



INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
FROM: Hari Ponnekanti, Interim Public Works Director
BY: Adam Cox, Transportation Project Manager
CC: Mayor Allan Ekberg
DATE: July 31, 2020
SUBJECT: 42nd Ave South Bridge In-depth Inspection
Project No. 91810404
Bridge Closure/Traffic Reroute - Resident Feedback

ISSUE

Update Committee on the three-day 42nd Ave South Bridge closure for the in-depth inspection. Staff will present the forthcoming post-inspection report to Committee in the near future.

BACKGROUND

At the December 2019 Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and City Council meeting, the Committee approved a recommendation by Public Works staff for additional analysis of the bridge beyond the routine King County inspections. Subsequently, the full Council concurred with that recommendation, desiring to have more information to develop options for the bridge's ultimate replacement.

Currently, the 42nd Ave S Bridge has a sufficiency rating of 7.56 out of 100, per King County's inspection. Sufficiency ratings are calculated by a formula implemented by the Federal Highway Administration to inventory the nation's infrastructure and to determine allocation of federal funds for bridge replacement. Some of the considerations in establishing a bridge's rating include:

- Structural Adequacy
- Serviceability and Functional Obsolescence
- Special Reductions

The City contracted a scope of work that included a more in-depth structural inspection using nondestructive testing. This type of inspection provides a better understanding of how the bridge steel is performing internally. The inspection included ultrasonic thickness measurements of gusset plates and steel members that exhibit areas of corrosion and pack rust. During the inspection, the 42nd Ave S Bridge was closed to all vehicular traffic to allow the inspectors to safely maneuver on the bridge. Public Works staff expressed to Council the necessity of closing the bridge during the inspection in December 2020.

An Under-Bridge Inspection Truck (UBIT) was used on July 22 and 23, 2020, to give the inspectors access to all the steel members under the bridge. The inspectors used a boom lift on July 24, 2020, to access all the connection points at the top of the bridge.

ANALYSIS

The City attempts to limit road and bridge closures whenever possible. On occasion, however, a partial or full closure is the safest or most effective means to perform emergency, investigative, or time-sensitive work. The closure of the 42nd Ave S Bridge was the safest and most expedient way to perform the necessary inspection and this inspection provides information that will be helpful in the City's on-going deliberations about the bridge. Nevertheless, because the bridge closure would be disruptive to many people, a traffic control and road closure communication plan were high priorities.

As part of the communication plan, a postcard (which is attached) was created by the City and provided to the post office on Friday, July 17, 2020, to be sent to residents. The postcard expressed that residents would need to use alternate routes during the closure. Additionally, two reader board message signs were placed on northbound and southbound E Marginal Way S in the vicinity of the bridge, in advance, in full compliance with the MUTCD best practices; displaying the dates and times of the upcoming closure per the traffic control plan. The bridge closure notice was also posted on the City's website and social media, including Twitter and Facebook.

In addition to communicating with the neighborhood and residential users of the bridge, staff made further efforts to communicate the three-day bridge closure to known commercial operators in the vicinity. BNSF Intermodal Yard and Baker Commodities personnel were informed of the upcoming closure and the City's approved reroute. The City met with BNSF representatives and Baker Commodities since January 2020 on numerous occasions to have clear communication during the bridge closure, including finding days which were least disruptive to their operations, as well as identifying detour routes. Both parties stated that they would broadcast the closure information to the anticipated users, and continuously communicate to their truck drivers that the S 129th St Bridge was the only approved truck detour.

During the bridge closure, large trucks, and bobtails (trucks without trailers) were witnessed by local residents using 42nd Ave S and S 115th St as a reroute. Public Works and the Tukwila PD were contacted approximately six times by Allentown residents to be made aware of the continual truck usage. City staff determined that detour signs targeting small vehicular traffic were mistakenly being used by some truck drivers not affiliated with BNSF or Baker Commodities. In an attempt to clarify the truck reroute for these unknown haulers, City staff placed additional signage stating trucks were prohibited to use 42nd Ave S and S 115th St. Many of the trucks obeyed the approved reroute, but some did not.

Staff collected and reviewed feedback received from residents and from BNSF. City personnel held a short debrief meeting with BNSF after the inspection to discuss the outcome, as well as lessons learned during the inspection. BNSF felt the bridge closure was handled well, as they did not observe a reduction in the volume of trucks through their facility. Additional feedback from the truck drivers stated that driving on the steep grade of the S 129th St Bridge was easier than what they had originally expected.

