

First Hill Streetcar Public Meeting and Comment Overview

December 15, 2009—January 8, 2010

OVERVIEW

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) hosted three community meetings in mid-December, marking the first in a series of community outreach endeavors. With more than 300 people in attendance at these meetings and hundreds of comments garnered from the period of December 15, 2009 through January 8, 2010 SDOT received significant community feedback.

Study of these comments is currently being combined with other important alignment factors including bicycle integration, ridership and economic development potential, possible utility conflicts, streetcar travel time, capital and operating costs, potential traffic and parking revisions and urban design opportunities. Further analysis of these factors will be available at the next set of community meetings, which will be held the second week of February 2010.

A third set of meetings may take place in mid-March to discuss the Mayor's final alignment preference(s), before they are likely presented to the Seattle City Council in April.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

The three December community meetings were hosted at venues directly served by the alignments under consideration for the First Hill Streetcar—Seattle Central Community College, the Yesler Terrace Community Center and Union Station. Meeting notification postcards were mailed to nearly 40,000 residences and businesses in the neighboring communities. In addition, a meeting notification splash page, which was translated into eight languages, rotated on the Seattle Streetcar Web site. Community members had access to translators and stenographers at each of the meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The comments submitted have been overwhelmingly supportive of the development of a First Hill Streetcar line. Of the more than 250 comments received at the three public meetings held in December, through the First Hill Streetcar web site as well as through e-mail and through mail, there were several common themes:

- Consider extending the alignment north to Roy Street.
- Closely evaluate the 11th avenue route and address the impact to Cal Anderson Park.
- Investigate the potential noise impacts.
- Determine the top evaluation criteria—best transit use, residential density, commercial density, traffic impact, etc.
- General preference for two-way street alignments.
- Closely evaluate pedestrian impacts.
- Examine bicycle integration needs closely.
- Take economic development opportunities into consideration, in addition to transit use.
- Evaluate the extension of the line to north Broadway as far as Aloha Street.
- Consider the impact the First Hill Streetcar will have on current transit services and work with King County Metro to coordinate on the routes.

- Evaluate a waterfront streetcar connection.
- Address lack of transit on 12th Avenue.
- Determine what traffic and parking impacts will be on the surrounding area.
- Ensure the streetcar's speed and reliability is consistent, despite higher congestion.

Below is a random sample of comments submitted through January 8, 2010. (Note: the comments have not been edited)

- I believe all the alignments on the table have merit based on different criteria. But to me the purpose and goals of Seattle Streetcar network are unclear and need to be determined before any alignments or studies are completed.
- The Broadway two-way alignment is best. Broadway has as much TOD (or more) potential as 12th.
- The primary purpose of this project is to connect the First Hill urban center to the regional transit system. Any alignment and design alternatives that move away from that purpose should be discarded.
- I think that locating the streetcar lines in the center is the best alignment. Using rubber inserts near intersections will minimize crossing problems.
- Connecting Chinatown ID with Capitol Hill, I would love to see the streetcar on 12th Ave, which does not have any public transit now, and it also helps with revitalizing 12th Ave.
- Live at 17 and Republican, work at 3rd and Jackson. I bike commute down 12th and Jackson and prefer the 14th Ave alignment through the Little Saigon area, for better bike compatibility.
- These plans do not all integrate well with current neighborhood plans, specifically in the First Hill area. Please think bigger and more transformative on these issues and get DPD and DON involved.
- I prefer having the streetcar operate in both directions on the same street. That will make it easier for pedestrians to use and cause less issues for bikes as only one route will be affected.
- The use of Minor, Boylston and Seneca is a great idea- maybe single track configuration (North on Minor-South on Boylston) might be a better option. Staying off Boren, Broadway and Madison as much as possible should be the goal.
- The 12th and Broadway option may allow for the easiest flow of car traffic, but doesn't seem to serve the needs of public transit users as appropriately and effectively as the dual Broadway tracks.
- The 14th Ave. S. alternative would allow access to people a bit further from other station options. Those who live in/around Yesler terrace have a number of convenient stops in either plan.
- The Weller loop would likely encourage people to engage in the community and benefit Int'l District businesses more than the Jackson option would as a quick throughway.
- It seems that, as someone who often travels (by foot and car) the area around Boylston, the Boylston alternative could cause significant traffic flow problems, particularly being so close to the Broadway and E. Madison intersection.
- As an avid cyclist, I'm not bothered at all by the use of Broadway, as I usually take side streets. I'm glad to see that the line extends around Cal Anderson as well.

