



AURORA CORRIDOR

June 2005 Volume 10

Coming now to Shoreline's Aurora: A better, safer place to travel and do business

A better, safer Aurora Avenue North is coming to Shoreline as construction begins next month on the Aurora Corridor Project, N. 145th to 165th Streets.

At its June 6 meeting, Shoreline City Council voted to award a contract to Gary Merlino Construction Company for \$23,606,287.75 to complete the Aurora Avenue North Multimodal Corridor Project N. 145th to 165th Streets and the Interurban Trail Bridge Project.

About 87 percent of the Aurora Corridor Project, N. 145th to 165th Streets is funded by federal, state and local grants including the state Nickel Gas Tax. The remainder is funded by money set aside by the City of Shoreline over the years for this project.

"Since before incorporation the community has asked us over and over to fix Aurora and I am thrilled to be able to finally say without a doubt that we are doing just that. The City is making Aurora a better, safer place to travel and do business," said Shoreline Mayor Ron Hansen.

The Aurora Corridor Project is Shoreline's plan to redesign and upgrade its three miles of Aurora Ave. N. which carries between 38,000 and 45,000 vehicles a day. Improving safety is one of the driving forces behind the project.

"Because of its central location, improving Aurora is one of

see a big improvement in how much safer and easier it is to use Aurora," Hansen continued.

Improvements to the first mile of the corridor between N. 145th and 165th Streets will include two through-traffic lanes in each direction; installation of a BAT lane (business-access/transit) in each direction for



Above is an illustration of the bridge over Aurora.

the most significant things the City can do to benefit the entire community and we've worked hard to make sure our plan meets many diverse needs," said Hansen.

"Once Aurora is completed, it won't just be drivers who see the difference – although they certainly will notice a vast improvement in safety, traffic flow and convenience. But pedestrians, the disabled, transit users and business owners will also

buses, and vehicles turning right to enter and exit businesses; and a center median with landscaping to provide opportunities for left- and U-turns at intersections and at mid-block locations at an average of every 350-feet.

Other improvements include construction of 7-foot sidewalks with bus stop shelters and a 4-foot landscaped area for underground utilities, fire hydrants, lighting and other features. Installation of curbs and

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Better, safer Aurora *continued from page 1*

gutters will provide additional separation between pedestrians and vehicles to improve safety and storm drainage to improve water quality. New traffic signals will be installed at N. 152nd and N. 165th Streets.

"The addition of sidewalks, landscaping, undergrounding the utilities, architectural features and the landmark pedestrian bridges will help transform the look of Aurora from a 1950's state highway and create a better image of Shoreline for people who travel along this road," according to Hansen. "I'd venture that this bridge will become the most notable icon on Aurora from Seattle to Everett," he added.

"When we began the design process, Council told staff to be flexible with the design to reduce impacts to existing businesses and buildings as much as

possible. There are multiple examples of how the City worked with property and business owners to make changes in the design to reflect the real conditions on Aurora and we have a final design that doesn't require any buildings to be moved," said Hansen.

The construction contract also includes building two bridges as part of Shoreline's Interurban Trail Project to get trail users safely across Aurora: one over N. 155th Street west of Aurora and another over Aurora Avenue N. just south of the Westminster Way intersection. Council approved upgrades to the bridges including a glass missile barrier for both bridges and an arch and special lighting for the bridge over Aurora.

Last year the City completed two sections of the Interurban Trail and two more will be finished this month. When the bridges and the final north central section are completed next year, the three-mile trail will provide a path through the center of Shoreline for pedestrians and bicycle riders. Built on Seattle City Light right-of-way, Shoreline's Interurban Trail will eventually connect with similar projects planned by Seattle to the south and Edmonds in the north all the way to Everett.

The total construction contract amount of \$23,606,287.75 includes the following projects: Aurora Avenue Improvements,

\$15,304,460.10; Interurban Trail Bridges, \$4,177,456.75; Seattle City Light (undergrounding electrical service), \$3,555,375.00; Seattle Public Utilities (installing new water main), \$558,115.90; and Ronald Wastewater District (adjusting manhole covers), \$10,880.00.

Seattle City Light, Seattle Public Utilities and Ronald Wastewater District will reimburse the City of Shoreline for the expected \$4,124,370.90 cost of their projects. The Council approved a total budget authority of \$24,992,820.68, which includes 5.9% contingency.

"Over the years, we've assembled an impressive array of partners and funding sources to help us make these improvements. We've successfully competed for grants and appropriations from federal, state and local sources for Aurora and the Interurban Trail," Hansen said. "We have an excellent track record bringing these dollars 'home' to Shoreline to pay for projects that improve our community," he added.

Gary Merlino Construction Company has completed similar construction projects in the Puget Sound area including a Highway 99 project for the City of SeaTac. Construction is expected to begin next month with completion by winter 2006, weather permitting.

Want to learn more?

City staff is available for question and answer sessions or presentations about the Aurora Corridor and/or the Interurban Trail Bridge Projects to groups. For more information about the projects or to schedule a presentation, contact Shoreline Aurora Corridor and Interurban Trail Project Manager Kirk McKinley at (206) 546-3901.

Project Benefits

Many of the design elements planned for Aurora serve more than one purpose in improving how the road works for pedestrians and vehicles. For example, the continuous sidewalks not only increase pedestrian safety, but also provide greater access for the disabled and improve safety and comfort for transit users.

And it works in the other direction to: many of the desired outcomes – pedestrian safety, increased traffic flow – are affected by more than one design element.

Below is a list of the goals for the Aurora Corridor Project followed by the design elements that help meet those goals.

Improved vehicle and pedestrian safety: sidewalks, 4-foot buffer between sidewalk and road, defined driveways, medians replacing center left turn lane

Improved pedestrian access along and across the corridor: sidewalks, new traffic signals, curb ramps, pedestrian bridges

Greater access for disabled: continuous sidewalks with curb ramps, audible pedestrian signals, wheelchair ramps, raised street surface to guide the visually impaired



Above is an illustration of the new traffic signal at 152nd St. looking south that shows how the design concept will look when completed.

Increased transit speed and reliability: Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes take buses out of the through lanes, enabling them to move into and out of traffic more smoothly

Increased transit passengers' comfort and safety at stops: new shelters, benches, trash cans, lighting and landscaping around bus stops, continuous sidewalks to and from stops

Increased vehicle capacity and traffic flow: BAT lanes remove turning from through lanes, signal synchronization

Enhanced streetscape and security: landscaping in median, pedestrian amenities such as benches, new lighting, new bus shelters

Improved nighttime visibility and safety: enhanced and continuous lighting eliminates dark spots, more signals for crossings

Improved stormwater quality: water quality enhancements, detention, new storm lines, reduced impervious surfaces

Increased property values/economic investment: improved "front door" appearance for businesses with underground power lines and improved aesthetics, improved safety and capacity, demonstrates City's commitment to businesses

Improved water pressure/flow for fire safety: new, larger water pipes and more hydrants



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Visit Our Web Site

www.shorelineaurora.com

Receive Email Updates

Visit the Web site above to sign up to receive project updates via email.

Alternate Formats

If you need this newsletter in an accessible format, please call Communications Specialist Susan Will at (206) 546-8323.

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