

H. Transportation Impact Analysis

Existing Street System

The street system for Olde Town is comprised of four functional classifications, which provide various levels of mobility and access in the City. The classifications are: 1) principal arterial, 2) minor arterial, 3) collector, and 4) local access roadways. The characteristics of the major streets -- Front Street, Sunset Way and Newport Way -- are identified below. The classifications noted below reflect the City's adopted Functional Classification Plan. The existing street system is shown in **Figure IV-A**.

Principal Arterial

Front Street is a principal arterial extending north-south through downtown Issaquah. Front Street is four lanes wide north of the downtown and becomes a two-lane roadway with on-street parking south of NW Holly Street to Sunset Way (as it passes through Olde Town). South of Sunset Way, the roadway transitions to a three lane arterial section to 2nd Avenue SE. South of 2nd Avenue, Front Street narrows to two lanes to the southern City limits. Traffic volumes on Front Street N. are 40,669 average weekday daily traffic (AWDT) north of I-90, and about 21,755 AWDT south of NW Gilman Boulevard. The volume on Front Street is 11,110 AWDT north of Clark Street and 17,037 AWDT at the south city limits (1996 Public Works traffic counts). The Draft Plan proposes Front Street change its classification from Principal Arterial to Minor Arterial once the SE Issaquah Bypass is completed.

The speed limit is 35 mph on East Lake Sammamish Parkway entering the city from the north. It reduces to 25 mph at the I-90 interchange and continues at 25 mph through downtown. The speed limit then increases to 35 mph at the south City limit. The roadway surface along Front Street through Olde Town is generally in fair to poor condition, except for the section between Clark Street to 2nd Avenue SE, which was improved in 1987 and 1997.

Newport Way is a two-lane principal arterial extending northwest to southeast through the City. Traffic volumes on SE Newport Way are about 14,085 AWDT between NW Dogwood Street and West Sunset Way (1996, Public Works) The speed limit is 30 mph east of SR 900 and reduces to 25 mph at NW Alder Court. The roadway is in fair condition.

Minor Arterial

Sunset Way is a two-lane minor arterial with on-street parking through the cultural and business district (CBD). Traffic volumes are 3,720 AWDT east of 2nd Avenue NE and 6,325 AWDT west of 2nd Avenue NE. The speed limit is 25 mph between SE Newport Way and the eastern City limits. The pavement surface is good between Front Street and 2nd Avenue SE.

Minor Collector

Rainier Boulevard is a two-lane minor collector with on-street parking. The speed limit is 25 mph. The pavement surface is in fair to poor condition between Holly Street and Dogwood Street. Rainier Boulevard is proposed to have its classification changed from Minor Collector to Local Access.

2nd Avenue SE is a two-lane minor collector with no on-street parking designated. However, in the vicinity of the High School the shoulders are extensively used for on-street parking. The City allows on-street parking in this area. The speed limit is 25 mph. 2nd Avenue SE is proposed to have its classification changed from Minor Collector to Minor Arterial.

The remaining roads are considered local access roads. Local access roads would be those roads that serve the immediate land uses. Speed limits would be 25 mph or less.

Road Conditions

In 1995 the City prepared a Pavement Management Report. This report inventoried and analyzed the condition of all roads in Issaquah. Within the Olde Town area several roads were identified as being poor to very poor. The poor road conditions within Olde Town affect portions of 2nd Avenue NE, 6th Avenue NE, 5th Avenue NE, Newport Way SW, and 2nd Avenue SE. The roads in Olde Town rated fair include portions of NW Holly, 2nd Ave SE, SE Bush Street, West Sunset Way, and NE Alder Street. These poor and fair rated roads are shown on **Figure IV-F**.

**Figure IV-G
Road Conditions**

Signalized Intersections

There are four signalized intersections within Olde Town, which are served by fully actuated controllers. This means the signals are responsive to variations in traffic flow. The four signals have phases that allow for signal protection for turning vehicles. These signals could be expanded to provide 8 possible phases that would allow for protected left turn movements on any of the four legs of the intersection. The signalized intersections are shown on **Figure IV-A**.

