BLUEPRINT

FOR A BIKEABLE AND WALKABLE
QUEEN ANNE

QUEEN ANNE GREENWAYS

DRAFT: DECEMBER 9, 2013
Queen Anne Greenways formed in November 2012 when several interested community members gathered to share concerns about safe walking and cycling on and around our neighborhood. Queen Anne Greenways is affiliated with Seattle Neighborhood Greenways, a volunteer coalition representing many neighborhoods across Seattle. Seattle Neighborhood Greenways was formed in August 2011 to plan and advocate for safe, equitable, and comfortable streets connecting us to the places we use, whether we walk, drive, ride a bike, push a stroller, or move by wheelchair.

After dozens of meetings and hundreds of conversations with members of the community, we have selected the seven most important investments we can make to provide non-motorized transportation options that are safe and convenient.

DEVELOP ESSENTIAL CORRIDORS

1. Build a high-quality greenway along the crown of Queen Anne

As the first major step towards realizing our vision, we seek the construction of a high-quality greenway on the crown of Queen Anne Hill by the end of 2015.

Why a greenway on the crown of Queen Anne Hill and not some other objective?

- The crown greenway is one of a handful of Queen Anne greenways drawn as part of Seattle’s Bicycle Master Plan.

- Of the greenways indicated in Seattle’s Bicycle Master Plan, the crown greenway is the only one that links all three public elementary schools, plus one private elementary school.

- The crown greenway touches nearly every corner of the neighborhood, putting more people within reach of a greenway sooner.

- The crown greenway potentially links a very large number of bicycle and pedestrian routes, including existing and planned bikeways and many of Queen Anne’s famous stairways.

- The crown greenway, though it travels through more than three miles of hilly terrain, is itself unusually level.

- Proposed alignments for the crown greenway follow the route of historic Queen Anne Boulevard with its sweeping curves and stunning views has the potential to be the most gorgeous greenway in the city.

Why do we say the greenway must be “high-quality”? What does that mean anyway? It simply means we seek to build a greenway that helps make Queen Anne a healthy place where people of all ages and abilities have safe walking and cycling routes to work, school, shopping and home.
Unfortunately, it is possible to paint sharrows, erect signage and declare something a greenway without actually making it safer to walk or ride a bike, without creating a truly low-stress environment that encourages the broadest cross section of the community -- young and old, men and women, fearless and apprehensive -- out of their cars and into a more active and environmentally friendly mode of transportation.

Attributes of a high-quality greenway include:

- Slow cars: Speed humps every 350 feet, and a legal speed limit of 20 mph.
- Few cars: Daily traffic counts of 1,000 or fewer. To maintain this, consider blocking or diverting through-traffic by autos at some intersections.
- Easy crossings: Signs, medians and/or marked crosswalks at busy streets.
- Useful signage: Sharrows in the center of the roadway and directional signs at key intersections.
- Controlled intersections: Stop signs for every intersection, none facing the greenway unless necessary.

2. **Make the Lake to Bay Loop a reality.**

Originally imagined as the Potlatch Trail, this 3.2 mile figure 8 pedestrian route between Lake Union and Elliott Bay creates a vital and safe connection to some of Seattle’s civic treasures – Lake Union Park, Seattle Center, the Olympic Sculpture Park and Myrtle Edwards Park. While only separated by a mile, these attractions for residents and tourists have remained divided by Highway 99 and the “Mercer Mess.” The Lake to Bay Loop reconnects these neighborhoods with a safe, pleasant route for pedestrians and cyclists.

**FIX QUEEN ANNE’S MOST DANGEROUS CROSSINGS**

3. **Install pedestrian- and bicycle-activated safety treatments at Highland Drive as it crosses Queen Anne Avenue North.**

Queen Anne Avenue bisects the envisioned crown greenway at its midpoint, along Highland Drive, creating an inhospitable crossing for children walking east to Hay Elementary and other users of this most popular section of the historic boulevard. We are calling for safety treatments at this intersection that give priority to pedestrians and cyclists.

4. **Install a four-way stop and pedestrian crossing amenities at 7th Avenue West and West McGraw Street.**
This is a key crossing point for children traveling from west of 7th Avenue and south of McGraw Street to Coe Elementary School. Currently, the rounded, sweeping southwest corner of this intersection forces very long crossing distances while encouraging high motor vehicle speeds.

5. **Provide a safe pedestrian route from Olympic Way West to West Olympic Place at 8th Avenue West.**

This entire intersection is actively hostile to pedestrians. Persons pushing strollers or using wheelchairs are forced to traverse two streets with rapidly moving traffic to get from the top to the bottom of Queen Anne.

**MAKE KEY CONNECTIONS TO THE CITYWIDE NETWORK**

6. **Build a safe bike route from Uptown along Olympic Way and 10th Avenue West.**

Uptown is Queen Anne’s connection to the city center, yet Queen Anne’s bicycle and pedestrian connections to Uptown are underdeveloped. Olympic Way provides the most gradual ascent from Uptown to the business district and future greenways at the top of the hill. Tenth Avenue West is a classic overbuilt arterial with wide curb-to-curb widths along most of its path that make it a prime candidate for a cycle track. It is the most level and direct north-south route on the west side of the hill and yet is has no bicycle amenities.

7. **Rebuild Gilman Drive West as an arterial safe for pedestrians and cyclists.**

On dark, rainy nights, it sometimes appears Gilman has returned to a state of nature. Potholes, ruts, jagged shoulders, freely flowing rivulets of drainage and intermittent sidewalks present an inhospitable route for cyclists, pedestrians and drivers alike. As one of two main routes up the west side of the hill, this road could be an essential connector between greenways at the top and bottom of Queen Anne and between Queen Anne and the neighborhoods of Magnolia and Ballard.