



NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC news

Working together to make your neighborhood a safer place to live!

BELLEVUE NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM

Dear Lakehurst Lane residents,

Over the past three months the City of Bellevue has been reviewing concerns shared by several residents in your neighborhood about Lake Washington Blvd, south of the Newcastle Beach Park. We have completed our field review and studies of this area. The results of these efforts, as well as our recommendations, are detailed in this report.

Users of the roadway include residents living on Lakehurst Lane, Newcastle Beach Park patrons, in addition to bicyclists and pedestrians accessing the Lake Washington Loop Trail. This roadway also serves as the only emergency response route for Newcastle Beach Park patrons and residents living north of the Exit 9 overpass.

What can be done to address vehicle speeds on Lake Washington Blvd?

City staff conducted a speed and volume study in August of this year on Lake Washington Blvd SE, just north of SE 50th Street. The results of this and previous speed studies conducted in 2006 are shown in the table below.

Date Conducted	Volume Recorded	85th %tile Speed	85th %tile Speed	Average Speed
8/4/09 Tuesday	510 Vehicles (24 Hrs)	34 MPH* Northbound	34 MPH* Southbound	29 MPH
8/8/09 Saturday	569 Vehicles (24 Hrs)	36 MPH* Northbound	34 MPH* Southbound	29 MPH
4/3/2006 to 4/10/2006	3273 Vehicles (1 Week)	37 MPH* Northbound	36 MPH* Southbound	29 MPH

*the speed at which 85% of traffic is traveling at or below. Fifteen percent of traffic is traveling above this speed. The posted speed limit is 25 MPH.



425-452-6856
City of Bellevue
Transportation Department



Speed Limit

The Transportation Department reviewed the 25 mph speed limit on Lake Washington Blvd in your neighborhood. Speed limits are generally set to reflect reasonable and safe conditions as reflected by the travel of a majority of drivers. Setting speed limits unreasonably low not only results in severe violation of the speed limit but interferes with the preservation of uniform travel speeds which in turn can lead to additional safety concerns. Our investigation finds that it would not be appropriate to lower the speed limit beyond the current 25 mph.

There have also been questions raised in regard to the lower speed within the Newport Beach park. The area signed at 10 to 15 mph is within the park itself which is not designated public right-of-way. Because of this, it is regulated differently than public right-of-way streets. The Parks Department, which manages this portion, has set the speed limit at the lower level to reflect the parking lot character of this area.



Lake Washington Blvd Existing Signing

Installing Speed Humps

Regarding requests to add speed humps accessing Newcastle Beach Park, the installation of traffic calming devices on Lake Washington Blvd is not feasible due to the impact they would have on the Fire Department. The average emergency response time for accessing Newcastle Beach Park is nearly 8 minutes, substantially above the Fire Department's goal of 6 minutes or less. This area is isolated due to its single access point, and as such, response times for second tier emergency responders (engine or medic unit) are even longer than those of the first responder. Traffic calming devices would increase response times.

Police Enforcement

In order to address concerns residents have with traffic speeds, the Police Department has taken the following actions:

- Notified Patrol and Traffic officers about the speeding and parking issues
- Notified motorcycle officers to work the area as often as possible in the rotation

We would encourage the residents that live in the area to call 911 at the time they witness illegally parked vehicles or a specific vehicle that is speeding. Warning letters regarding an incident not witnessed by the police will be issued to vehicle owners when a license plate and vehicle description is reported. To report non-emergency issues, residents are welcome to use the Police Online Complaint Form: www.bellevuewa.gov/Traffic_Service_Request.htm or call 425-452-6917.



Can a 3-way stop be installed at SE 50th/Lake WA BLVD?

The installation of stop signs is strictly regulated and must meet certain conditions for their installation in order to maintain safety. When stop signs are inappropriately installed, it can result in poor compliance with drivers either rolling through the stop signs or failing to stop altogether. When poor compliance occurs, it can lead to safety concerns for both motorists and pedestrians. Our experience finds that when intersecting roads have very unbalanced traffic, as is the case in this location, the compliance to stopping at a 3-way stop is poor. Based on our field investigation and engineering considerations, it would not be appropriate to install additional stop signs at this location.

Can a crosswalk be installed at SE 50th/Lake Washington BLVD?

The Transportation Department takes great care in considering new crosswalks and recognizes the importance of providing facilities that maintain a safe walking environment for pedestrians. For locations where the frequency of pedestrian use is low, as is the case here, drivers tend to tune out the occasional pedestrian crossing in the crosswalk. Since pedestrians often will use less care in a marked crosswalk than they would otherwise, it can lead to a more hazardous condition for certain situations. Our review of the location finds the current conditions to be appropriate and no changes are warranted at this time.

What additional signing and pavement markings can be installed to heighten motorists' and bicyclists' attention to the rules of road?

Dead End Signing for Lake Washington Blvd

There currently exists Dead End signing on Lake Washington Blvd in an appropriate location. No further signing is warranted.

Directional Signing to Park

There is currently directional signing to the park near the interchange off ramps. One additional sign could be installed near SE 50th Place (northbound direction only) to further encourage motorists not familiar with the area to continue straight ahead. This would be expected to reduce some of the turnaround movements within SE 50th Place, which is a concern based on resident comments.

