

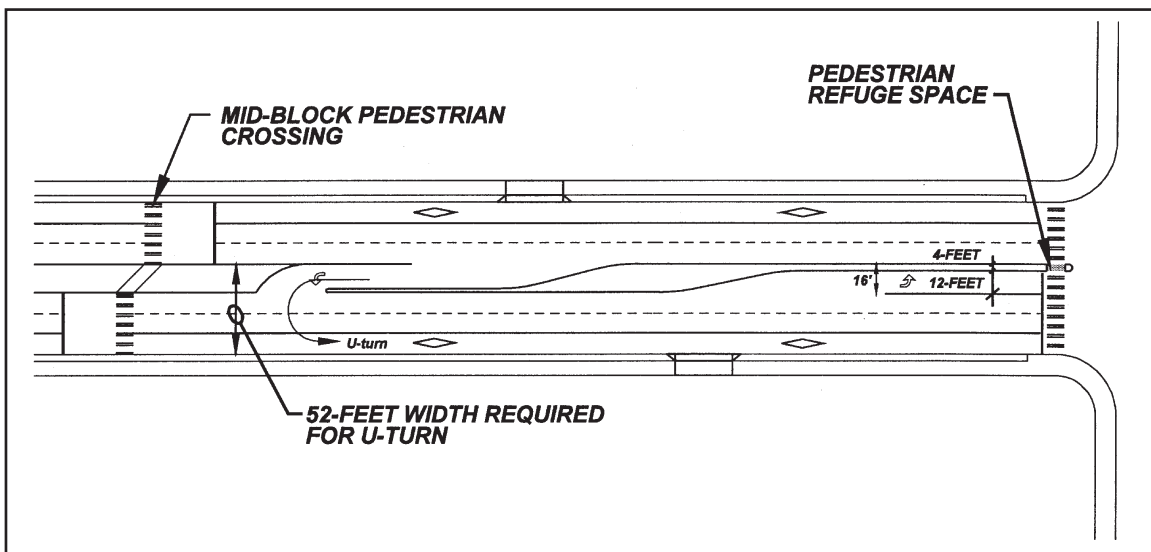


## HOW WIDE SHOULD THE MEDIAN BE?

Did you know that Shoreline's Aurora Avenue is currently one of the most hazardous roadways in the State? Aurora Avenue has one of the highest accident rates for urban arterials of its type in the State of Washington. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) estimates that more than \$61 million has been lost along Aurora Avenue in Shoreline over the past five years due to the high number of fatalities, injuries, and property damage.

The Aurora Corridor Project's traffic safety features, such as the median lane for focused left-turn and U-turn lanes and driveway standards with curbs and sidewalks, will provide a safer environment for vehicles and pedestrians.

The primary purpose of the median is to provide a safe refuge area along the center of the roadway for vehicles making focused left-turns and U-turns and for pedestrians crossing the roadway. The figure below illustrates the typical design for the median. This figure demonstrates that the width of the median lane is dictated by the needs of two separate uses: 1) the need to accommodate vehicles making left turns and U-turns and the pedestrian refuge spaces within the median lane and 2) the need for the median width to allow the minimum roadway width required to negotiate a U-turn. Both cases are described on the following page.





## MEDIAN WIDTH FOR LEFT-TURN POCKETS

At intersections, the median is sized to accommodate both left-turning vehicles and pedestrian refuge areas. The minimum lane width allowed for a left-turn lane is 12 feet; the minimum pedestrian refuge space is four feet. The total, 16 feet, is only slightly wider than is generally used for a center two-way left-turn lane (usually 13 or 14 feet). The pedestrian refuge will serve pedestrians, wheelchair users, people with baby strollers, and others who may choose to stop at mid-crossing until the next crossing cycle. Four feet might seem a bit narrow for a pedestrian refuge, but this width was established as a compromise to minimize overall roadway width.

## MEDIAN WIDTH FOR U-TURNS

A passenger vehicle requires a minimum distance to safely make a U-turn without running over the curb and onto the sidewalk on the opposite side of the road. The minimum width necessary to safely make a U-turn is 52 feet, as measured from the outside of the median/U-turn lane to the curb adjacent to the receiving lane, as shown in the figure on the preceding page.

The design for the Aurora corridor improvements includes left/U-turn locations approximately every 800 feet along the corridor and pedestrian crossings approximately every 1,000 feet along the corridor. This spacing of left/U-turn and pedestrian crossing locations means that most of the length of the median will be used to accommodate turning vehicles or pedestrian refuges. The remaining areas are transitions between the left/U-turn and pedestrian crossing locations and could be landscaped or paved with colored or textured paving materials.

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information on the Aurora Corridor Project please contact Anne Tonella-Howe, City of Shoreline at (206) 546-1700.