

Frequently Asked Questions

**Project: W. Platt St. from Armenia Avenue to Bayshore Boulevard
Bike Lane and On-Street Parking Improvements Project**

This report addresses questions and comments about the current City of Tampa resurfacing project on W. Platt Street that extends from Armenia Avenue to Bayshore Boulevard. An objective of this project is to achieve more efficient use of the street pavement for all transportation modes, while maintaining traffic conditions at existing (pre-project) levels. In addition to providing a new driving surface, this project will correct minor drainage issues and accommodate a new buffered bicycle lane and on-street parking spaces along the south curb. This pavement utilization is being accomplished without increasing congestion or delay by including capacity improvements at the key signalized intersections and modifying traffic signal system timings to reflect the new lane configurations.

Attached are responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about this project:

Question 1 – How will traffic conditions along W. Platt Street change as a result of the revised pavement utilization with a buffered bicycle lane and on-street parking spaces?

Traffic conditions are expected to remain approximately the same as they are today because the project is maintaining the same basic eastbound traffic throughput at the key control points, which are the signalized intersections. The objective of the project design is to better utilize the roadway pavement while maintaining existing traffic conditions. This is being accomplished by including capacity improvements and signal timing changes at the key signalized intersections along W. Platt Street that control the flow of traffic. Platt Street will still have three traffic lanes (as it does today) at key signalized intersections with the only differences being narrower lanes (reduced from 12 feet to 10 feet) and designation of one of the lanes for only turning movements. Signal timings will be optimized to provide additional green time to W. Platt Street. Capacity improvements are included at a few key intersections, involving parking restrictions and modifications to the number of lanes available on the cross streets. The table below compares existing and expected PM peak hour traffic conditions in terms of average vehicle delays at the key signalized intersections based upon the Platt Street improvement plans.

Table 1 PM Peak Hour Intersection Delay on W. Platt Street

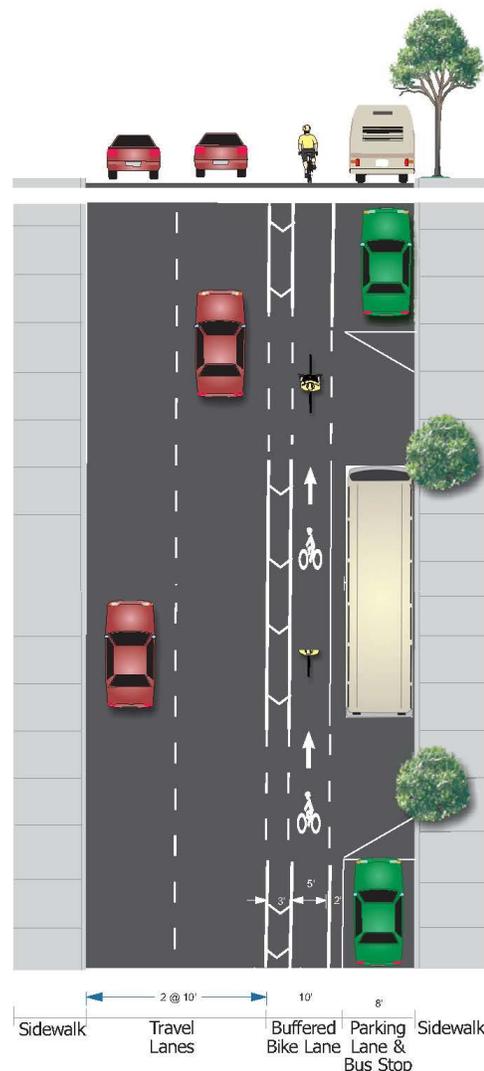
Intersection	Existing Delay (Pre-project) Seconds / Vehicle	Expected Delay (Post-project) Seconds / Vehicle
S. Armenia Avenue	50	50
S. Howard Avenue	18	32**
S. Willow Street	123	94***
S. Boulevard	38	38
S. Hyde Park Avenue	50	40
S. Plant Avenue	62	64
Bayshore Boulevard	70	66

** Based upon proposed northbound right turn lane on S. Howard Avenue

*** Based upon the traffic signal phasing being modified to provide for a southbound left turn phase.

Question 2 – Where will the bus stops, on-street parking and buffered bicycle lane be located along W. Platt Street as a result of this project?

Bus stops will remain at their current locations along the south curb. However, because busses will no longer be stopping in a travel lane at these bus stop locations, they will not impede traffic movements in the two through lanes. The on-street parking will be provided along the south curb at certain mid-block locations where the spaces do not interfere with driveways, intersection operations and bus stops. In some blocks no on-street parking spaces will be provided because the street width or intersection needs will not permit them. The buffered bicycle lane will run continuously from S. Armenia Avenue to Bayshore Boulevard generally adjacent to the south curb or adjacent to the on-street parking spaces where they are provided. Typically, the bicycle lane will be buffered (separated) from the through traffic lane by 3 feet and where appropriate buffered from on-street parking by 2 feet. The drawing below shows a typical mid-block cross-section for Platt Street with two through travel lanes, the buffered bicycle lane and bus stop with on-street parking.



