

For more information

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Look for this icon on the City's web site and sign up for project updates.



Ways to be involved, informed

The June 25 open house is just one of a variety of ways to be involved in and stay informed on the NE 137th/138th Avenue Improvement Project.

Open Houses – Two more are planned later in the project to coincide with the 50% and final design phases. These meetings are ideal for exchanging general information and feedback with the community.

Sounding Board – This ad hoc group—comprising members of neighborhood associations, school district, C-TRAN, and other interested agencies—will meet prior to each open house to receive information and provide the project team with feedback on a variety of topics to ensure that project information and materials are speaking to the issues and concerns of the community.

Citizen Forums – Scheduled by request of an agency, organization, neighborhood, or other group, these targeted meetings work best where people have similar issues with similar reasonable solutions.

Web Site – www.cityofvancouver.us/137-138Ave

Project information, and notification of upcoming open houses, will be provided via newsletters (such as this one), newspaper ads, project web site, and other means.

Printed on recycled paper.

City of Vancouver Transportation Services
P.O. Box 1995 - Vancouver, Washington 98668-1995
www.cityofvancouver.us/137-138Ave

Wednesday, June 25
4 - 7 p.m.
Firstenburg
Community Center
700 NE 136th Avenue
(Community Room "A")

Join us at the
next Open House
NE 137th/138th Avenue
Improvement Project

City of Vancouver
Transportation Services
P.O. Box 1995
Vancouver, Washington 98668-1995



Project in brief

The City of Vancouver is proposing improvements to NE 137th/138th Avenue from NE 28th to NE 49th streets. These improvements will upgrade the roadway to current Minor Arterial standards in order to:

- enhance safety
- minimize traffic delays
- improve access to fronting properties

Features of the project could include roadway widening, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, streetscape and drainage improvements, utility upgrades and relocations, evaluation of right of way needs, and environmental analysis. Improvements will also benefit the NE 49th Street, NE 39th Street, NE 18th Street, and NE 28th Street corridors.

An estimated 12,000 to 14,000 vehicles currently travel the corridor each day; it was originally built for 10,000-15,000 vehicles. The existing roadway between NE 28th and 49th streets is limited to one lane in each direction and overdue for improvement. Sidewalks, bike lanes, and street lights are needed. Adjacent property owners, business owners, and residents experience long delays getting out of their driveways onto the road.

Stakeholder process provides valuable community insight

Safety identified as primary concern along corridor

One of the best ways to identify and understand the issues and concerns associated with a roadway is to talk with people who depend on it and know it best. This includes people who live and work on or near it, drive it regularly, or have a particular interest in the road.

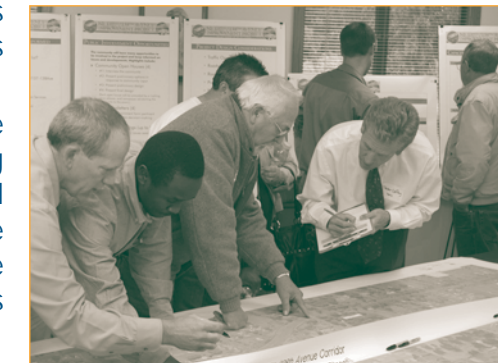
During the fall 2007, the project team selected and interviewed 33 stakeholders who represented a cross-section of perspectives and opinions on the corridor. They ranged from daily commuters and retirees to neighborhood activists and community service providers.

Their input, gathered in one-on-one interviews with project staff, is helping the project team better understand the nature of the corridor and the effects the project might have on the surrounding area and the communities connected to the corridor.

What we heard

Safety was identified as the major concern in all of the interviews. Comments focused on the lack of pedestrian/bicycle facilities, coupled with an unlit narrow roadway with high traffic volumes and speeds. Other concerns include the safety of major corridor intersections, right of way acquisition, and impacts of traffic cutting through neighborhoods during construction. Additional topics included sound walls and other design details such as medians, roundabouts, and driveway access.

We also asked for ideas about and expectations for the corridor. Ideas addressed such topics as crosswalks, traffic calming, transit options, turnouts, and intersection improvements. Expectations focused on safety but also addressed traffic delays, access during and after construction, lighting, sound walls, and other design details.