Bicycle Signing

We are currently considering replacement signing for "Bikes Ride Single File." These signs are non-standard and solely advisory. Options for their replacement are being evaluated, and may include more standard "share the road" type signing.



Lake Washington Blvd Existing Signing



Are the current “No Parking Anytime” signs sufficient to enforce parking restrictions?

East Side of Lake Washington Blvd

A review of the “No Parking” signing has shown that it is sufficient to prohibit parking within the pedestrian/bike shoulder. Vegetation has been trimmed around many signs for better visibility.

West Side of Lake Washington Blvd

There are places along the west side of Lake Washington Blvd where a vehicle could legally park beyond the existing white edge stripe. This is infrequent but can occur during certain events at the park.



Parking Restriction on East Side



Railroad Crossing Near Park

Parking Near Railroad Crossing

According to RCW 46.61.570 no person shall park within 50 feet of a railroad crossing. We can consider some parking restrictions signing near the railroad crossings in this area to reinforce the existing state law if this is continuing to occur.

Parking Enforcement

Where parked vehicles are either in the pedestrian/bike shoulder area, are parked such that they extend beyond the white edge stripe, or are within 50 feet of a railroad crossing, residents should call 911 to request police enforcement. To report non-emergency issues, please call 425-45-6917, or use the Police Online Complaint Form found at: www.bellevuewa.gov/Traffic_Service_Request.htm.

What can be done to address sight-distance concerns and visibility?

SE 50th/Lake Washington Blvd Intersection

Sight-distance was reported to be a concern at the SE 50th/ Lake Washington stop sign. It was evaluated and determined that placement of a new stop bar would help define the proper place to stop. This stop bar has recently been installed.

The current placement of the stop sign is the optimal location for visibility. Approaching vehicles to the stop sign are traveling very slowly since they must first travel over the railroad crossing to their approach to the stop sign. No trimming or relocation of stop sign at this intersection is warranted.

Lake Washington Bike Trail Entrance

As for concerns with visibility near the bike trail entrance from Lake Washington Blvd, Bellevue's Maintenance staff trimmed vegetation around the trail entrance and improved the lines of sight for users. No additional brush removal is planned at this time.

What can be done about illegal dumping?

A pile of debris, which was illegally dumped in the bus turn-around area, has been removed by City crews. A police report was filed in order to document the costs associated with the clean-up. Should the perpetrators be found in the future, they will be billed for the work. Please call 911 if you witness illegal dumping in this area in the future.



Recent Illegal Dumping Site

What efforts are the Parks Department undertaking?



Newcastle Beach Park

Park Rentals

The rental office will be assigning a staff member at the park during weekends and certain busy weeknight evenings to monitor picnic rentals. The Rental Monitor will ensure that groups have all the correct permits and they are adhering to park rules and policies. During scheduled busy weekends, extra monitoring and staffing will be assigned to the park. Large groups will have to reserve multiple sites to assist in limiting the size and number of groups at the park at one time. Larger groups will also need to have a parking plan that includes shuttles, carpooling or alternatives. Groups of certain sizes will be limited to parking in the overflow lot only.

Garbage Pick-up

We will improve communication on garbage pick-up prior to and during weekend times. This will better ensure the cleanliness of the park. Flyers and garbage bags will be distributed to all rental groups asking them to please clean up after themselves. We will also include a small map to where the dumpster and garbage totes are located.

Enforcing Parks Rules and Codes

We will stress continued vigilance by Park Rangers and all Parks Department staff on public use of parks, and compliance with park rules and codes. We will continue to review and discuss these options and others throughout the year to help ensure a positive experience for picnic rental groups, other park patrons, and park neighbors alike.



Where can concerns regarding the Exit 9 overpass be directed?

Sight-distance

The northbound off ramp from I-405 to Lake Washington Blvd has some vegetation which should be trimmed or removed to improve visibility. The City of Bellevue forwarded the concern on to WSDOT for corrective action.

Crosswalk and All-way Stop Requests for Exit 9

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has jurisdiction over the operation and traffic control choices for interstate interchanges in the state. The City of Bellevue forwarded these concerns on to WSDOT to evaluate the appropriateness of installing crosswalks or changing the traffic control for the interchange ramp intersections. If you have additional questions about WSDOT controlled areas, please contact Jerry Althaus, WSDOT Maintenance/Operations Superintendent, at 253-372-3901 or althaug@wsdot.wa.gov.

Conclusion

We appreciate all of the concerns residents have brought to our attention and hope our findings and recommendations meet with your needs. Several City Departments have been instrumental in addressing the numerous issues expressed by Lakehurst Lane residents. Any further questions or comments would best be addressed by the contacts listed below.

City of Bellevue Contacts

Department	Issue	Staff	Contact Information
Transportation	Neighborhood Services; Traffic Calming	Karen Gonzalez	425-452-4598 kgonzalez@bellevuewa.gov
Transportation	Traffic Operations— Crosswalks; Stop Signs	Kurt Latt	425-452-6020 klatt@bellevuewa.gov
Fire	Emergency Response	Ken Carlson	425-452-6874 kcarlson@bellevuewa.gov
Police	Speeding; Parking Enforcement	—	911 425-452-6917
Parks	Newcastle Beach Park	Jonathan Wilson	425-452-4278 jwilson@bellevuewa.gov
Utilities	Street Maintenance; Brush Trimming	—	425-452-7840 omsupport@bellevuewa.gov

