

CHARTER

Public Involvement Process

Island Crest Way Project

On June 2, 2008, the City Council approved changing Island Crest Way (between SE 42nd Street and SE 53rd Place) from the current four-lane configuration to a three-lane configuration. The decision came after significant levels of engineering analysis, council discussion and public involvement – primarily focused on the intersection of Island Crest Way and Merrimount Drive.

In its discussions, the Council strove to address known vehicular safety concerns, improved turning movements to side streets, pedestrian and bicycle safety and “throughput” of vehicles traveling through the ICW corridor and the cost of improvements. The City Council considered many different solutions and, in the end, determined the three-lane configuration as the most effective alternative.

The Council has also clearly heard from some Mercer Island residents concern that the decision will not produce the desired results. The Council takes these concerns seriously.

Consequently, the City Council has determined the following:

1. Implementation of the decision will be reconsidered after a thorough public involvement process is completed. This means all final design efforts will cease during this public involvement effort; and
2. The City Council shall set out the minimum set of goals or criteria for the Island Crest Way corridor under discussion. The goals include:
 - Improve safety at key intersections (e.g. Merrimount)
 - Maintain or improve travel times on and across the corridor (volumes and posted speed limits)
 - Provide for safe pedestrian and bicycle use of the corridor.
 - Develop solutions that are fiscally responsible.
 - Remain consistent with sustainability language in the City’s Comprehensive Plan specifically regarding start and stop issues.
 - Analysis of Island Crest Way will include the evaluation of northbound and southbound peak periods.

The public involvement process shall be conducted according to the following parameters:

Timeframe: Commenced in the fall of 2008 and shall be completed in the spring of 2009; the proposed schedule is attached.

Project Boundaries: The project will focus on the Island Crest Way corridor and its cross-street intersections. It will not extend beyond SE 42nd Street to the north and Landsdowne Lane to the south.

Participation: A panel of approximately 15 citizens plus two Council members shall be selected by the Mayor and approved by the City Council to participate in the process. Citizens will be selected according to the interests they represent including by geographic location (south, west, north, east or on ICW) and mode of transportation used (vehicle, bike, pedestrian). Participants will be expected to attend all meetings (emergencies excepted).

Public Meetings: All meetings will be public. Non-participants will be welcome to observe. An opportunity for public comment will be provided at each meeting.

Staff/Consultants: The Public Process will be facilitated and “serviced” by City Staff and retained engineering consultants. The Assistant City Engineer will serve as overall Project Manager and coordinator. The City’s Communications Coordinator will provide meeting facilitation and logistics including meeting notices, minutes and information dissemination and arrangements for meeting facilities, tours and field trips. KPG Engineering will provide all technical analyses and production/presentation of text and graphical materials.

Costs: the public involvement process will require consultant work and other incidental meeting expenses estimated at \$ 52,000.