The project team also gathered community insight at the October 2007 open house.

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Join Us
at the next
Open House

Wednesday, June 25
4-7 p.m.

Firstenburg Community Center
700 NE 136th Avenue
(Community Room "A")

Review details about the project and preliminary studies, find out what the community has already told us about the project, share your concerns and ideas, and learn about the project timeline and next steps.

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October 2007 open house introduced project

Twenty-six local residents helped the City of Vancouver kick-off the road improvement project at the



City Project Manager Jeff Schmidt (left) examines a corridor map with local residents at the October 2007 open house.

inaugural open house on October 2, 2007. Project team members met with the attendees to answer questions, gather information, present exhibits, and discuss various details and issues associated with the project. Large table-top maps of the corridor served as a focal point and provided useful reference points for the conversations.

To ensure that their comments, concerns, suggestions, and questions were accurately captured, each attendee was asked to complete a comment form. Twenty-three people did so. Their responses helped the

project team better understand how people use the corridor on a daily basis. Attendees were specifically asked whether or not they commute and, if so, how (by car, bus, bike) and how often; if they walk along the corridor; and how they exit their driveways. They were also asked about their greatest safety concerns.

Responses were similar to and supported those provided during the stakeholder interviews (see story page 1). When combined, this valuable information from the community is helping to guide the project team as it begins redesigning the roadway.

Preliminary studies help map project

First open house a starting point for next stage of study, review

Between the first project open house in October 2007 and now, the project team and City staff have been busy on a variety of preliminary studies. They include traffic analysis, verification of roadway configurations, review of project funding and budget, and review of land-use issues.

Preliminary findings indicate:

- Traffic volumes along the study area corridor are expected to double by the year 2030.
- A two/three-lane section* will provide adequate capacity for at least 15 years; however it will become congested by the year 2030.
- A four/five lane roadway will need to be considered for the future and reviewed with the proposed two/three-lane project, as well as with future development along the corridor.

*A two/three-lane section would include two travel lanes and either a median divider or center turn lane. A four/five-lane section would include four travel lanes and either a median divider or center turn lane.

Stakeholders

(continued from page 1)

What we will do

NE 137th/138th Avenue is defined as a "minor arterial." This means the roadway provides movement within subareas of the city and serves through-traffic for a localized area.

Mobility and safety are driving forces behind this project and stakeholder input confirmed their importance. The project design will address these issues with improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities as well as a wider roadway and other features to be determined. The City will also work to coordinate construction to minimize impacts on corridor residents, surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, and services providers such as C-TRAN, US Postal Service, and Evergreen School District.

The project team will also continue to listen to and talk with local residents and agencies to coordinate construction activities and address local issues, concerns, and expectations as the project design moves forward.

What can we do to make the corridor a "Great Street"?

The NE 137th/138th Avenue corridor will be redesigned to address current needs and serve a growing area for at least the next two decades. One question driving the project team as it works with the community to develop the roadway design is, "What can we do to go from a road improvement project to a community enhancement project that will make the NE 137th/138th Avenue corridor a "Great Street"? What is a "Great Street"? A "Great Street" will:

- Change the public perceptions of the corridor through streetscape and transportation improvements. It will make the corridor a great place in Vancouver.
- Transform the roadway and intersections into environmentally friendly and usable community open spaces.
- Change the existing corridor function from being a place just for vehicles to a street that encourages healthy pedestrian- and transit-based activities and, consequently, supports the city's air quality and transportation goals.
- Transform the corridor into a place that is memorable — a great place to walk, bike, and drive.
- Make the street a vital neighborhood asset and increase the community's pride in this investment.

To meet future needs, the project design intends to improve the safety of the road, provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and include other design features to maximize safety for drivers and all users of the corridor. These improvements will be combined with other features involving, for example, landscaping, intersections, access, and environmental considerations. The public process will incorporate all these factors to produce community input for creating a "Great Street."

Next Steps

Spring 2008	Traffic studies and concept design
Summer 2008	Second open house
Summer-Fall 2008	Preliminary design, technical studies, and third open house to review project progress
Fall 2008 – Summer 2009	Final design/plans, final open house
2010-2011	Construction (pending funding)

Example Roadway Configuration: Two/Three-Lane Minor Arterial

