Greenways Go To School

The Vision. Imagine a cluster of neighborhood schools linked by quiet residential streets where children and adults can safely choose to walk or ride their bicycles. Traditional Safe Routes to School Programs tend to focus on transportation safety immediately adjacent to a single school. Greenways Go To School is an innovative pilot program intended to link schools within a one-mile radius with safety improvements in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and in the process provide a network of routes (called Neighborhood Greenways) and increase the number of children who can safely choose to walk and bike to school and after-school activities.

What are Neighborhood Greenways? Neighborhood Greenways provide safer, quieter alternatives for people to walk and bike while making neighborhood streets more pleasant for everyone. People can continue to drive and park on Neighborhood Greenways. Greenways use signs, pavement markings, and traffic calming elements along the road to help prioritize people who walk or bike. The biggest construction costs for Greenways are building safe ways across busy streets. Seattle is embarking upon a citywide program to build a network of Greenways linking people to the places they want to go – parks, schools, shopping, transit stops and community centers. Greenways Go To School will focus Greenway development between schools, resulting in an outcome where children and adults can choose a safe and healthy alternative to travel to and from school.

Neighborhood Greenways Change the Picture of Walking or Biking to School

To learn more about Seattle Neighborhood Greenways
* www.facebook.com/SEAGreenways
* www.neighborhoodgreenwayssea.wordpress.com
* www.twitter.com/SNGreenways
* www.groups.google.com/group/seattle-greenways-organizers
Walking and biking to school remains a challenge for children in Northwest Seattle. Arterial streets with high-speed traffic crisscross our neighborhoods and traffic is busiest when children travel to and from school. Local residents (Ballard and Phinney/Greenwood Greenways) are working to develop a network of safe streets known as Neighborhood Greenways. This network will form a grid of quiet, residential streets that are parallel to the main arterials and connect our schools, parks, residential areas, community centers, transit hubs, libraries and business districts.

The City is building two Neighborhood Greenways in 2012-2013: 1st Ave NW (between NW 85th St. & NW 56th St.) and NW 57th/58th St. (between Seaview Ave NW & 4th Ave NW). These two Greenways will pass within a few blocks of 5 elementary schools, including Adams and Greenwood Elementary Schools, which have the highest proportion of children receiving free lunches in the area (29% and 36%, respectively).

Greenways Go To School Northwest Seattle proposes to build two connector segments (1, 2) and one new Greenway (3) (see map).

- **Segment 1**: NW 73rd St. between 1st Ave NW and 6th Ave NW
- **Segment 2**: 6th Ave NW between NW 73rd St. and NW 58th St.
- **Segment 3**: NW 70th St. between 6th Ave NW and 28th Ave. NW

Building these three segments will raise the number of schools within a half-mile of safe, traffic-calmed routes to a total of nine:

- **Adams Elementary**: 6110 28th Ave N, 433 students
- **Greenwood Elementary**: 144 NW 80th St., 433 students
- **Loyal Heights Elementary**: 2511 NW 80th St., 395 students
- **Matheia School** (K-5), 2205 NW 67th St, 45 students
- **Salmon Bay School** (K-8) 1810 NW 65th St., 236 students
- **St. Alphonsus** (K-8) 5815 15th Ave NW, 194 students
- **St. John’s School** (K-8) 121 N 80th St., 535 students
- **West Woodland Elementary**: 5601 4th Ave NW, 459 students
- **Whittier Elementary**: 1320 NW 75th St., 453 students

By leveraging city funding, Greenways Go To School will bring communities together and provide safe routes to schools and other frequent destinations for families. Although high schools are not within scope of the SRTS program, this project has the additional benefit of providing a safe route within 1 block of Ballard High School. These routes also lay the groundwork for future greenways on 17th Ave NW and 28th Ave NW that will improve access to Whitman Middle and North Beach Elementary Schools. Safe, pleasant routes will make walking and cycling a comfortable and inviting option for families in northwest Seattle.
“Greenways Go To School” – Beacon Hill Proposal
WDOT Safe Routes to School Program 2012 Grant Cycle

Walking and biking to school is a unique challenge on Beacon Hill due to our topography and heavy traffic volumes in the morning and afternoon. But now that the Seattle Public Schools has reorganized reference areas, families once again live close enough to walk or bike to school. Recognizing this opportunity neighbors on Beacon Hill formed Beacon BIKES (Better Infrastructure Keeping Everyone Safe) to develop a network of safe streets to connect our schools to parks, residential areas, community centers, transit hubs, libraries, and business districts.

With a grant from the city we hired Alta Planning and Design to develop a plan for a Neighborhood Greenway network on Beacon Hill. This network plan is built around a main Greenway corridor or “spine” that runs the length of the hill connecting Judkins Park, Daejeon Park, Lewis Park, Jose Rizal Park, Stevens Park, Jefferson Park, Mapleview Park, and the Georgetown Playground. This 3-mile spine (all on quite residential streets or separated paths) also connects the following 6 schools: Washington Middle School, Thurgood Marshall Elementary, Asa Mercer Middle School, Maple Elementary School, St. George K-8, and Cleveland High School.

The City plans to implement this 3-mile Neighborhood Greenway route in 2012-2013. However, there is one missing link in the route: the 16th Ave S gravel road that runs along the western edge of Jefferson Park. **Our proposal is to turn 16th Ave S (an abandoned gravel road) between S Spokane St and S Dakota Street into a multi-use trail that will both connect the Greenway route through the park and connect Asa Mercer Middle School to the Greenway.** The project would also entail traffic calming and improved bicycle and pedestrian safety along the paved section of 16th Ave S between S Dakota St and Columbian Way S. This area is busy in the morning with drop off traffic. The improvements will make access to the school much safer. The traffic issues around the school are an issue for the PTA, who are currently applying for a city Neighborhood Project Fund grant to improve traffic conditions on the Columbian Way side of the school. Our proposed trail project would complement the Columbian Way work and is supported by the PTA.

Having one clearly marked, safe, low stress, and gentle grade route connecting all these vital neighborhood resources will be a boon for our community and fits perfectly with the vision of the Safe Routes to School program.