Olde Town Circulation Changes

The Draft Plan states that the proposed Olde Town circulation changes would not take place until the SE Issaquah Bypass and Sunset Way Interchange are constructed. The intent of the circulation changes is to expand the grid established in Olde Town. Increasing north-south or east-west circulation traffic for local residents reduces dependence on Front Street and Sunset Way as the only primary source of access.

North-South Connections

The circulation changes would provide additional north-south connections at 1st Avenue NW to Rainier Boulevard N, 2nd Avenue NE to NE Dogwood and 3rd Avenue NE to Gilman Boulevard (as a future option to be considered). These three connections would reduce the dependence on Front Street for access to the Olde Town residents. Actual location of the extensions would occur after design and feasibility studies evaluate alternative locations and detailed environmental review for construction is complete.

1st Avenue NW: More traffic near the Front St/Dogwood street intersection will necessitate changes. Timing for the 1st Avenue NW connection to Rainier will have to wait until the Public Works Shops are moved from their current location to north of I-90. 1st Avenue NW as a two-way street connection north of NW Dogwood to Rainier Boulevard N will divert traffic that is otherwise forced to pass through the Rainier Boulevard/NW Dogwood/N. Front Street intersection. The connection could be potentially provided by extending the road through an existing parking lot (to the Darrell Scott Building) or by a bridge crossing over the East Fork of Issaquah Creek. The segment of 1st Avenue NW from Sunset to NW Dogwood is to convert to a one-way street with on-street parking. This segment is recommended to have a southbound direction. The intended southbound direction would support commercial/office and residential trips entering north of Olde Town.

2nd Avenue NE: Connecting 2nd Avenue NE to NE Dogwood would require the removal of two homes (one at the end of 2nd Avenue NE and one on the south side of NE Dogwood. Widening the 2nd Avenue NE roadway from NE Creekway to NE Dogwood would also be required.

3rd Avenue NE Bridge: At the later part of the 20- year planning period, the Draft Plan recommends that a connection of 3rd Avenue NE to Gilman Boulevard, across Issaquah Creek East Fork be considered. Strong neighborhood opposition has prevailed to this

connection in recent years, but with Sunset Interchange and the SE Issaquah Bypass established and in operation for several years, the 3rd Avenue bridge connection should be evaluated. To offset the increase in local traffic along 3rd Avenue, traffic calming measures (See “Traffic Calming discussion below) should be applied to this potential connection.

East-West Connections

Additional east-west connections would be possible at the realignment of NW and NE Dogwood Streets at Front Street and Rainier Boulevard North.

NW Dogwood/NE Dogwood Street Realignment: This realignment may take a variety of forms, but the objective is to use Dogwood Street for west-east travel and to provide a safer intersection of these streets with N. Front Street. The two possible alignments suggested in the Draft Plan have impacts to different segments of street and to adjoining property owners. Creating a traffic circle (or island) to connect NW and NE Dogwood Street to Front Street is complicated by the railway, and potential trolley use of the rail line. However, establishing a traffic circle (or island) will initiate traffic calming as drivers enter the historic business district of Olde Town. Realigning the Dogwood intersection will require right-of way to cross two or more properties. The resulting “jog” of Dogwood Street segments will not necessarily provide a 90 degree intersection with Front Street. Further design evaluation will be necessary to determine the preferable solution.

Traffic Calming

Taking measures to slow vehicle traffic is the essence of traffic calming. It goes hand in hand with giving priority to pedestrian circulation movements and making transit unimpeded by individual cars. Traffic calming will intentionally decrease the road capacity to move single occupant vehicles. Traffic calming is used so that shopping and residential vehicle traffic is slowed. It is implemented with measures such as 4-way stops, parking streets, traffic circles (or island) and speed bumps.

