

WEST SEATTLE TRANSPORTATION COALITION

April 2, 2020

Seattle City Council, 2nd Floor
Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan, 7th Floor
600 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, WA. 98104-3856



Re: West Seattle High Bridge Closure

Greetings Council Members and Mayor Durkan,

On March 23, 2020, SDOT deemed structural conditions unsafe on the West Seattle (Jeanette Williams) high bridge, and closed it. Seattle's DOT only gave the public five hours notice for both this unplanned closure, and for new travel restrictions imposed on the Spokane St. low bridge. While we appreciate SDOT acting to protect public safety, the announcements took West Settle by surprise, and are already creating adverse impacts on our neighborhoods.

The West Seattle Bridge Transportation Corridor (WSBTC) is Seattle's busiest artery outside of I-5, and the main route into and out of West Seattle. The high bridge carries 100,000-110,000 vehicles per day. The low bridge carries 10,000-14,000 per day, and is the Peninsula's sole access to Harbor Island and Terminal-5 activities. The WSBTC also carries 17,000 transit riders a day, plus ferry traffic from Vashon Island & Kitsap County.

The West Seattle Transportation Coalition is a peninsula-wide organization working to address transportation and commuting challenges for the nearly 100,000 people living and working on the West Seattle Peninsula. The high bridge closure and low bridge restrictions have taken West Settle by surprise, and are already creating adverse impacts on neighborhoods.

Thus, the WSTC proposes the following immediate and longer-term actions to help ease strains on mobility for Peninsula workers and residents, including but not limited to:

Immediately –

- create and install re-route plans and detour signage, to move traffic away from the WSBTC, including:
 - . SDOT to manage SODO and the Spokane Street corridor diversions
 - . SDOT to work with WSDOT to manage I-5, SR 99 and SR 509 diversions, and use other statewide notification modes;
 - . SDOT to create individual street plans and detour signage, to reduce or eliminate cut-through traffic impacts on West Seattle neighborhoods
 - . SDOT to install oversized signs to highlight high bridge closure and re-route requirements in key Peninsula centers – Alki, Admiral Junction, Alaska Junction, High Point, Morgan Junction, Fauntleroy Ferry Dock, 35th Ave. SW at Barton, Arbor Heights, Westwood Village, South Delridge, Highland Park, Pigeon Point, North Delridge, and the Junction Triangle.
- install traffic signals at –
 - . SW Holden and 9th Ave. SW-SW Highland Park Way (SDOT completed 03-29)
 - . SW Delridge and 21st Ave. SW, to allow L & R turns onto Delridge, and ease pressure on SW Holden from SW Highland Park Way,
 - . AND improve signal timing and operation on all anticipated detour routes
- allow (1) registered King County Van Pool vehicles and (2) medical staff vehicles to use the low bridge,
- initiate SPD traffic patrols over the low bridge and authorize violation fines;

Longer-term –

- Re-activate appropriate Seattle Squeeze transportations options, as when the general population returns to work, the high bridge will likely still be closed. Options would include, but not be limited to:
 - . Increasing West Seattle Water Taxi service if demand warrants, expanding parking for Water

- Taxi commuters, and coordinating 773/775 with new sailing schedule,
- expanding 773/775 service to Morgan Junction, for the duration of the High Bridge closure;
- adding midday bus service for Admiral area residents, who are most effected by the closure,
- helping coordinate re-routes for commuters from Vashon and Southworth-Kitsap, who drive more than 800,000 vehicles a year through Fauntleroy, and put additional pressure on Fauntleroy Way and the WSBTC.
- Prominently share information on SDOT's and the City of Seattle's main web pages, and add other informational tools that provide regular updates on progress toward bridge repair and re-opening,
- Simultaneously share this information with the *West Seattle Blog*, *Westside Weekly*, and other news outlets.

We thank SDOT for taking prompt action to protect the public from structural failure of the high bridge, and for fast-tracking installation of a traffic signal at the Holden/Highland Park Way SW intersection.

In Community,

Martin Westerman, Vice-Chair

On behalf of The Board

West Seattle Transportation Coalition / info@westseattletc.org

Cc: WSTC Board

Seattle City Councilmembers:

Lisa Herbold, Tammy J. Morales, Kshama Sawant, Andrew J. Lewis,

Teresa Mosqueda, Lorena González, Alex Pedersen, Debora Juarez, Dan Straus

Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan

SDOT Director Sam Zimbabwe

King County Executive Dow Constantine

King County Councilmember Joe McDermott

Washington State Ferries Director Amy Scarton

Washington State Transportation Secretary Roger Millar

West Seattle Blog

Westside Weekly