 14th. The results of this survey are posted on the Sustainable Seattle web site.

East Ballard Neighborhood page:

http://www.sustainableseattle.org/Programs/SUNI/NeighborhoodPartners/eastballard/document_view

East Ballard Street-Level survey page:

<http://www.sustainableseattle.org/Programs/SUNI/streetlevelsurveys/eastballardsurvey>

To view the East Ballard Results survey directly, it is located also on the bottom of the E. Ballard street-level survey page (above): <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=254891641682>

In addition, the Ballard District Council, Groundswell NW, Sustainable Ballard, Mars Hill Church, St Alphonses Catholic School, Ballard High School and local merchants have been involved in the process of defining this project to date.

Over 80 residents and businesses have pledged volunteer hours to support this project. Those that have signed pledge forms have indicated that they would like to continue to participate in public meetings and discussions in defining the action plan, many would like to help get others involved through outreach efforts to both businesses or residences. Others have offered professional services to aid in reviewing design and aid in planning.

One of the underpinnings of this project is to rekindle and enhance the sense of community in East Ballard by creating a forum for neighbors to get to know and trust each other. The 14th Ave Visioning Project is being set up as a collaborative process that seeks public input and participation at the outset from all community stakeholders. Community members already appreciate that they need to come together behind a unified vision to transform this critical part of this neighborhood. Furthermore, this project is being viewed by many as way to create the much needed open space and community-gathering place for East Ballard. There are no such facilities within the immediate 14th Ave NW neighborhood presently.

Residents and businesses understand that rallying behind a common action plan, builds trust and understanding as participants get to know each other's needs and desires. There is a growing appreciation for developing consensus around a workable solution that will accrue long-term economic, environmental and social benefits to the community. The project's commitment to building community is underscored by its approach to creating its Steering Committee, email list of interested community members, open process and communication, and solicitation for help from the entire community.

Project Schedule / Workplan

Step/Activity	Responsible Person/Group	Date Done
RFP for Urban Planner / Design Consultant	Steering Committee – Technical Advisory Group	January 31, 2006
Applicants conference	Steering Committee – Technical Advisory Group	February 3, 2006
RFP response due to Steering	Applicants	February 13, 2006

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Committee		
Interview applicants	Steering Committee – Technical Advisory Group	February 17, 2006
Award Contract	Steering Committee– Technical Advisory Group	February 24, 2006
Outline Action Plan	SC, UP	March 2006
Hold community meetings (2 or 3 over the course of 6 months, with smaller focus groups dedicated to specific issues)	Urban Planner, – Technical Advisory Group, Community	Various as needed
Prepare draft Action Plan	Urban Planner	May 2006
Review & comment on draft Action Plan	Steering Committee– Technical Advisory Group, community	May 2006
Prepare final Action Plan	Urban Planner	May 2006 – July 2006
Present final Action Plan to community	UP, SC, Comm	July 2006

Budget

\$13,500

Key Stakeholders

All Residents within 2 Blocks of 14th Ave NW
 All Landlords on 14th Ave NW
 All Businesses and Merchants on 14th Ave and those who depend on 14th for access to their
 businesses
 St. Alphonses School
 Ballard High School
 Mars Hill Church
 Seattle Department of Transportation
 Seattle Public Utilities
 Seattle Department of Planning and Design
 Seattle Department of Neighborhoods
 Any utility within the right of way of 14th Ave
 Seattle Maritime Training Center
 BINMIC
 NIMC

Other Stakeholders

Seattle Police Department
 Burlington and Northern Railway
 Salmon Bay Railway (Private Rail Line: Salmon Bay Sand and Gravel)
 Friends of the Burke Gilman Trail
 Cascadia Bicycle Group
 Ballard District Council
 Ballard Chamber of Commerce
 Groundswell NW
 Seattle Marine Business Coalition

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Ballard Historical Society

Professional Community Volunteer Pledges

Architect – 40 hours

Landscape Architect – 40 hours

Urban Planner Volunteer – 10 hours

Ecologist – 10 hours

Water Specialist – 8 hours

Traffic Planner – 8 hours