

Sportsman Club-New Brooklyn Road Intersection Improvements

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the City considering a roundabout at this location?

The City is proposing a roundabout for the Sportsman Club Road-New Brooklyn Road intersection to encourage walking and biking on the Island, increase safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, and reduce traffic congestion in the coming decades.

As recognized by the Federal Highway Administration's Safe Routes to School program, modern roundabouts are one of nine proven safety countermeasures recommended for school zones. The [Safe Routes to School guide](#) states:

This designation is based on research that has shown that roundabouts greatly improve safety compared to traditional intersections...In particular, at locations near schools, consideration should be given to designing bicycle curb ramps and wider sidewalks to accommodate transitions for bicyclists between the roadway and the sidewalk system. Wider sidewalks and crosswalks can help mitigate potential conflicts between pedestrians and bicyclists.

The City's design includes all the recommended accommodations.

The City's design review consultant, Toole Design, shared that roundabouts at school locations are becoming more and more common. The City of Bellevue recently installed a mini roundabout at the Tye Middle School with great success.

What kind of growth is expected around the Sportsman Club Road and New Brooklyn Road intersection in the future?

Up until the early 1990s, this area of the island was fairly rural. However, in the last several decades a significant amount of development has slowly contributed to growth in the surrounding area. That growth started with the development of two adjacent middle schools, Woodward and Sakai, and continued with the development of the residential neighborhood, North Town Woods and the original Coppertop Park light industrial area. Near the outer reaches of the intersection, other significant developments have been constructed, including the Island Church and expansion of the Coppertop development to the north, and the Bainbridge Artisan Resource Network (BARN), Bainbridge Island Fire District Station 21, and Madrona House assisted living facility to the east.

New development is continuing to be planned in the immediate vicinity of the intersection, and along the outer reaches of each corridor in the following areas:

- Southeast corner of the intersection: The City is considering the development of a 60+ unit affordable housing development on the Suzuki property;

- East of the intersection: The City is planning for the re-location of the Police and Court facilities to the former Harrison Medical Center building;
- West of the intersection along the New Brooklyn corridor: The City is facilitating a sub-area plan for the Island Center neighborhood, which will likely include planning for increases in compact residential and commercial development over the next several decades.

Is the intersection unsafe in its present condition?

From 2013 to 2017, City records indicate that there were seven recorded collisions at or related to the Sportsman Club-New Brooklyn intersection. The five-year period included two recorded injuries: one resulting from a left-turn collision due to driver inattention, and the other injury resulting from a driver falling asleep and striking a mailbox and tree near the intersection. One bicycle-related crash occurred at the intersection, between 2013 and 2017, when a left-turning passenger vehicle failed to grant right of way to a bicycle from the opposing direction.

Given the high peak traffic volumes, and the inadequacy of the current facilities at the intersection, undesirable driver and pedestrian behavior is often witnessed through casual observation. For example, during visits to the site in 2018 and 2019, City staff and consultants observed several children exiting vehicles parked on the east shoulder of Sportsman Club Road and crossing to the south school driveway, sometimes without looking for a safe crossing opportunity. Vehicle stacking, and several near-miss accidents, including those with pedestrian and bicyclists, were also recently observed during both school arrival and dismissal periods.

What improvements will be constructed for pedestrians and bicyclists?

The City worked with the project engineering design consultant, Skillings Connolly, and held a half-day charrette with pedestrian and bicycle design experts, Toole Design, to develop the approach to the roundabout. The design is intended to improve and expand facilities and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, improve the flow of traffic throughout the day, and accommodate the intersection's unique volume of large vehicle and truck traffic related to school buses, fire trucks, delivery and construction vehicles:

- On the north, south and west sides of the intersection, 5-foot wide paved shoulders will be added on both sides of the road within the project limits, and the off-road pedestrian trail will be enhanced, widened, and interconnected with the existing facilities;
- On the east side of the intersection, 5-foot wide paved shoulders will be added on both sides of the road within the project limits. New sidewalks will be added, and existing sidewalks will be enhanced and widened;

- On all legs of the intersection, vehicles will be prompted to slow down to the 20-mph roundabout design speed through the creation of a “chicane” or curved approach, and the vehicle lane widths will be reduced to 10-feet wide;
- On all legs of the intersection, the pedestrian sidewalk or trail will be widened to a 10-foot multi-use path with mountable transitions for bicyclists. All legs of the intersection will include 10-foot wide ADA accessible ramps and raised concrete crosswalks with rapid-flashing beacons.

Did the City consider a design alternative that includes fully separated paths for pedestrians and bicyclists?

Yes, the staff heard from some members of the community about the desire to build a roundabout at this location that included fully separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The staff reviewed this concept with design experts from Toole Design, and came to the conclusion that a fully-separated design would not pass a cost-benefit analysis test – the design would require a larger footprint that would add cost and further impact tree and vegetation removal, while not significantly increasing safety for users at this location. The fully separated alternative should continue to be evaluated in other locations on the island where traffic speeds, the volume of non-motorized users, and intensity of surrounding land-uses would dictate the need for different accommodations for all users.

