



City Council Business Agenda Item
City of Kenmore, WA

Subject/Topic:

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

For Council Meeting Agenda of: March 24, 2014

Department: Various

Prepared by: Rob Karlinsey, City Manager

Proposed Council Action/Motion:

**Authorize the City Manager to Move Forward
With Implementation of the Near-Term Safety
Actions**

Approved by Department Head:

Approved by City Attorney:

Approved by Finance Director:

Approved by City Manager:

Initial & Date

RJK

Exhibits/Attachments:

Exhibit A: Pedestrian and Cyclist Accident History

Exhibit B: Previous Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Actions

INFORMATION/BACKGROUND:

The City is very concerned with recent accidents involving pedestrians in the City of Kenmore. Citizen safety is a top priority for the City Council. We are taking these recent incidents very seriously and are proposing a series of affirmative next steps to improve pedestrian and vehicle awareness with the goal of improving safety.

We are proposing both near-term and long-term steps to help improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in our City. It is important to take a holistic approach while at the same time implementing short-term measures that can make a difference now. Near-term actions are recommended as follows:

Near-Term Actions

Arterial Crosswalks with No Mainline Stop Control. Examples include Juanita Drive/160th Street and Simonds Road/157th Street.

1. Install pedestrian hand-carry flags at these crosswalks (several already have these flags). Replenish those crosswalks that do have flags.
2. Re-check street lighting at these crosswalks. Augment lighting where needed.
3. Install Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons ([RRFB](#)) at all arterial crosswalks that have no mainline stop control. Allocate the funding to do this ASAP.



4. Analyze these crosswalk configurations and determine whether striping or other adjustments need to be made.

5. Continue to conduct crosswalk enforcement.

Road Conditions, including speed limits and channelization:

1. Evaluate channelization and striping of certain arterials, including the possibility of “road diet” (reducing the number of automobile lanes and creating more room for bicycles and pedestrians) where volumes and conditions allow.
2. Evaluate whether speed reductions on certain arterials are appropriate.

Education, Outreach, and Enforcement. Increase driver and pedestrian education. Examples:

1. Handout retro-reflective arm bands at schools and events. The arm band would have the City logo and a possibly a short safety message.
2. At schools and various media sources (City newsletter, newspaper, webpage, social media, etc.), educate on pedestrian clothing, driver and pedestrian attentiveness, etc.
3. Enlist the help of citizens to encourage involvement and help get the word out in schools, safety booths at events, etc.
4. Install educational signage. For example, “Look Both Ways” signs for pedestrians at crosswalks. Continue to use the speed trailer where the permanent “Your Speed” signs are not located.
5. Continue to provide a police presence and enforcement on arterials and in neighborhoods.
6. Help promote the Fire Department’s bicycle and skateboard helmet and safety programs.

These above steps combined will benefit the community; however, there is no substitute for driver and pedestrian care and attention. Even with more installed physical devices and education, every vehicle/pedestrian/bicycle encounter contains independent judgment and decisions by the participants. Timing: Most of the above near-term actions should be complete and underway by the end of this year (2014).

Long-Term Actions

The City should continue on the path the City Council has already laid out, including the adopted City Council Goal “to accelerate implementation of the Sidewalk Plan by determining various funding options.” Last year the City Council adopted a 20-year sidewalk plan, a small portion of which is funded. The newest sidewalk to be installed is on the east side of 68th Avenue between 182nd Street and the Tolt Pipeline Trail. New commercial and residential developments are required to install new sidewalks. For example, the developers of Spencer68 apartments in Kenmore Village will be required to install new sidewalks on 68th Avenue and NE 182nd Street. Another example includes the East Creek Estates on 80th Avenue NE.

The City has aggressively applied for various State and Federal sidewalk grants. These grants are very competitive, and the City has seen some success in applying for these grants. For example, the sidewalks running the length of 153rd/155th from Arrowhead 84th Avenue were funded through a State grant in the mid 2000s. More recent sidewalk grant funding success can be seen on Bothell Way and the approaching arterial avenues to Bothell Way. The City will soon apply (for the second time) for funding for new sidewalks on 155th Street approaching Inglemoor High School and 202nd Street approaching Kenmore Junior High School as well as NE 181st Street along the Safeway frontage

In addition to and in keeping with implementing the sidewalk plan, the City should consider creating Neighborhood Traffic Plans, with the emphasis on traffic calming and pedestrian/bicycle safety. The current Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program is similar to those in other jurisdictions and is reactive to citizen complaints. A Neighborhood Traffic Plan is proactive and divides the City into regions that geographically make sense for neighborhoods. Staff coordinates with neighbors, conduct speed/volume studies, and develop an implementation plan for each neighborhood with significant neighbor input. Such a program would require additional resources that are not currently identified or funded, including funding for additional staffing,

community outreach, design, and installation of signage, striping, and physical devices. Physical devices include roundabouts, traffic circles, speed bumps, and chicanes.

These long-term actions should be holistic with emphasis not only on pedestrians but also cyclists—the City should also consider accelerating the implementation of the Bicycle Strategy that was completed in 2013. We need to have an open mind and depart from the automobile-oriented devices of the 20th century, such as traffic signals and all-way stops. In other words, the mentality needs to shift from the vehicle as the dominant transportation mode to *multi-modal* transportation, with an emphasis on pedestrians and cyclists.

As we move towards these long term goals, the City will have to make difficult decisions about our roadways and the priority “mode of transportation.” For example, our roads often provide overflow parking in neighborhoods and arterials, but the “real estate” may better serve bicycles and pedestrians through bicycle lanes and pedestrian shoulders. It is not feasible to have it all given our current right of way limitations.

