



Enhancing crossing safety on MLK Jr Way S in the Rainier Valley

PROGRAM UPDATE | SEPTEMBER 2024



Sound Transit and SDOT commitment

In 2022, Sound Transit and the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) signed a partnership agreement, reaffirming our commitment to shared values and goals of enhancing safety, equity, community access, and mobility in the Rainier Valley. Together, we aim to amplify our efforts in identifying and installing safety treatments to reduce collisions and near misses. This initiative is a top priority for both agencies, and we're dedicated to working closely to serve the community.

Where we've been

Data analysis and community feedback shape the safety initiatives Sound Transit and SDOT pursue to reduce collisions and near misses. Building on previous engagement efforts, Sound Transit and SDOT partnered in 2022 and 2023 to attend several local events and host three safety walks with community members in the Rainier Valley in 2023. Recently, Sound Transit and SDOT participated in two Transportation Safety Town Halls with members of the Rainier Valley community.

Together, our agencies have been working to complete several near-term safety enhancements in the corridor, summarized in the table below.

COMPLETED PROJECTS					
PROJECT TYPE	SAFETY FOCUS AREA			PROJECT NAME	COMPLETION DATE
	Train	Pedestrian	Vehicle		
Signage Enhancements			✓	LED flashing no left turn signs	March 2022
		✓		LED flashing another train coming signs at station intersections	September 2023
		✓	✓	Other signage updates	January 2024
Pavement Markings			✓	R X R pavement markings in left turn pockets	June 2021
		✓		"LOOK" pavement markings	September 2023
		✓	✓	Corridor pavement marking refresh	September 2023
Traffic Signal Enhancements		✓		Leading pedestrian intervals	August 2023
			✓	Retroreflective tape added to signal heads	May 2024
		✓	✓	Signal Reprioritization Pilot	June 2024

Current focus

Sound Transit and SDOT are piloting innovative treatments in the corridor and advancing several other projects to enhance safety.

Sound Transit and SDOT were awarded \$2 million in grant funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation to pilot innovative technologies in the corridor with the potential to secure up to an additional \$15 million in the future for permanent implementation of these technologies along the entire MLK corridor. The technologies enhance safety for all users at rail crossings through data analysis, innovative safety communications, smarter traffic signals, battery backup for traffic signals, and touchless accessible pedestrian push buttons.

This summer, Sound Transit is engaging with SDOT and other industry experts to advance our understanding of planning and design work on pedestrian gates, conduct additional data analysis on how the projects we've implemented are influencing data trends in the corridor, and participate in additional engagement opportunities with the community to collect feedback, including a qualitative survey.

We plan to share more updates on our progress in fall 2024.

ACTIVE PROJECTS					
PROJECT TYPE	SAFETY FOCUS AREA			PROJECT NAME	STATUS
	Train	Pedestrian	Vehicle		
Train Enhancements	✓			Increase volume of train bells pilot	Piloting
	✓	✓	✓	Alternating headlights on trains	Design
Signage Enhancements		✓		LED flashing another train coming signs at all intersections between stations	Design
Pavement Markings		✓	✓	Pavement markings to enhance trackway visibility pilot	Design
Technology	✓	✓	✓	SMART Grant Phase 1 Rainier Valley Safe project pilot	Design
Infrastructure Projects		✓	✓	Link alignment corridor update	Design
		✓		Pedestrian gates/arms at station locations pilot	Planning/Design

Learn more and get involved!

Community feedback is at the core of guiding our work. Over the coming months, we'll be at fairs and festivals to provide new opportunities to learn about upcoming projects and provide feedback. We will also share more ways to get involved as we add them to our calendar on a new page of our website available in fall 2024. Below is the current schedule of events where you can get involved.



* in partnership with Operation LifeSaver (Columbia City, Othello, and Rainier Beach Stations)