

# ALLENTOWN COMMUNITY MEETING

January 24, 2023 at 5:30pm

Tukwila Community Center

## AGENDA

### Welcome & Introductions

- Residents, City staff, and HDR consultants introduced themselves and shared their favorite thing about Allentown.
- Adam Teepe and Dennis Sandstrom, consultants from HDR, introduced themselves and experience with similar EIS projects.
- Council Members Kruller and Hougarty were in attendance.
- Mayor Ekberg was in attendance.
- City staff in attendance included David Cline, Hari Ponnekanti, Mark Hafs, Josh Hartley, Brittany Robinson, Adam Cox, and Griffin Lerner.

### 42nd Ave S Raised Crosswalk Grant Application Results

The City of Tukwila received a grant award from the Transportation Improvement Board for \$175,000 to design and construct a raised crosswalk on 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave S at the S 119<sup>th</sup> street bridge crossing. Project elements will include the raised crosswalk, as well as a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) and curb bulb outs to increase pedestrian visibility and reduce traffic speeds.

Design work will begin in March and the construction will take place during the summer and fall of 2023. The project is anticipated to be fully complete by the end of the year.

### Truck Reroute EIS Project

HDR consultants, Adam Teepe and Dennis Sandstrom, presented information about the EIS process and what to expect over the next 18 months.

### EIS Process

An EIS is required by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). It will help identify potential alternatives, determine how they might impact the project area and the people in it, and select alternatives that best achieve project goals. The process is focused on making project decision open and transparent, and ensuring that documents prepared as part of the EIS are clear and understandable to members of the public and stakeholders who want to review and comment on project planning and design.

#### 1. Scoping - Looking to community for input on what we should be analyzing in the EIS

- The first step of the EIS process is to gather feedback from residents, businesses, and the greater community to learn about their needs, desires, and concerns, and places and things in the project area that they value and want to protect.

- A Determination of Scoping Notice will kick off a 30-day public comment period during which residents, stakeholders, and agencies comment on potential truck reroute alternatives and what they believe the EIS should be analyzing.
- The 30-day comment period for the scoping notice and determination of significance will begin on February 14, 2023, and close on March 15, 2023. Public and stakeholder comments are due by 5:00 p.m., March 15, 2023.
- Public comments made during the scoping period will be used to help define what truck route alternatives are considered for further design and analysis.
- Starting out, we have only a general sense of what the issues are, so it will be important that the community gives their input to HDR, including ideas for routes and a perspective that comes from familiarity with the areas that alternative truck routes might affect.
- As part of the EIS, HDR will analyze the five truck route alternatives that were looked at in the 2016 truck route study. They'll also take a fresh look at the project, with the goal of proposing new alternatives that haven't been considered before, and reconsidering the original alternatives to make them work better.
- People who were involved with past efforts to reroute truck traffic might notice that the questions we're asking are similar to ones you've been asked before, but it's important that everyone share this information again during the scoping process so that it can be documented as part of the official EIS process.
- If you have ideas on who should be involved in the EIS process (people, businesses, etc.) Mark Hafs at [mark.hafs@tukwilawa.gov](mailto:mark.hafs@tukwilawa.gov).
- We will have an open house where you can learn about the project; the open house will be on February 28th, at 5:30 pm, at the Tukwila Community Center.
- We'll also be letting you know about other ways that you provide public comment – for example a project email address - [AllentownTruckReRoute@TukwilaWA.gov](mailto:AllentownTruckReRoute@TukwilaWA.gov), a survey that can be dropped off at the open house or mailed to us, and a survey on the project website - <https://www.tukwilawa.gov/departments/public-works/construction-projects-and-transportation-impacts/allentown-truck-reroute-project/> .
- All public comment must be received in written form by March 15, 2023 to be included as an official part of the EIS.
- We will continue to have forums for community input as initial draft alternatives are being considered, including a second open house where you'll get a chance to look at and comment on the project engineers' initial draft for truck reroute alternatives.
- At the second open house, you'll also have a chance to tell the project planners and engineers whether the initial draft alternatives they're showing us are on the right track, to talk with them about their thinking about the initial draft alternative designs, and to offer your input.

## **2. Draft EIS - use that feedback to create a draft EIS and do an analysis of the environment**

- At the end of the scoping period, our consultant team at HDR will take the community feedback they've gotten and use it to help narrow down the alternatives to be further studied.
- The alternative selection process will look at the feasibility of each alternative, and possible impacts to existing conditions and resources in the project area.
- For each alternative, HDR will be looking at anywhere from 10 - 15 resources, such as water and air quality, plants and animals, traffic, noise, vibrations, aesthetics, etc.

- For each of these resources, specialists on HDR’s team will prepare an extensive report for a range of resources found in the project area that will detail the existing conditions, how the proposed truck reroute alternatives could affect them (both adverse and beneficial impacts), and what can be done to avoid or mitigate potential impacts.
- HDR’s team will need to do a lot of on the groundwork to look into environmental impacts and then prepare the resource reports, which is why the process takes as long as it does.
- The City will continue to be communicate with the public during this time. There might be times when it is too early to say what the alternatives will be, or what sorts of effects they might cause, but we’ll continue to give you updates.