Front Street: Traffic calming will be used to modify Olde Town’s CBD into a slow driving and limited vehicle capacity area. By discouraging and slowing vehicle movement, safe pedestrian crossing and efficient bus loading will be facilitated. Potential four-way stops for all Front Street intersections between Dogwood Street and Bush Street will give equal access to pedestrian crossing and transit stops along Front Street. Creating a serpentine drive with angled parking (along Front Street or Rainier Boulevard N.) will slow the car speed and restrict daily trips.

1st Place NW: The Draft plan proposes eventually converting 1st Place NW into a one-way street with on-street parking. Initially the street would remain for two-way traffic. However, when substantial new or redevelopment in the area is complete, conversion as a one-way parking street will occur. This segment is recommended to have a northbound direction. This is to complement the 1st Avenue NW southbound one-way road. The road currently serves like an alley access, without a predominant role in the grid pattern. Using it

for CBD accessory parking and one-way circulation will allow it to be upgraded with landscaping, sidewalk and still require minimal additional right-of-way. The conversion would have the impact of limiting access for northbound trips, but would ease visitor access to parking.

Directing Circulation

Coordinated signage will be used to direct visitors to parking and attractions. New visitor traffic will need easy access to parking and clear/easy routes to enter and exit the CBD. This will be important when street conditions slow traffic so that directional signage is beneficial. It will also benefit truck/delivery service to business by providing clearly marked routes. Sidewalks from residential areas will be improved (incrementally over time) and will facilitate connections to the trail linking CBD to Gilman Village or natural resource trails (Tiger Mountain). Signs marking parks and connecting to regional trails will improve the utility of pedestrian/bicycle paths. Residents, workers and visitors will be able to easily follow the trail system for short, in town walks, or for long hikes.

Traffic Volumes

Over the initial part of the planning period, traffic volumes will increase with the increases offset by new roads and connections. The principal traffic carrying streets are Front Street, Sunset Way and Newport Way. In the future Sunset Way and 2nd Avenue S will be more heavily traveled, and the Sunset Interchange and SE Issaquah Bypass will provide a way to channel pass-through traffic and new traffic growth away from Olde Town's collector and local streets.

Table IV-3 shows the daily traffic flow on key street segments of Olde Town. These volumes are the total traffic on a street section during the PM Peak Hour. Turning movement counts recorded a high number of vehicles turning left, right or passing through an intersection from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM. This same table shows the projected increase in traffic by 2005 without construction of the SE Issaquah Bypass and with construction of the Bypass.

Olde Town Traffic Growth Without The Bypass

Without the SE Issaquah Bypass connecting to the Sunset Interchange, traffic will divert to 2nd Avenue S. as a bypass to Front Street. Year 2005 modeling prepared for the SE Issaquah EIS study indicates that 2nd Avenue S. PM Peak traffic will increase over four times the present levels. (**See Table IV-3.**) East Sunset will also experience volumes six times the current PM Peak hour volumes. Without the use of the SE Issaquah Bypass, the traffic volumes will decrease by 38% at the north end of Front Street and increase by 34% at the south end of Front Street.

Olde Town Traffic Growth With The Bypass

With the SE Issaquah Bypass connecting to the Sunset Interchange, traffic will divert to between the Sunset Interchange and south Issaquah. This connection will significantly reduce Front Street as the arterial for pass-through traffic, and in turn will allow changes to the Olde Town circulation to be made. Year 2005 modeling prepared for the SE Issaquah EIS study indicates that N. Front Street daily traffic will decrease by 52% of the 1997 PM Peak hour volumes, and at Front Street South will decrease by 63% of PM Peak. **(See Table IV-3.)** With the SE Issaquah Bypass in operation, Sunset Way will see an increase of 58% of its PM Peak hour volumes by 2005.

**Table IV-3
PM Peak Hour Volumes
1997 and 2005 (with and without the Bypass)**

Links	1997 Link Volumes	2005 Link Volumes (w/o Bypass)	2005 Link Volumes (w/ Bypass)
Front Street at Dogwood St	1,580	985	765
Front Street at 2 nd Ave S.	1,500	2,015	555
Sunset Way at 6 th Ave. NE	260	1,985	705
2 nd Avenue SE at High School	195	1,060	110
SE Bypass Road	N/A	N/A	510

Source: Draft Technical Report, SE Issaquah Bypass EIS

Note: The volumes identified for Olde Town does not reflect the proposed road extensions and traffic calming measures.

