



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Public Works
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3800
www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

MEMORANDUM

To: David Ramsay, City Manager

From: Daryl Grigsby, Director of Public Works
Ray Steiger, P.E., Capital Projects Manager

Date: July 21, 2009

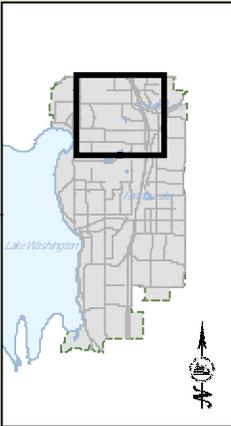
Subject: Draft response letter to Mr. & Mrs. Paquette
RE: Condition of NE 124th & Suggestion for NE 116th

RECOMMENDATION:

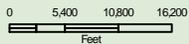
It is recommended that the City Council authorize Mayor James Lauinger to sign a letter as presented or modified responding to Mr. & Mrs. Paquette.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

On July 9, 2009, an e-mail was received at the City, addressed to the Kirkland City Council, and authored by Jason & Lindsay Paquette. In the e-mail, Mr. & Mrs. Paquette express their concerns regarding the condition of Ne 124th and suggest signal improvements at NE 116th (Attachment 1).



Vicinity Map

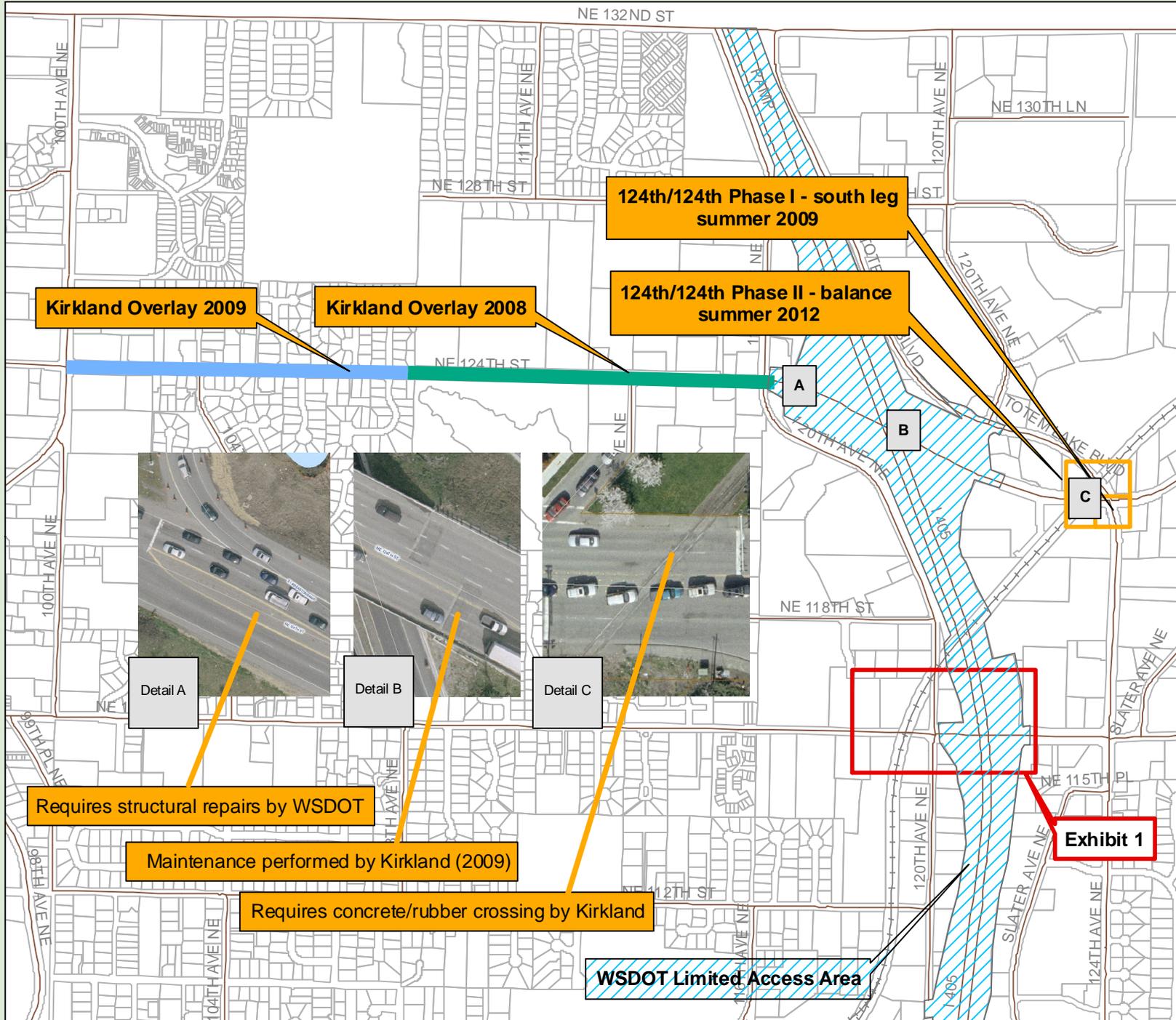


Map Legend

- Major Streets
- Railroad Centerlines
- RAIL_TYPE
 - Main Line
 - Spur Line
 - Railroad Bridge
 - Tax Parcels



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vicinity map -- NE 124th Street and NE 116th Street corridor

From: Jason Paquette [mailto:jason@paquettesplace.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 09, 2009 1:43 PM
To: KirklandCouncil
Subject: Condition of NE 124th & Suggestion for NE 116th

Dear City Council,

My wife and I moved to Kirkland three years ago. We've been pretty patient about the condition of some roads in town, but after numerous band aid fixes we have grown quite frustrated with the condition of NE 124th between 116th NE and 124th NE.

First, the railroad crossings at NE 124th & Totem Lake Blvd are a major road hazard. Other crossings on that rail line have all been replaced with newer and smoother crossings (including the crossing at 132nd Ave NE), but the potholes on these major thoroughfares continue to degrade. I don't recall seeing any work done on these in the three years I've been commuting over them every day.

Next, westbound NE 124th approaching the northbound I-405 on ramp have had potholes in the right lane that get bad then at random times road crews pour in more asphalt until the hole gets bad enough again. This is also true of potholes at the expansion joints for the I-405 overpass.

Finally, NE 124th between I-405 and 116th Ave NE, the road is very bumpy and uneven. I don't recall seeing any work done here.

