

MERIDIAN AVENUE N SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Background

The Meridian Avenue Safety Project will construct transportation safety and capacity improvements for all users of the Meridian Avenue N corridor. Project limits extend along Meridian Avenue N between N 155th Street and N 175th Street.

The City's 2018 Traffic Report indicated that 39 percent of the 46 injury and fatal collisions in Shoreline between 2010 and 2016 involved a pedestrian. As a percentage of overall injury collisions, the number of non-motorized (pedestrian and bicycle) collisions is rising. In 2018, City staff sought grant funding for improvements on several identified segments of the Meridian Avenue N corridor. Proposed improvements focused on reducing the numbers of pedestrian and bicycle injury collisions. Shoreline was awarded a \$1,139,000 WSDOT City Safety Program grant. In addition to pedestrian safety, proposed corridor improvements are identified in the City's Transportation Master Plan as necessary to accommodate growth.

The project will change the lane configuration of Meridian Avenue N from one lane in each direction with on-street parking to one travel lane plus one bicycle lane in each direction and turn lanes or on-street parking where appropriate. At N 170th Street, a supplemental pedestrian activated rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) will be added to the pedestrian crossing. The RRFB will make the crossing more visible to drivers and a new pedestrian refuge median will reduce pedestrian exposure to traffic. At N 163rd Street, a new RRFB system will be installed, and curb bulb outs will be installed to reduce the crossing distance.

Public outreach was conducted in 2022. A list of the most frequently asked questions (FAQs) that we heard from participants was compiled. FAQs and answers are included below to help convey project objectives and background.

1. Where is this project happening?

The Meridian Ave N Safety Improvements Project is located along Meridian Avenue N between N 155th Street and N 175th Street.

2. Who is paying for this project?

The project is federally funded. In 2021, the City of Shoreline was awarded a \$1,139,000 WSDOT City Safety Program grant. In addition to grant funding, City funds are necessary to

fulfill grant match obligations. City funds are allocated to the project from the Roads Capital Fund.

WSDOT's City Safety Program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration's Highway Safety Improvements Program.

3. When will this project be constructed?

Construction is currently planned for late Spring/Summer of 2023. Updates will be posted to the project webpage at: shorelinewa.gov/MeridianAve

4. Will the availability of on-street parking be impacted by the project?

On-street parking will be reduced by the project. The reduction in parking is necessary to make the roadway safer for pedestrians and bicyclists and to accommodate turn lanes at some intersections. The project will retain an adequate amount of on-street parking to meet current and future parking demand. The City conducted a parking utilization survey in 2021 and found that less than 30 percent of available on-street parking is used throughout the day.

On-street parking will be concentrated to the west side of Meridian Avenue. This approach will support parking demand and serve the greatest number of residents along the corridor.

5. How is pedestrian safety being improved?

The project includes significant pedestrian safety enhancements at the N 170th Street and N 163rd Street intersections. At N 170th Street, a supplemental pedestrian activated rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) will be added to a new median island at the crossing. The new RRFB will make the crossing more visible to drivers and a new pedestrian refuge median will reduce pedestrian exposure to traffic. Improvements at N 163rd Street will include a new RRFB system. Curb bulb outs (extending the curb into the road) will be installed to reduce the crossing distance and pedestrian's exposure to traffic. The presence of bike lanes can also make vehicles drive slower, and provides a buffer between the sidewalk and the travel lane to make the walking environment safer and more comfortable for pedestrians.

6. Is the City doing anything to reduce the amount of speeders on the Meridian Avenue Corridor?

Yes, in 2022 the City reduced the speed limit on Meridian Avenue N from 35 mph to 30 mph. Fatal and serious injury collisions have been on the rise in Shoreline. High vehicle speed is a key factor in these types of collisions, particularly collisions with pedestrian and bicyclist. Per [Ordinance No. 950](#), the Meridian Avenue Corridor is one of six roadway corridors subject to five mph speed reduction.

7. How do bicyclists and traffic pass by an intersection bulb out?

The bike lane and traffic lane are maintained through the intersection. The parking lanes are eliminated at the intersection to provide the required width of the bulb outs (approximately seven feet from the existing curb). See Figure 1 below.