What are the traffic conditions at the intersection today?

The Sportsman Club-New Brooklyn intersection is one of the City’s busier areas, consisting of the crossing of two secondary arterials – the busiest classification of roadway on the island after State Route 305. Sportsman Club Road (north-south), is the busiest leg of the intersection, as the corridor serves the schools and majority of light-industrial uses and serves as a primary route for vehicles traveling to and from SR305 and the south end of the island. In accordance with the Intersection Control Analysis (ICA) report prepared for the roundabout project, Sportsman Club Road carries approximately 6,400 vehicles a day, and New Brooklyn carries approximately 3,200 vehicles a day. Of those vehicles, approximately 240 are trucks or heavy vehicles.

How does the City measure traffic congestion at intersections on the island?

In accordance with the Island-wide Transportation Plan (IWTP), which is part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, the City measures congestion at intersections with a level of service (LOS) analysis that considers the wait-time of approaching vehicles. The recommended LOS for secondary arterials in the Sportsman Club-New Brooklyn area of the island is

identified in the IWTP as being LOS C, which equates to a wait-time of between 15-25 seconds. In accordance with the City's traffic report for the project, the intersection currently performs at an overall LOS B at all times of the day. Without any improvements, in 2035 the intersection is anticipated to perform at an overall LOS D (the analysis uses an annual growth projection of 2.7% per year).

How would an affordable housing development on the Suzuki property impact traffic congestion at the Sportsman Club-New Brooklyn intersection?

According to the traffic study prepared by the City's consultant for the Suzuki property project (which anticipated 91 residential units on the Suzuki property), the intersection would perform at level of service (LOS) A because the report assumes that the City has constructed a roundabout. However, in comparing the traffic analysis in the Suzuki traffic study to the analysis in the City's traffic report, it is clear that if the Suzuki property were to be developed without the roundabout, the intersection would perform at LOS C during the PM peak hour (the hour used to analyze projects for development purposes). Therefore, the developer of the property – if the development scheme was unchanged from that outlined in the report – would not be responsible for any improvements at the intersection because the recommended LOS for secondary arterials in the Sportsman Club-New Brooklyn area, identified in the Island-wide Transportation Plan (IWTP), is LOS C.

Will a roundabout improve traffic congestion during school pickup and drop-off times?

Not necessarily, as intersection performance is difficult to manage during surge events such as school pickup and drop-off times. For example, City staff and community members know from experience that the the High School Road roundabout performs at a less than desired level of service during afternoon school pick-up and drop-off. While the design for the Sportsman Club-New Brooklyn roundabout includes different and more modern features, such as extended separation between the roundabout and pedestrian crossings that will allow for improved safety and traffic flow, it is unrealistic to expect that the intersection will perform at LOS A for vehicles during the peak time (as identified in the City's traffic study)– which is currently between 3:00 p.m. and 3:40 p.m.

Has the school district considered hiring a crossing guard for this location to improve traffic flow?

The Bainbridge Island School District is not against the use of a crossing guard at this location; however, they have identified that crossing guard positions are difficult to fill, and the main purpose of the crossing guards are to ensure safety – not improve traffic flow. Crossing guards could still be considered after the construction of a roundabout.

Will the roundabout add more impervious surface than exists currently?

The proposed roundabout design will result in almost no increase in impervious surfaces, as the design includes landscaping on each leg of the intersection, as well as between pedestrian and vehicular traffic and within the center of the roundabout.

Will construction of the roundabout require the removal of trees?

The need to shift the roundabout to the north and west of the intersection to accommodate westbound right turns requires the removal of up to 36 trees greater than 12 inches in diameter on the north and west sides. The project budget includes funds for planting new trees and vegetation and includes the construction of a retaining wall on the northwest side of the intersection to reduce the impacts on existing trees and vegetation. The location of separated paths will be identified in the field during construction to ensure maximum retention of existing trees.

What is this project going to cost?

The total **cost** of the project, as designed, is expected to be \$2,315,000. If the project moves forward, approximately 60% of the project would be funded by the City and 40% of the project would be funded by grants.

The current project **budget** (in round numbers), is as follows:

Current Budget	\$1,215,000
Traffic Impact Fees	\$358,000
Federal Grant (Design)	\$154,000
Federal Grant (Construction)	\$703,000

The City has spent the following to date:

Expenditures to Date	\$372,000
Traffic Impact Fees	\$218,000
Federal Grant (Design)	\$154,000

The project budget remaining is as follows:

Remaining Balance	\$843,000
Traffic Impact Fees	\$140,000
Federal Grant (Construction)	\$703,000

The project needs the following additional budget for completion:

Additional Funds Required	\$1,100,000
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If the project does not move forward after the City Council discussion on March 3, 2020, the City will be required to repay approximately \$154,000 in grant funds that were used for the initial design phases.

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