Long term changes

By the year 2015, the traffic daily volumes on Front Street south of Gilman Boulevard will either increase 16% without the SE Issaquah Bypass or decrease by 55% with the SE Issaquah Bypass. **(See Table IV-4.)** Front Street volumes will reduce to 45% of the current levels, with implementation of the SE Issaquah Bypass. This substantial traffic decrease will allow for the traffic calming measures to be implemented, because Front Street will not be utilized as a thoroughfare for traffic to and from I-90.

More noticeably, by 2015 the volumes on 2nd Avenue S will increase by 205% without the SE Issaquah Bypass but only increase by 46% with the SE Bypass. **(See Table IV-5.)** Second Avenue S. will experience volumes that are beyond its current capacity to handle without the SE Issaquah Bypass.

The SE Issaquah Bypass after 20 years will divert about 20 to 30% of the daily trips that pass through Olde Town. Sunset Way will be a more predominant road because of its

connection to the Sunset Interchange and SE Issaquah Bypass. The Market and Economic Conditions chapter discusses the commercial emphasis on Sunset as a cross road to Front Street. Future travel patterns and traffic volumes will support creating a crossroad commercial area. The added volumes will provide customer exposure for East Sunset Way's potential new neighborhood commercial and mixed use development. As Sunset become a more commercialized road, it will be important to retain the pedestrian walkability (by emphasizing the streetscape features).

**Table IV-4
AWDT Volumes
1997 and 2015**

Intersections	Average Weekday Daily Traffic Road Segments		
	1997	2015 Without Bypass	2015 With Bypass
Front Street			
• Front Street - south of Gilman Blvd.	21,775 ⁽¹⁾	25,350	9,700
• Front Street - southeast of 2nd Ave S.	17,037 ⁽¹⁾	20,900	5,300
SE Issaquah Bypass Road			
• SE Bypass Road	N/A	N/A	17,200
Sunset Way			
• Sunset Way - east of Newport	6,325 ⁽¹⁾	N/A	N/A
• Sunset Way at I-90	2,808 ⁽¹⁾	25,350	10,050
Newport Way			
• Newport Way north of Sunset Way	14,085 ⁽¹⁾	12,500	13,350
• Newport Way south of Sunset Way	10,294 ⁽¹⁾	N/A	N/A
Second Ave			
• 2nd Ave. south of Sunset	3,620	11,050	5,300

Source: Issaquah PW, Parsons Brinkerhoff

(1) These counts are areas with known traffic AWDT (1997).

(2) The 2015 AWDT counts were calculated from PM Peak Hour volumes.

Traffic Accidents.

Table IV-5 shows the number and area of traffic accidents in 1995 (most recent records). The Olde Town area with highest accident rate is along Front Street between Dogwood and Sunset with 14 accidents reported in 1995. Mid-block accidents occur often along Front Street. The other high accident areas (in descending order) were along 2nd Ave SE between Clark Street and the High School, Front Street between Sunset Way and Clark Street and E Sunset between Rainier Boulevard and Front Street.

**Table IV-5
1995 Road Segment Accident Areas**

Location	1995 Accidents
Front Street From Dogwood/Rainier intersection to Sunset Way	18
2nd Avenue between Clark Street and the High School	11
Front Street from Clark Street to Sunset Way And Sunset Way from 2 nd Avenue to Front Street	8
W. Sunset between Newport Way and Front Street	4
2nd Avenue S between Sunset Way and Clark Street	4
1st Avenue and 1st Place NW between NW Dogwood and Sunset Way	4
Front Street between Dogwood Street and Holly Street	3
2nd Avenue N between Birch Street and Sunset Way	3
Rainier Boulevard between Dogwood Street and Holly Street	2
NE Dogwood Street between Front Street and 1 st Avenue	1
Rainier Boulevard between Sunset Way and Alder Street	1