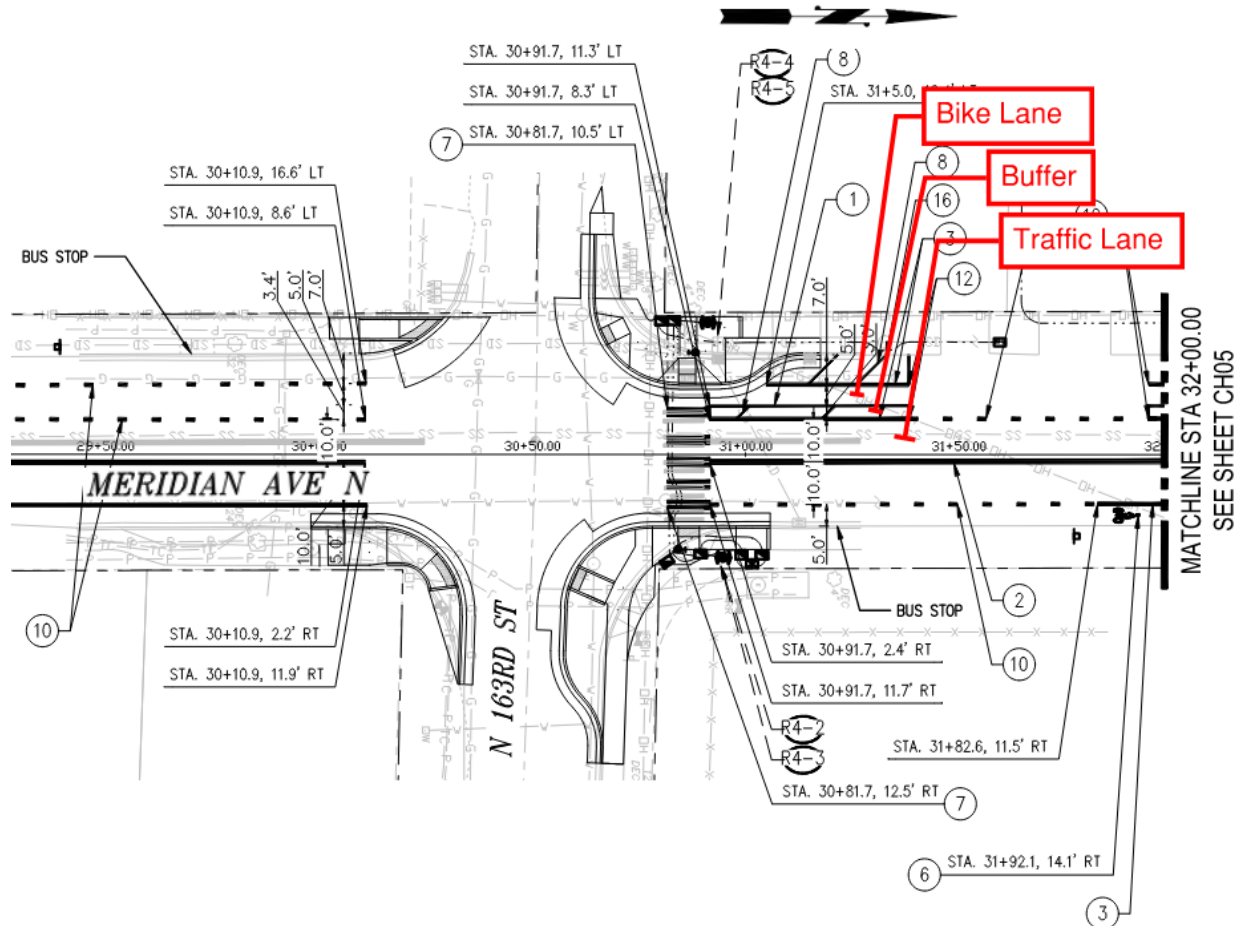


Figure 1, N 163rd Street Curb Bulb Out

8. Have you considered raised crosswalks along Meridian Avenue N?

For a corridor like Meridian Avenue, raised crosswalks are not a good fit. High corridor traffic volumes, functional classification (arterial), transit use, and the corridor’s function as a key **emergency** response route would generally discourage the use of raised crosswalks.

9. Will the bike lanes be protected?

The southbound bike lanes will include a two-foot painted buffer where an adjacent parking lane is present. See Figure 2 below.

Delineator posts (four foot tall, flexible plastic posts, mounted to the asphalt) were considered to supplement the buffer, however, they pose a high ongoing maintenance burden and there is little evidence of their effectiveness in improving safety outcomes.

The northbound direction will be a standard bike lane with no buffer.



Figure 2, Example Buffered Bike Lane

10. Will the bike lanes have detection or sensors at traffic lights?

At the N 175th Street and Meridian Avenue N intersection, a future project ([175th Street Corridor Project](#)) is being designed to funnel the bicyclists and pedestrians to a wide, shared use crossing area. The pedestrian and bike signal would be activated by a pushbutton. At NE 155th Street and Meridian Avenue N, video detection is already present.

11. Why will building bike lanes help with car flow?

High-quality and convenient transportation options will be necessary to successfully accommodate anticipated growth over the next 20 years. Low-stress bike facilities that connect key destinations such as schools, transit, light rail stations, retail, parks, and many others provide an alternative to driving. The more people (existing or new to the City) that use these bike facilities, the less vehicles there are on the roadway resulting in lower relative traffic congestion and delay. Currently, high traffic volumes and relatively high speeds combined with the lack of a separated facility discourages most potential bike riders from using the corridor. This project unlocks the potential for many more bike, scooter, or other wheeled riders to feel comfortable using this corridor for transportation or recreation purposes.

12. Are you removing any trees?

No, the project design does not include removal of trees.

13. How can I share my ideas and opinions?

Public participation is important to the success of this project, and we hope you will continue to be involved.

Contact us: Leif Johansen, P.E., Capital Projects Manager

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Stay informed by looking out for updates on our project website. We will also be working closely with local news media in the area to get the word out about the project process.

Project Website: shorelinewa.gov/MeridianAve

- Watch the September 14, 2022, online presentation recording
- Download presentation slides
- Project overview
- Project site map
- Background information
- Financial impact