The band aid fixes along this stretch have not fixed the underlying cause of the potholes, ruts, and uneven roadway. More drastic measures may be required.

On a separate note, the traffic on NE 116th St under I-405 is usually terrible during rush hours only because the lane configuration is so poor. Going westbound on NE 116th from 124th Ave NE, there is a center left turn lane that does no good because you can't turn left onto the Northbound off ramp, and going eastbound there is nothing to turn left into until you get to the Dania. Going westbound, there are two lanes, but the right lane ends in a seldom used right-turn-only lane to northbound 120th Ave NE. Due to this configuration, you have all the traffic going to southbound I-405 and westbound NE 116th crammed into one lane which regularly backs up to Slater Ave NE and causes backups on 124th Ave NE. A simple lane reconfiguration could alleviate this mess. Essentially, allow the WB NE 116th Traffic to split from the SB I-405 traffic, make use of the right lane that people can't use because it goes right-turn only to a road that doesn't have heavy traffic. I have attached an image of the I have that could alleviate the backups. The cost of this should be minimal... simple re-striping and updated signs to alleviate a bottleneck my improving flow. Frankly, I can't figure out why this wasn't done as part of that overpass construction that recently finished.

Finally, going eastbound on NE 116th through the stop light at 124th Ave NE, the light only stays green long enough for 3-4 cars to pass through until it turns yellow. Many times I am going home after getting off the freeway and in a line of cars only a few make it through the light before it turns yellow.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jason & Lindsay Paquette
12906 NE 122nd Lane, Apt L405
Kirkland, WA 98034
(425) 522-4899

August 4, 2009

D R A F T

Jason & Lindsay Paquette
12906 NE 122nd Lake, #L405
Kirkland, WA 98034

RE: Response to Email dated 7/9/09 Regarding Condition of Streets

Thank you for your input regarding City of Kirkland roadway conditions, specifically those on NE 124th Street and the signal coordination on NE 116th Street. Please be assured that we are working diligently to coordinate repairs and upgrades with scheduled capital improvement projects as well as with other agencies' improvements both public and private. We have also passed your email along to the local contact for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). We have attempted to address each of your concerns below (roughly in the order they were presented in your email).