Source: Issaquah Public Works

The Draft Plan calls for improvement to the Front Street/Dogwood Street /Rainier Boulevard intersections, which has the highest occurrence of accidents within Olde Town. Recent signalization improvements to Front Street S. and 2nd Avenue S. should reduce the frequency of accidents. The third notable accident area is along S. Front Street and Sunset in the vicinity of the Front Street Market commercial center, City Hall and Boehm Pool. Reductions in vehicle traffic (diverted to the Bypass) will help reduce the incidence of accidents, but also traffic calming measures are intended to slow traffic and increase judgement time for making turns. (Notably the intersection of Front Street N. and Gilman Boulevard is outside of the Olde Town planning area, but its accident occurrence rate far exceeds any intersections in Olde Town.)

Sunset Interchange and SE Issaquah Bypass

The SE Issaquah Bypass (and Sunset Interchange) will significantly reduce the traffic through Olde Town and allow proposed circulation and parking changes. Convenient access to I-90 and the SE Bypass road would be essential for supporting the changes to Olde Town. The SE Issaquah Bypass will reduce traffic from Front Street at PM Peak, allowing traffic calming and more grid connections to be provided. The Bypass will be essential to reducing school related traffic (buses, employee and student drivers) on Front Street. New office development produced by the plan will use the Sunset Interchange and Bypass. Residents of Olde Town will have better access to I-90 and may avoid travel through the Front Street N. and Gilman Boulevard intersection. Construction of the Sunset Interchange and SE Issaquah Bypass will have a beneficial impact on Olde Town and is essential to the success of the Olde Town Subarea Plan.

Parking

The Draft Plan establishes a framework for implementing new parking options and increasing the number of spaces within Olde Town. However, the increase in parking is not made at the expense of Olde Town's walkability and transit accessibility. The Draft Plan emphasizes that increased parking should not be land intensive such that it replaces new and expanded Olde Town businesses.

The Draft Plan proposes to change the time availability, location and to increase the number of parking spaces provided within City streets. This is needed as new businesses are encouraged by the Draft Plan to locate in Olde Town. The creation of an organization, such as a district parking authority to establish and monitor parking (public and private) will improve the availability of parking by focusing on customers. The "parking authority" provides a group to establish parking as a beneficial enterprise for all merchants in Olde Town. New perimeter parking within the CBD will have a positive impact on businesses that depend on part of their customers to drive (such as specialty retail, restaurants, theater, banks and financial services, and offices). Clear signage that directs shoppers to parking will be essential to finding the existing and new parking spaces. Parking streets at Rainier Boulevard, 1st Place and 1st Avenue, and NE Creekway will be the source for new on-street spaces. Also, Front Street will provide additional on-street parking (at diagonal) if reconfigured for traffic calming. Parking not provided, or provided late in the planning period, will have an impact on spilling business parking onto the surrounding residential streets.

The addition of parking garages within Olde Town will benefit parking with minimal land area use. The Library parking garage will be the first of many parking facilities implemented in Olde Town. Future expansion of the Community Center is anticipated to provide additional parking, serving the Community Center, Boehm Pool and City Hall offices. A future potential location for a garage (between 1st Place NW and 1st Avenue NW) is encouraged to be primarily a private enterprise, serving the private businesses in downtown.

Increased traffic on 2nd Avenue S. will create conflicts with the on-street parking and will raise additional safety (street crossing) concerns, if the School District and City continue to allow overflow parking. The Draft Plan offers a framework for discussing High School overflow parking issues. The success of a parking strategy for Olde Town should include its school-related drivers.

The Draft Plan recommends a change of the Land Use Code to require fewer on-site parking spaces. Providing fewer on-site spaces will take parking capacity from existing on-street and parking lot spaces. However, the Parking Utilization Study in Historic Downtown Issaquah (February 1998) found that many of the on-street spaces underutilized. (See **Figure IV-I**.)