Another long-term strategy should be to continue to press the State for SR520 tolling mitigation. We need to continue beat this drum and request funding to mitigate for increased traffic volumes that we have seen in the last several years.

Citizen Involvement

We are grateful for the citizens who have expressed concern and are offering to help. We should tap into and harness their interest and positive energy. The City is currently undergoing a thorough review of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. This year (2014) is great timing for our citizens to get involved. Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit route prioritization, and other important transportation topics are part of this effort to update the City’s Transportation Element. There will be a joint Planning Commission / Council meeting in the near future to discuss the “layered network” approach by which the City could prioritize certain routes and the main mode of transportation it will address. We also will be holding a public Transportation Element workshop for the public, and Planning Commission and City Council meetings will be open for input and involvement from our citizens.

In addition, if the City Council chooses to allocate resources toward Neighborhood Traffic Plans, residents from each neighborhood will be involved, provide input, and participate. In each neighborhood there are always certain citizens who are more involved than others, and the City would work with and through those citizens to develop plans and help raise awareness.

In summary, the near-term and long-term recommendations discussed above aim to improve pedestrian and vehicle awareness with the goal of improving safety. However, as long as there are cars, pedestrians, and cyclists (and other modes), there will always be accidents—there are a multitude of factors that contribute to accidents, many of which involve individual driver and pedestrian decisions that are beyond the City’s control. In the last several years, the world has changed for Kenmore. Due to regional changes, we are seeing increased automobile volumes on our roads. In addition, the growing popularity of smart devices and cell phones has reduced driver attentiveness (even pedestrians and cyclists are “plugged in”). We need to be aggressive in getting the word out and raising awareness about safe driving, walking, and riding safely in Kenmore.

FISCAL CONSIDERATION:

Near-Term Recommendations that Need Funding:

Crosswalk Lighting Enhancements	TBD
Crosswalk RRFB Installations	\$170,000
Rechannelization Evaluation	\$25,000

Arterial Speed Studies	\$15,000
<u>Educational Materials</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>
Total	\$215,000

The above are estimates. As we move toward implementation, these numbers will be further refined.

We recommend that funding for the above actions comes from the Street Fund Balance. Thanks to the efforts of the City Council, the Street Fund has been stabilized. The Street Fund's projected ending balance is currently budgeted at \$1,498,676. This balance is 91% of the Fund's annual operating expenses (\$1,646,338), which is healthy and considered a higher-than-needed fund balance by most standards. Financial institutions view a 15% to 20% fund balance as sufficient.

Implementing the above-recommended actions will reduce the Street Fund projected ending fund balance by approximately \$215,000 and bring the ending fund balance down to \$1,283,676 or 78% of the Fund's annual operating expenses.

Previous proactive actions by the City Council have made it possible for the City to be in this financial position with a stabilized and healthy Street Fund balance.

If the City Council wishes to proceed with the proposed Near-Term Actions, the City Council can direct the City Manager to proceed with the Near Term Actions and follow up with corresponding budget changes as part of the next budget amendment for Council consideration (likely in April 2014).

Long-Term Actions:

We recommend that discussion of the long term actions, including funding and implementation, occur during the 2015-2016 Biennial Budget process which will take place in the fall of this year.

COUNCIL GOAL/BUDGET OBJECTIVE BEING ADDRESSED:

Public Safety
Accelerating the implementation of the sidewalk plan

Exhibit A

Previous Pedestrian Accident History

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Serious Injury and Fatality Accidents

(Police Data from the MARR Database which was Initiated in 2004)

Year	Description	Ped Injuries	Ped Fatalities	Bike Injuries	Bike Fatalities
2004	1 Pedestrian Injury	1			
2005	1 Bicycle into Parked Car			1	
2006	N/A				
2007	1 Fatal Bicycle Accident, 1 Bicycle Injury, 1 Pedestrian Fatality		1	1	1
2008	N/A				
2009	1 Bicycle Accident (No other vehicle involved)			1	
2010	1 Bicycle at Fault Injury			1	
2011	N/A				
2012	1 Pedestrian Fatality		1		
2013	1 Pedestrian Injury, 1 Pedestrian Fatality	1	1		
2014	1 Pedestrian Fatality, 1 ped injury, 1 Bicycle Injury	1	1	1	
Totals		3	4	5	1

Exhibit B

Previous Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Improvements

What has the City done to improve pedestrian safety?

- Reduction of 80th Ave speed and we're adding more street lights to 80th NE (north of 522)
- Reduction of SR 522 speed
- 15 miles of sidewalk installed since incorporation (through city installation and developments)
- SR 522 improvements from the eastern City limits to 65th Avenue : sidewalk, lighting, bus stops, signals
- Upcoming (and funded) SR 522 improvements (new sidewalks, etc.) from 65th Avenue to 61st Avenue (including the intersection at 61st/Bothell Way)
- Permanent "Your Speed" signs on various arterials
- Use of the "Your Speed" trailer in various neighborhoods
- Neighborhood police presence and enforcement, including crosswalks, stop signs, bus stops, and speed.
- Neighborhood Safety Program
- New radar gun checkout program
- Two new signalized intersections at 145th & Juanita Drive and also 181st/61 st Ave
- Safety Improvement Grant (2014) for improved pedestrian facilities (stop buttons, curb ramps, etc.) on Juanita Drive
- Upcoming (and funded) 2014 Juanita overlay and restriping to improve bicycle/pedestrian shoulder
- Installation of new bus stop ahead signs where site distance problems exist
- Crosswalk Flags