Improvements at the intersection of NE 124th Street and 124th Avenue NE at the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSFRR) crossing have been under design since 2002 with the City considering a modern roundabout at the intersection to address the ever-increasing traffic volumes. Because of the ongoing design efforts, no maintenance activities were scheduled. After a significant study and preliminary design of the roundabout option, it was eliminated from further consideration due to pedestrian safety concerns and the requirement of BNSFRR to install crossing arms at multiple locations in the intersection which was cost-prohibitive. Concurrent with this decision not to proceed with a roundabout, the BNSFRR and King County/Port of Seattle began discussions regarding the future of the rail corridor, and in deference to those discussions, Kirkland divided the intersection improvements into two distinct projects: Phase 1, which is currently under construction and was scheduled for paving the week of July 12, will complete the south leg of the intersection expansion and repave the intersection. Phase 2, which is funded beginning in 2011, will replace all railroad crossings with materials and methods similar to those used at 132nd Ave NE. Phase 2 will reconstruct the north leg of the intersection. Until these improvements are installed, only minor maintenance and patching will be used with the understanding that it will be temporary.

In 2008, the City of Kirkland completed the repaving of NE 124th Street west of I-405 between 116th Avenue NE and approximately 107th Avenue NE. This summer we will complete the repaving from 107th Avenue NE to 100th Avenue NE.

Work on the NE 124th Street overpass and the NE 116th Street underpass is a coordinated effort between the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the City. Any construction or maintenance within the area of freeway interchanges involves different roles for the City and State. Technically, the roadway areas are either WSDOT public right-of-way or are WSDOT limited access areas. The City and the State divide maintenance responsibilities based on whether the work is "structural" versus "routine" maintenance. Some of the repairs you identified on both streets would be performed by the City as routine maintenance. Others require structural maintenance and thus action on the part of the WSDOT.

An example of routine maintenance performed by the City took place just this spring on both of the NE 124th Street bridge approaches which were in part resurfaced by City crews. However if there is an underlying structural failure (such as the case on the east approach) or problems with the materials used in the original design by the state (such as the approach to 116th

Avenue NE you described as “bumpy and uneven” road) is a much more comprehensive design and construction project. Design and repairs must be performed by the WSDOT in these cases. The WSDOT in turn is coordinating maintenance activities that will need to be performed by the City with their own upcoming capital projects.

Two significant State projects are on the near horizon which will impact the timing of local area maintenance work such as pavement repairs or overlays. The [I-405, SR 520 to I-5 Widening](#) project will add an additional lane in each direction on I-405 from approximately NE 124th Street northward. While this project is being constructed, WSDOT will remedy an existing inadequacy on the NE 124th Street overpass; they will provide safe pedestrian passage via a concrete walkway on the north side of the bridge and will re-stripe and re-channelize the lanes and shoulders to accommodate this safety enhancement. Kirkland continues to provide routine maintenance on the surface according to our obligation with the State until the State's project can complete its structural work and sub-grade repair in this area. The WSDOT project work is scheduled to begin in 2012.

The NE 116th Street Interchange and related City street improvements are also on the near horizon for WSDOT. They include the second stage of the “Kirkland Nickel” project (the first stage was completed in 2007) which is currently being designed. A graphic has been included with this letter that shows the travel lane placements for the interchange access lanes and other improvements (Exhibit 1). While the WSDOT is not proposing the particular alignment you offered, capacity improvements are being made and through-traffic in both directions has been modeled by them and will improve at the interchange. The left-turn lane to access the southbound off-ramp will later be a double lane configuration. The City was advised that the timing of this project is for construction to begin late 2010 or early 2011 and will be complete in 2013.

Finally, regarding the timing of the signal at the intersection of NE 116th Street and 124th Avenue NE, we have submitted a service request to our signal shop. They will review the timing of the signal and make a determination. If you would like more information regarding the signal, you may contact our signal shop directly by calling (425) 587-3925, or email Brian Dalseg bdalseg@ci.kirkland.wa.us or Dan Rogers drogers@ci.kirkland.wa.us.

As you can see, there are a number of projects planned for the near future that will address most of your concerns in a comprehensive manner and in the most cost effective way possible. While interim improvements may appear to be “band-aids,” more permanent and expensive repair work in advance of these major improvements would not be cost effective.