Question 3 – Is the proposed design for W. Platt Street safe for bicyclists, considering the narrower traffic lanes and the location of the bicycle lane adjacent to the travel lanes?

Yes, this design is a safe design for bicyclists, exceeding current FHWA and FDOT design standards for bicycle lanes. Where the bicycle lane is buffered (separated) from the travel lanes, it is wider than most other on-street bicycle lanes in Tampa. This design was selected after a detailed review of existing traffic operations, the varying width of the street and the locations of intersections and access driveways. The buffered bicycle lane located between the travel lanes and the on-street parking was chosen for a number of reasons:

- This configuration is commonly used throughout the City of Tampa and in the downtown.
- Bus stops which are adjacent to the south curb will not interfere with the alignment or operation of the bicycle lane.
- The parking turnover frequency is expected to be low and the two foot buffer between on-street parking spaces and the bicycle lane will result in fewer and less hazardous conflicts between parking vehicles and bicyclists.
- A higher number of on-street parking spaces can be provided because sight lines of the bicycle lane for right turning vehicles will not be blocked by parked vehicles.
- The travel lanes will be less subject to interruption by parking maneuvers, door openings and/or bus stops.

Question 4 – Will the reduction in lane widths of the travel lanes from the current 12 feet to 10 feet impact traffic flow, considering the amount of trucks and buses that travel on W. Platt Street?

The impact of the narrower travel lanes is not expected to be significant. Based upon 2014 traffic counts, trucks and busses make up less than 1% of vehicles currently using W. Platt Street during peak traffic hours. The City of Tampa has reduced lane widths to 10 feet on several streets within the city, including N. Boulevard and Swann Avenue with no adverse problems. It has proven to be a successful method of traffic calming, making it more comfortable for motorists to travel at lower speeds and safer for bicycle and pedestrian traffic. As part of this project, the speed limits on W. Platt Street are being reduced to 35 MPH to be more compatible with adjacent land use activities. The pictures below show segments of North Boulevard and Swann Avenue that currently have 10-foot travel lanes with adjacent bicycle lanes. Swann Avenue also includes on-street parking spaces on one side of the street, similar to the proposed design for W. Platt Street.



Question 5 – What intersection modifications are proposed as part of this project to maintain or improve existing traffic conditions?

Three stages of modifications have been proposed for the W. Platt Street intersections. The first stage which will occur as part of or soon after the resurfacing project involves optimizing traffic signal timings and accommodating exclusive turn lanes at key intersections on Platt Street. The second stage modifications which are being developed by the City of Tampa involve additional traffic lanes on the north-south cross streets. The third stage modifications require coordination through and implementation by the Tampa Hillsborough Expressway Authority. These proposed modifications are described below:

Stage 1 as part of or soon to follow the current resurfacing project

- At the intersection of S. Willow Avenue, the traffic signal phasing will be modified to provide for a southbound left turn phase. To achieve a third eastbound lane through the intersection, no parking will be allowed on Platt Street between the CSX railroad crossing and Newport Avenue (east of the Selmon Expressway on-ramp).
- At the intersection of S. Hyde Park Avenue parking will be prohibited on the west leg to provide for a long right turn lane.
- At the intersection of S. Plant Avenue parking will be prohibited on the west leg to provide for a long left turn lane.
- At the intersection of Bayshore Boulevard parking will be prohibited on the west leg to provide for a long right turn lane.

Stage 2 in the future as part of other City of Tampa projects

- At the intersection of S. Howard Avenue, a project will be developed to restripe the south leg of the intersection to add a northbound right turn lane. This requires realignment (restriping) of the two northbound through lanes on the intersection approach and exit.
- At the intersection of S. Willow Avenue as part of the Willow Avenue Walk-Bike project being funded by FDOT which is currently in design, the north leg of Willow Avenue will be modified to provide a second southbound left turn lane. This improvement will also involve traffic signal modifications. Funding for construction is currently anticipated to be available in FDOT FY17.
- At the intersection of S. Plant Avenue, restriping of the south leg of the intersection to provide three northbound through lanes is being evaluated as part of the Hyde Park Ave and Plant Ave Safety Improvements project currently under design with construction scheduled to begin during FDOT FY 16 .

Stage 3 in the future as part of other agency projects

- The intersection of S. Willow Avenue would benefit from the addition of a second lane for the Selmon Expressway entrance ramp; however, this improvement needs to be coordinated through and implemented by the Tampa Hillsborough Expressway Authority (THEA). This additional entrance lane will permit both southbound lanes on Willow Avenue to turn left and use the two-lane entrance ramp to the expressway. The City intends to discuss with THEA the potential for implementation of this improvement.