



## **King County**

Department of Transportation  
**Road Services Division**  
201 South Jackson Street  
Seattle, WA 98104

December 14, 2010

# **Sylvester Road Bridge replacement Q&A**

## **■ Why does the bridge need to be replaced?**

The Normandy Park Public Works Department received a federal bridge grant to replace the Sylvester Road Bridge, which is on Sylvester Road SW near the boundary with the city of Burien. The current bridge was built in 1931. Today it is aging, structurally deficient, and load-limited to 15 tons. It has several significant cracks and areas of broken concrete, and it does not have adequate earthquake protection for this region. The replacement bridge will be wider and safer, will meet current capacity standards, and will improve motorized and non-motorized traffic flow.

## **■ How will the new bridge be better than the old one?**

The existing five-span, 220-foot-long bridge has two 10-foot-wide travel lanes, with no shy distance and a four-foot-wide sidewalk on the east side. The replacement will be a single-span, 220-foot-long concrete girder bridge with two 11-foot-wide travel lanes, a one-foot shy distance, and a five-foot-wide sidewalk on the west side. It will meet all current structural and safety standards.

## **■ What is the timeline for this project?**

The construction project will be advertised for bid in February 2011. Work is scheduled to begin in spring 2011 and to take about 6-8 months.

## **■ What is the role of King County Department of Transportation on this project?**

This project is funded with a federal bridge grant that is administered through the Washington State Department of Transportation. The Federal Highway Administration requires a qualified and certified agency to administer a project that it funds during the project's development and construction. The King County Department of Transportation is filling that role for this project at the request of the City of Normandy Park.

## **■ Will this project require closure of the road?**

Yes. The bridge will be closed during construction, and signs will direct traffic on a detour route around the closure. Other options were considered—including use of a temporary bridge, staged construction, and realignment of the existing road and bridge—but are not feasible in this case due to their cost, the position of the bridge on the hillside, adjacent property owners, existing utilities, the fact that they would lengthen the project's construction time, their environmental impacts, and their affects on traffic and the safety of construction personnel.

The City of Normandy Park realizes that Sylvester Road is a major transportation link in the area's road network and any construction project, no matter the size, poses an inconvenience for many commuters. Our goal is to minimize this impact while balancing the project's scope, schedule, and budget.

■ **What is the detour route?**

The signed detour route is about 2.5 miles long and will use 12th Place SW, SW 170th Street, 14th Avenue SW, and SW 160th Street. Traffic conditions will be monitored closely in the first two weeks, and the detour will be modified if needed.

■ **What is being done to reduce the project's affect on traffic during construction?**

The City of Normandy Park will coordinate with the City of Burien to accommodate the detour traffic, and will also coordinate with the sheriff's office, emergency services, and the construction contractor to ensure the best possible operations in the project area during the closure of the bridge. Area residents will receive updates via construction notices in the mail or via e-mail (to subscribe, send a request to [community.relations@kingcounty.gov](mailto:community.relations@kingcounty.gov)).

■ **How will the public be involved in this project?**

The project will be reported on the City of Normandy Park website. The city is also planning to hold a public open house in mid-December 2010 to inform affected agencies and the public about the project. The city has contacted the Highline School District and local fire, police, and emergency agencies to solicit their feedback and concerns about the project. In addition to the website update, two postcards will be mailed to residents in the area.

■ **What is the budget for this project?**

The current total budget for replacing the Sylvester Road Bridge is \$3.3 million. This covers the cost of engineering, environmental permitting, public involvement, agency coordination, right-of-way, construction, utility coordination, and construction administration engineering.

■ **What are the archaeological/historical findings in the area?**

The project site has no known archaeological significance or historical significance. However, discovery of archaeological resources during construction is always a possibility, and all project personnel are required to monitor for archaeological resources. If any archaeological materials are discovered during construction, work on the project will cease and the find will be reported to the King County archeologist.

**■ Why will the sidewalk be moved to the west side of the new bridge?**

The City of Normandy Park has future plans to add a new sidewalk on the west side of SW Sylvester Road. This new sidewalk will connect to the one on the bridge.

The city analyzed long-term safety and cost issues when choosing where to put the new sidewalk. Placing it on the east side of the road would require hundreds of feet of retaining walls. It might also require acquisition of right-of-way and/or construction easements, and would create sight-distance problems for motorists at several driveways.

After the bridge is built, the city plans to re-grade and clean up the west-side shoulders for improved pedestrian use. As the city begins to design future sidewalks in the area, it will work with residents and the City of Burien to address pedestrian needs along the entire SW Sylvester Road corridor.

**■ How can I learn more or comment on the project?**

If you have questions or comments about the project, or would like to sign up for e-mail updates, please contact King County at [community.relations@kingcounty.gov](mailto:community.relations@kingcounty.gov) or 206-263-9770. You may also call the City of Normandy Park Public Works Department at 206-248-8269.