Thank you again for your suggestions and appreciate your patience. Your input helps us make future plans to improve transportation and safety for motorists and pedestrians. Please feel free to contact Ray Steiger in our Public Works Department at 425.587.3833 should you have further questions.

Sincerely,
KIRKLAND CITY COUNCIL

James L. Lauinger
Mayor

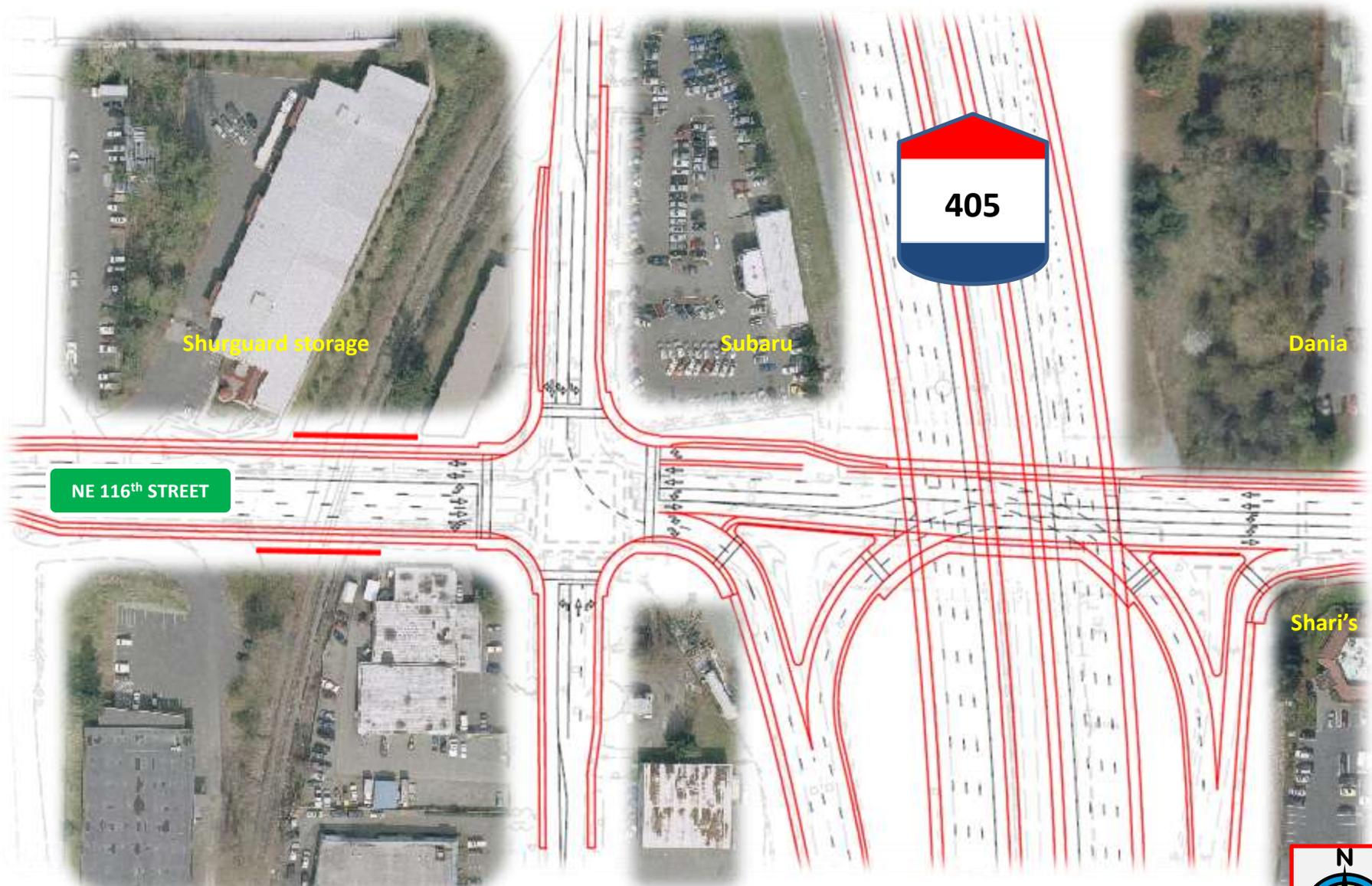


Exhibit 1

NE 116th Street/I-405 Interchange conceptual plan