Transit

There are six transit routes serving the Issaquah area. Most transit service focuses on peak hour commuter runs to Seattle along the I-90 corridor. (See **Figure IV-J.**)

Metro has recently increased the number of transit routes and frequency in Issaquah. The potential addition of a Park and Ride along the south terminus of the bypass is a great opportunity to divert cars from the Issaquah Park and Ride, thereby allowing more visitors that could use the shuttle. Most transit service focuses on peak hour commuter runs to Seattle along the I-90 corridor, but destinations of University of Washington, downtown Bellevue, Bellevue Community College, Redmond Park and Ride lots and North Bend are also accessible from Issaquah. The Issaquah Shuttle (Route 200) provides good in-city transit service to shopping areas for residents of Olde Town. The service is about every 30 minutes from downtown passing both the senior center and the community center on its way to the Issaquah Park and Ride. Linking parking to the shuttle could allow for fewer vehicles and less parking located in Olde Town, but still be as accessible to Front Street businesses.

Other forms of transit are also available. The Far West Taxi Company serves the City and the Sammamish Plateau with taxi service. The Airport shuttle service stops at the Holiday Inn – Issaquah, and shuttles to the SeaTac Airport. The Issaquah Senior Center has a mini-van service for senior citizens to accomplish errands, shopping, appointments and recreation. The frequency of the service varies with demand.

The Draft Plan coordinates the existing transit services with new supplemental transit (transit center, transit hub and trolley). The improvements support many of the needs for transit, by making pedestrian access to transit and bringing a transit hub (transit center) into the center of Olde Town, where pedestrian activity is higher than any other part of the city. With a high rate of pedestrian/transit usage, the transit may be able to support Metro/Shuttle service increases to every 10 to 15 minutes. It may be possible to reintroduce Greyhound service with the Metro and RTA service at the transit center. Continued support for the local (Route 200) shuttle service is identified, along with the support for Metro's connection to Issaquah P & R and future transit center inside the CBD. While not providing specific recommendations, the Draft plan looks to the City, Metro and School District to evaluate ways to reduce student driving (by using busses).

**Figure IV-H
Parking Spaces**

Figure IV-I
Transit and Non-Motorized Circulation Routes

Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Olde Town has the unique ability to serve the immediate population with entertainment, retail goods and services within a quarter to one-half mile walking area. The system of sidewalks and bikeways is inconsistent throughout the Olde Town. The Rainier Greenway urban trail along the rail right of way is an example of the best Olde Town has to offer pedestrians and bicyclists. The gravel shoulders along Donnelly Lane are an example of the worst.

The Front Street corridor is the backbone of the pedestrian circulation system. The Front Street Corridor provides pedestrian facilities in varying degrees. Sidewalks are generally available on both sides of the street but are mixed in width and condition. Streetscape improvements are identified for Front Street (through the CBD), Sunset Way, 1st Place NW and 1st Avenue NW. The connection of sidewalks from the surrounding area is needed to make the CBD and community facilities in Olde Town more accessible to residents, workers and visitors.

The Draft Plan identifies the segments of walkways that need connection but does not set the priority for segments. A priority should be established to focus first on school/child safety, then general pedestrian safety and then convenience for accessing the CBD.

Circulation and Parking Mitigating Measures

1. City support for the SE Bypass, as a means to reduce pass-through traffic on Front Street.
2. City and Main Street™ organization should examine ways to build parking garages.
3. Examine creation of a parking authority with ability to regulate timed parking
4. Revise CBD district parking standards to decrease parking spaces required as incentive to transit usage and to provide additional support for mixed use in the CBD.
5. City, Metro and School District should discuss a program to reduce student driving and parking.
6. Locate a transit hub in the CBD of Olde Town connected to the proposed RTA Issaquah Transit Center.
7. Maintain ease of access from new I-90/Sunset interchange.
8. Support a southern access point to the SE Bypass as a means to reduce school bus traffic on Front Street.