

# WEST SEATTLE TRANSPORTATION COALITION

July 14, 2019

Lisa Herbold  
City Councilmember District 1  
Sent by Email: [Lisa.Herbold@seattle.gov](mailto:Lisa.Herbold@seattle.gov)



Re: *Rapid Ride H Design and Delridge Way SW Multimodal Corridor Project*

**Dear Councilmember Herbold:**

The West Seattle Transportation Coalition (WSTC) works to address transportation and mobility issues for Seattle's largest constituency – the nearly 100,000 people living on the 10 square miles of the West Seattle Peninsula. As you know from your recent visit with us and your longstanding relationship with our organization, one of WSTC's top legislative priorities has been following the progress of the set of projects to pave and improve Delridge Way SW, develop a more boulevard design and welcome to the community, and prepare for the implementation of a new Metro Rapid Ride bus line through the corridor.

WSTC continues to thank you for your advocacy on these projects and for ensuring on-going communication with the affected communities, check-ins on the design progress, and oversight of the budget and spending to ensure successful outcomes that benefit everyone.

We are writing to you today because community leaders have repeatedly raised concerns about some aspects of the Rapid Ride design progress that continue to be ignored in the public documents or Open House materials presented by SDOT and King County Metro. While we believe these are critical concerns raised by the community for several years now—and through multiple planning processes in this corridor—we believe they are relatively minor issues to address in the design and planning of the project—and should have little to no financial impact on the project budget(s). **We are requesting your help in ensuring that they are adequately looked into by City staff prior to reaching 100% design and project budget approval:**

1. We oppose 24-7 all-day bus lanes between SW Andover St and SW Oregon St;
2. We oppose the consolidation of the existing Route 120 bus stops at SW Brandon St and SW Juneau St into a single stop at SW Findlay St; and
3. We demand that, if consolidation does move forward with a single stop at Findlay or some other location in between the two stops, the new Rapid Ride stop must have a full traffic or pedestrian-activated signal installed with the painted crosswalk and not just a rapid flashing beacon.

**1. We oppose 24-7 all-day bus lanes between SW Andover St and SW Oregon St.**

First a refresher on the history of bus lanes in this section of the corridor. The first call for an officially designated bus lane in this area came not from SDOT but from neighborhood residents and the North Delridge Neighborhood Council. This led to formalizing the unofficial practice of many veteran Metro drivers who would utilize the parking lanes to keep buses moving during peak commute times. As the street is currently designed today, the neighborhood has given up parking on the east side of the street during

morning peak hours and parking *at all times* along the west side of the street for a bike lane. As a result of long time lobbying by neighborhood residents and the North Delridge Neighborhood Council to bring the Route 50 bus line through the area, the neighborhood also voluntarily gave up parking *at all times* along nearby portions of SW Genesee St.

The result has been a *voluntary* loss of a considerable number of on-street parking spaces in this area—the Community Campus or Cultural Junction in the neighborhood plan(s)—which has been absorbed at times on neighboring residential streets. Neighborhood leaders believe that any additional loss will have a significant impact on the community organizations and public and private facilities in this node.

**The WSTC, in support of many neighborhood residents, is not opposed to further expansion of bus lanes in this corridor or the return of options for southbound traveling buses. We are simply opposed to the designation of these lanes for 24/7 or all-day transit use *only*.** Neighborhood leaders have repeatedly requested that parking be preserved for evening and weekend periods when traffic yields do not support the need for transit prioritization. Having this space available at these times (e.g. 7pm-7am on weekdays and all-day on weekends and holidays) will ensure continued access to classes, cultural activities, and major neighborhood events that occur at Youngstown Cultural Arts Center, Delridge Community Center, Delridge Skatepark, and Delridge Athletic Playfields.

**2. We oppose the consolidation of the existing Route 120 bus stops at SW Brandon St and SW Juneau St into a single stop at SW Findlay St.**

As transit advocates and professional transportation engineers, many of us at the WSTC understand the benefits of stop consolidation and the goals of Metro’s Rapid Ride program to maintain a common stop spacing distance along Rapid Ride routes. However, stop consolidation has long been a significant concern for many of the residents in this corridor. It was most recently raised during community conversation to develop the [North Delridge Action Plan](#) with OPCD and other City departments. Some even expressed willingness to pass on Rapid Ride improvements if it meant losing too many of the existing Route 120 bus stops, which provide the ability to travel to and from destinations and recreation centers within the North Delridge neighborhood itself and not just destinations to the north and south.

At SW Brandon St, the existing stop provides close connections to a convenience store, Southwest Early Learning Preschool and the Delridge Branch Public Library. At SW Juneau St, the existing stop provides close connections to a Spanish Immersion Education Center and a corner of the Boren K-8 STEM school (particularly the entrance to the middle school, whose students are more likely to be arriving by bus).

The neighborhood has also repeatedly raised concern to SDOT and King County Metro planners that only identifying the walkshed along Delridge Way SW itself is inadequate, as we know that bus riders walk or bike additional distances to come down from the Puget Ridge and High Point neighborhoods on the east and west sides of the corridor to access the higher frequency Route 120. This ridership demand would be expected to increase along with the additional route frequency that a Rapid Ride upgrade will provide.

While a non-resident might expect preference to be for service to a new bus stop at the current focus of the business node at SW Findlay St in Cottage Grove, there is large truck activity generated at this intersection by food trucks traveling to and from a nearby commissary. There is expected to be increased

vehicle activity and parking on the side streets when the Delridge Grocery Co-op opens in the nearby DESC building. And there have long been safety concerns about criminal activity and loitering in the area around the Super 24 Food Store currently open at this intersection. Reference to neighborhood plans will note that this area is referred to as the *Brandon Junction* or node, which is projected to become the center of a future pedestrian-oriented business area.

**3. We demand that, if consolidation does move forward with a single stop at Findlay or some other location in between the two existing stops, the new Rapid Ride bus stop must have a full traffic or pedestrian-activated signal installed with the painted crosswalk and not just a rapid flashing beacon.**

As advocates for pedestrian safety, and in support of residents' concerns for the safety of families with small children, we are particularly dismayed at the proposal to move a bus stop away from SW Brandon St and its existing traffic signal and crosswalk to a new intersection with only a pedestrian-activated flashing beacon. WSTC views this as a downgrade in service from existing neighborhood amenities.

If a bus stop must be located at SW Findlay St, design and budget consideration should be made to install, at minimum, a pedestrian-activated stoplight to help ensure traffic comes to a stop in this area.

Additionally, we believe further study needs to be made to support safe pedestrian and bicycle access for riders traveling to and from the ridges above Delridge Way SW. If solutions can be identified, we would like to see them as part of the 100% design and final budget approval so that they may be in place *prior* to the Rapid Ride stop consolidation and not coming online at some indeterminate future date afterward.

The WSTC looks forward to working with you, as well as the additional elected, staff, and planners copied below, throughout the progress towards 100% project design status. Together, we are committed to helping King County Metro deliver the elegant solution that will benefit all of the people living, working, and visiting in the Delridge Way SW corridor for many years to come.

In Community,



**Michael Taylor-Judd**  
**Chair, West Seattle Transportation Coalition Board**  
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Cc: WSTC Board  
Seattle City Councilmember Lorena Gonzalez  
Seattle City Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda  
Dan Anderson, SDOT  
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