Two residents voiced concerns about the truck traffic in the neighborhood during the closure. This feedback led to changes that future signage would be needed to clearly differentiate between trucks and smaller vehicular traffic. For example, in the future, staff will display "No Trucks Allowed" signs to indicate that the detour is not intended for trucks and that there should be additional monitoring by the contractor and City staff. It was also communicated that some residents did not receive their postcards until July 21, 2020, which was the day before the closure.

Going forward the staff will send notifications much earlier to avoid any possible delays that potentially impact Tukwila residents.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will present a more detailed summary of the inspection report this Fall, in addition to proposing options for the 42nd Ave S Bridge. The initial results of the inspection, and with continued adherence to load restrictions, indicate there is no need to close the bridge to vehicular traffic immediately.

Attachments: Photos
Post Card
Two Resident Emails

42nd Ave S Bridge Closure – In-depth Inspection Photos
July 22-24, 2020





42ND AVENUE SOUTH BRIDGE INSPECTION

The 42nd Avenue South Bridge will be closed to vehicle and pedestrian traffic on Wednesday, July 22nd to Friday, July 24th from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Description:

- The 42nd Avenue South Bridge is scheduled to have an in-depth inspection of the steel members.
- The inspection is tentatively scheduled to be performed on July 22 through July 24th but could take up to two (2) weeks depending on the results of the inspection.
- During the inspection, both lanes will be closed to all traffic to allow the inspector complete access to the bridge.
- Please contact the Project Manager, Adam Cox, for any additional comments or concerns.

Project Contact:

City of Tukwila
Adam Cox
Project Manager
(206) 431-2446
Adam.Cox@Tukwilawa.gov



City of Tukwila
Public Works Department
6300 Southcenter Boulevard
Tukwila, WA 98188

**42nd Ave Bridge
Inspection
Notification**

From: Cynthia Delostrinos Johnson
Sent: Sunday, July 26, 2020 1:16 PM
To: Laurel Humphrey
Subject: Fwd: 42nd Ave S bridge...

Begin forwarded message:

From: Patrice bloch <bloodrootyoga@gmail.com>
Date: July 24, 2020 at 3:58:30 PM PDT
To: Cynthia Delostrinos Johnson <C.DelostrinosJohnson@TukwilaWA.gov>
Subject: 42nd Ave S bridge...

Good afternoon!

I am a resident of Duwamish/Allentown which is the area most impacted by the bridge closure.

This area has been declared a "Critical Area" and is protected from disturbance and alteration according to TMC Chapter 18.45

There are many beautiful species of animals and birds that deserve protection.

Our children deserve safety and our pets deserve safety.

The river side road is not capable of bearing the weight of 5 ton+ trucks traveling as frequently as BNSF's customers do.

We live on 42nd Ave S, so as you can imagine, we've witnessed (and felt!) the uptick in truck traffic after the closure. You may already know that 129th was designated as a reroute for the trucks. I understand fully that this route is inconvenient and the hill is difficult to maneuver for the truck drivers. While I want to be sensitive to the drivers and am fully supportive of workers' rights, we have to let them settle their grievances with BNSF on their own, which I hope they actively do. Meanwhile, I have to stand up for our neighborhood's residents.

Despite some permanent and temporary signage as drivers exit the BNSF intermodal yard, drivers are choosing to disregard and are using 42nd Ave S to connect to E Marginal.

Turning into Allentown from Marginal, the temporary signs visible to drivers that are turning onto S 115th don't include reroute instructions for trucks, only "detour" signs for cars. The weight restriction "no trucks" sign that is visible on S 115th appears too late to reroute being that there is no turnaround available to large trucks. Ultimately, I'd like for BNSF to provide a traffic enforcer to guide trucks toward the proper reroute for trucks.

There needs to be a permanent alternate route that is both safe for the truck drivers and one that encourages them to abide by the "no truck" laws on our streets. It's my personal opinion that it is the

responsibility of BNSF, not the city's, to prepare an alternate route for their customers. The 42nd Ave S bridge is in a state of deterioration due to the constant overweight trucks from BNSF's yard repeatedly traveling over it. Our neighbors were in talks with BNSF years ago and were promised that a plan was in place, yet after several years there is no indication that it is going to be implemented.

As a side note, BNSF claims to have "been here first" and therefor has rights to the territory that we, as residents, do not. That's a lie. Not only did this land belong to the Duwamish people prior to white settlers, there were white settlers here in 1851 staking claim to this land while the railway did not establish until 1875. The Northern pacific line was completed in 1883. I'm not sure if the BNSF reps know they are lying, but we do.