- The route should ideally go down Boren to best serve the hospitals and high-rise residential. But Broadway would be ok as well, but 12th Avenue/11th Avenues would be worthless for First Hill residents and workers.
- On the whole—I love this and if we can't have a monorail, this is the next best thing.
- Make one “route” with trains in both directions so people know where to find it. I like that you focus the ends at major transportation hubs, light rail station on Cap Hill and tunnel/streetcar in Pioneer Square, however don't need to be redundant with light rail- Light rail already connects Broadway-Pioneer Square.
- Are there minor changes in this design that would allow future expansion such that this project can be expanded to serve a wider area and projections for future demographic changes and future developments?
- As a person who lives at Terry and Jefferson and owns a business on 12th and Madison, the lack of north south public transportation along 12th (in reality, anywhere between Broadway and 23rd!) is a serious problem. I support a loop that addresses this issue by traveling at least one direction on 12th. I don't think that the separation distance between the 12th and Broadway sides of the loop is a real issue.
- Is there a way to generate funding to go on Broadway to Aloha? Can this design take a future expansion into account. Broadway north of Seattle Central is at great risk due to all the construction.
- Weller looks good on the map, but I think it's impractical. Each turn in the international district presents risk because of chaotic ped & car traffic. I think you should stick to Jackson and don't be scared to take away parking.
- I love the route- I've lived in the International District and in Capitol Hill and it is impossible to get between them. If the traffic engineers can figure out a few intersection conflicts, this will be a big win for a walk able city.
- First Hill is distinctive not only for the density of residents, but also for out of area visitors, most predominately patients to medical centers. The First Hill line must include passage and stop on Boren.
- I do not like the 11th Ave option. It doesn't help businesses and it significantly reduces the peacefulness of Cal Anderson Park. Just because it's cheaper and easier to use 11th (vs. 12th) and Denny does not make that loop a good one. The area is well served already by bus service.
- Please consider a 12th Ave. alignment north past Pine to either Denny or better yet, John St. Much better economic development potential.
- As a First Hill resident, I support strongly the alignment that considers first and foremost the strongest connection between first hill employees, customers to First Hill's major institutions and First Hill residents to I.D. and Cap Hill light rail.
- Please make it right the first time and don't let angry individuals win. Do what is best for the whole. Appease residents near 12th Ave with a bus. A line speaks more than a loop.
- I am broadly very supportive of rail transit but I am very concerned about the design flaws of the SLU line with respect to bicycle use. Such errors can be repeated on this line.
- I know there is presently not enough funding to extend the streetcar to Roy St. on Broadway, but there is a dense residential population building up at this end with the condos and apartment complex to be finished in 2010.

- The addition of a Yesler Terrace stop was an excellent idea coinciding with the Terrace's redevelopment.
- I feel the 2-way Jackson Street option makes much more sense along with the 2-way Broadway option. Connecting these two with the 14th Ave. option is, in my mind, the optimal solution. These three options together cover the more neighborhoods with less track and fewer stops.
- Please do more detailed research into how ridership (to the 1st Hill hospitals) would be affected by 2 3 block separated loop would be southbound on 12th so a downhill walk would be required for fastest service.
- Please consider indicating the connections available near King St. Station i.e. light rail to SeaTac, Sounders, ferries, sports arenas.
- I would like to see a study of the southern terminals running up King Street all the way to 12th encouraging development and furthering "King" as a pedestrian backbone between the I.D. and Little Saigon.
- Please add the pioneer square alternative loop- the connection to Capitol Hill, First Hill and The ID is critical for the economic revitalization of the historic district.
- Stay off Boren Ave. It's a disaster. Providing an "alternatives" will not remove all the cars from this street.
- Concerned about construction impacts as well-how long, how late, how loud?
- I think the streetcar is a great idea for bringing revitalization/energy/visitors and growth into neighborhoods that are often overshadowed.
- My preference for a route is a hybrid of the Broadway/12th couplet with the Minor Ave spur added from the Boren/Seneca/Boylston option. This would service the First Hill community as well as spur business development along 12th Ave.
- Please do not put bike lanes next to parked cars. Use sharrows in the middle of the right lane instead. Please provide a design that allows bikes to safely merge to the left turn lane.
- I don't like the Weller St. loop option, as that area has a lot of pedestrians and elderly walking and the impact to them is significant- w/ streetcar tracks making it easy to trip/fall on.
- Consider bringing back waterfront street car since the tracks are already there, and it can connect to the First Hill street car! I think it will help connect First Hill/Cap Hill areas with the waterfront community and help with tourism!
- Thanks for putting on an informative event. I am in favor of the Boylston option with the 11th loop. It looks like a good balance between speed and serving First Hill. I also like the Yesler Terrace option for speed, and the Weller Street loop.
- I'm concerned with the plans of the trolley starting through Chinatown. I like the way it is now- slow paced, pedestrian oriented. The trolley would be an intrusion.
- I'm in favor of the alignment that would travel on Jackson and east to 14th because it would serve more areas. Also if this alignment is chosen I would like to see a station on Jackson at 14th.
- If possible, I would like to see the tracks for the First Hill line link up with the old waterfront line (see map on reverse side). The hope is that the First Hill line's barn can hold cars for the currently- inactive

waterfront line (either the Melbourne cars or modern cars), since the old barn was demolished in 2005 to construct the sculpture park.

- First Hill has thousands of workers and participants who need easy transportation from downtown to the hill. The buses only cover portions of the area. Reducing car traffic to First Hill would be an important advantage in having the streetcar route through First Hill.
- If possible to have SC stop on Jackson near 12th (between 12th and 14th) the alternative that goes around Bailey Gatzert is good.
- Pick a route that serves an area that currently does not have good transportation.
- A streetcar up to 1st Hill is a great idea- can it be including ferry pick-ups also? Many employees and patients take the ferries across to Coleman and it's very difficult to get up to Swedish/VM/Providence.
- It seems to me that there are numerous benefits to considering this issue carefully. There are a great number of people using these facilities and working in them that could use public transport if it was convenient.
- I support streetcar project and urge SDOT to continue routing options for residents, employees and patients who need access to First Hill since bus #2 is so crowded most of time especially the rush time.
- Please don't block or narrow the bike lanes on 12th! It is the longest, flattest north-south route for bicycles.
- I would like to have the Streetcar run at night to the bus tunnel.
- Another feasible and perhaps more effective option, would be to increase the number of Metro Buses traveling/connecting Downtown to First Hill. As well as extending the hours of operation later into the evening. My primary concern is not the mode of transportation that will get me from downtown to First Hill, but the safety aspect of the matter.
- There is a strong community interest to build a thriving urban village along 12th Avenue and a streetcar line would accelerate that process. Additionally, a 12th Avenue streetcar that crossed Madison at 12th Avenue would include a redesign of the 12th Avenue-Madison –Union Street intersection, historically an accident-prone intersection.