### **3. Public Comment Period – public and stakeholders review the draft EIS and provide comments**

- The draft EIS – including alternative designs and the reports on resources in the project area - will be accessible to the public and stakeholders in April 2024 as part of a required public comment period.
- After the draft EIS is issued, the community will have an option to review the alternatives the project engineers have been working on, as well as on the analysis of likely effects of the alternatives, and then provide the project team with feedback.
- Although the alternatives will be more developed than the ones shown at the second public open house, they’ll still be drafts, meaning that community input will be needed to make sure the alternative designs are on the right track.
- During the public comment period, the public can provide formal comment on anything in the EIS, such as the effectiveness of truck route alternatives, or whether the technical reports on project area resources have missed something.

### **4. Final EIS – taking the input and making final changes to EIS**

- After the public comment period for the draft EIS, the project team will look over comments we’ve received and consider how to incorporate them into the final design.
- With all the information and input gathered by the project team, HDR’s engineers will prepare a final design for truck route alternative/alternatives, and we’ll publish the preliminary final EIS.
- The preliminary final EIS will give the public and stakeholders one more chance to review and give input on the project during a 30-day public comment period, after which we’ll issue the final EIS.
- After the final EIS is published, it is relevant for about 5 years. After that, the information tends to get stale due to the consistently changing nature of conditions in project areas.

### **Questions and Answers**

#### **Q: Who is the point person if I have questions or comments about the EIS process?**

A. Mark Hafs ([mark.hafs@tukwilawa.gov](mailto:mark.hafs@tukwilawa.gov))

#### **Q: Who is coming up with the other potential alternatives?**

A. It will be a collaborative effort with the City, HDR, and the community. It will be important for the community to share its ideas and knowledge in the scoping process.

#### **Q: Is HDR in contact with BNSF as part of the EIS?**

A: Yes, we will connect with them as part of the scoping process.

**Q: How are you reaching out to get the news out about public outreach?**

A: We'll be putting out notices in a few different places - for example, press releases, emails, and through a formal notice from the Department of Ecology. HDR and City are also working together to use the City's information networks, such as Tukwila's Facebook account.

**Q. When will the date be finalized for the scoping meeting? And how will you inform the community?**

A. We'll be holding an open house at the Tukwila Community Center on February 28, 5:30 to 7:00. We're also sending this information out through the Hazelnut, the project website, the Allentown email, the City Facebook page and other social media. Outreach will be conducted in multiple languages.

**Q. How are potential alternative truck routes being evaluated? Will the public and stakeholders be consulted during evaluation of alternative routes?**

A. The project team will be using a matrix for assessing the benefits and adverse effects of the alternatives, and then ranking them for feasibility. We'll use the information in the matrix to determine which of the alternatives we should pursue further, and which ones don't achieve project goals. Things we'll likely be considering in the matrix will include whether an alternative helps reduce truck traffic in Allentown, how does it affect noise, vibration, air and water quality, wildlife, parks, etc., and whether it's constructable, affordable, and permissible.

**Q: Should the first public comment section be moved back to March 2023, so we have time to reach out to Sound Transit, BNSF, and others to get their feedback?**

A: We think that we should begin the public outreach part of the EIS on the original schedule. The EIS process has some flexibility, so if we find that the project will benefit from further input from the public and stakeholders, we can always extend the public comment to accommodate that. And we will continue to have check-ins outside of public comment period, although it won't be part of the official project record.

**Q: What is the difference between the formal and informal record. Is it all part of the SEPA process?**

A: The formal public comment period is a part of SEPA-required public outreach. We will take comments throughout the life of the project, but to be part of the formal record, comments must be submitted in writing within formal comment periods. All other comments/input are considered informal.

**Q: Will the final EIS make a recommendation to preferred alternative?**

A: A preferred alternative isn't required by SEPA, and we won't be able to make a decision on this until we see how well each of the proposed alternatives achieves project goals. Ultimately the City will make this decision, with input from citizens and stakeholders.

**Q: After the EIS is complete and an alternative is selected, will we need a second SEPA process?**

A: probably not; that would only need to happen if the City decided to substantially change a proposed alternative or propose an alternative that hasn't been considered up to that point.

**Q: Are you going to have one public meeting, or will there be multiple?**

A: Currently, we are planning on just one meeting, but the SEPA process allows for expanding the comment period if additional community input would be beneficial. And throughout the project, the public and stakeholders will still be able to give input in the same way they are currently.

**Comments about scoping process:**

- There are a lot of programs with kids and others using the community center. It would be important to get their feedback. They are not in this room right now.
- BNSF and Sound Transit should be involved in the scoping process.

**Next Meeting: February 28, 2023 at 5:30pm, Tukwila Community Center**