I have contacted Adam Cox several times, I've called the Tukwila Police Department and I spoke with the motorcycle policemen parked at the abandoned fire station.

After contacting the Tukwila Police, I was informed that they have not received a directive to address the trucks traveling down our street and I had a few questions:

Do the cops need a directive to enforce the law if there is a speeder? A drunk driver? The law is clearly posted and is being disregarded. One should not need a directive.

The motorcycle cops I spoke to stated "Well, the bridge is closed. They don't have anywhere else to go" and I informed them of the reroute instructions clearly posted to which they replied "Well, a lot of the drivers are from out of town..." which poses the obvious question... If an out of town driver is disregarding the speed limit sign do they get a pass? If so, why? The same cops also told me that I was not allowed to redirect truck traffic myself as I am planning to do because, well... the LAW. I've witnessed the disregard for law for the past three days, I don't feel obligated got follow the rules.

I want to be clear that I intend to protest peacefully and lawfully if the bridge closes temporarily or permanently, but I will not fail to inconvenience BNSF.

Thank you immensely for your time and your public service,

Patrice Bloch

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From: Cynthia Delostrinos Johnson <C.DelostrinosJohnson@TukwilaWA.gov>
Sent: Sunday, July 26, 2020 11:40 AM
To: Laurel Humphrey <Laurel.Humphrey@TukwilaWA.gov>
Cc: Adam Cox <Adam.Cox@TukwilaWA.gov>
Subject: Fwd: 42nd Avenue S. Bridge Closure

Hi Laurel and Adam,

I would like to add the 42nd Ave Bridge as a topic of discussion at the next TIC meeting. It will be an opportunity to learn what went well and what can be improved for next time. I imagine this is not the first and won't be the last time the bridge will need to be closed.

Adam, feel free to jump in. I think you were able to talk with Mr. Bloch about his concerns. Thanks for passing along my contact info for him to follow up with. I'll respond to him and let him know we'll be talking about this.

Laurel - I will be forwarding you two emails for incorporation into the meeting packet on this agenda item.

Please let me know if either of you have any questions or concerns. Also feel free to forward this email to others who you think should be looped in.

Thanks,
Cynthia

Begin forwarded message:

From: Drüe Bloch <andrewmbloch@gmail.com>
Date: July 24, 2020 at 2:35:55 PM PDT
To: Cynthia Delostrinos Johnson <C.DelostrinosJohnson@TukwilaWA.gov>
Subject: 42nd Avenue S. Bridge Closure

Good afternoon Cynthia,

I was informed by Adam Cox that you are the city council representative that is in charge of transportation. As a resident who lives on 42nd Avenue South I felt compelled to give my personnel assessment of the past shut down of the 42nd ave s bridge for its inspection.

To begin, I was aware that something was about to happen when the detour signs began appearing a week before the shutdown. I have to admit that I thought it was inconsiderate to not include the residents most

affected earlier in the planning process. Adam told me that BNSF had had a minimum of two weeks advance notice to inform their customers of the reroute yet the residents were not informed until two days before the shut down. I expressed my opinion to Adam and I suggest to you as well that the residents get an opportunity in the future to express their opinions. I think it would have helped in the planning because what transpired was less than acceptable.

Adam assured me that BNSF had had ample time to alert their customers to the reroute. However, as early as 6:15 in the AM semi trucks began rolling down 42nd Avenue which, if you do not know, has a weight restriction of 5 tons. I was told by Adam if there were trucks coming down 42nd that I was to call 911 (non emergency) and report it to TPD. I called TPD twice on Wednesday and once on Thursday after I witnessed a car passing a semi in a 25 MPH zone because the semi was doing the speed limit. In addition to TPD I called Adam to see if he could pass the word to whomever might be able to get the trucks to divert to the agreed reroute along S. 129th St. I saw no effect to the flow of trucks based on our repeated phone calls.

In summary, I would like to suggest that in the future when there is to be another bridge shutdown, that BNSF is made to hire TPD or post traffic control individuals to monitor the exit of the intermodal yard at S. 124th and at the entrance of the Duwamish/Allentown neighborhood at S. 115th and E. Marginal to prevent the trucks from traveling through a residential neighborhood. That's all it would have taken to avoid me having to bother you with this.

I anticipate more shutdowns to come considering the damage that the trucks are causing our bridge. I look forward to a solution sometime in the near future.

Thank you for your service to the community, Andrew Bloch

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