



The Edmonds International District



Project Scope

In 2006, the City of Edmonds was awarded a \$316,000 grant under the Transportation Enhancement Program that will improve the aesthetics and pedestrian safety within the Edmonds International District on SR 99. Funding will specifically be used for lighting and streetscape improvements, including public art elements and signage. Additional funding was awarded in 2008 for a total budget of \$373,000.

The International District area, located approximately between 238th and 224th on SR 99, is highly visible to drivers, transit riders and pedestrians. Although, the average daily traffic count is approximately 35,000 drivers and Community Transit records over 1 million bus passenger trips per year along the Highway 99 corridor, this stretch of highway lacks a clear visual identity, and could benefit from pedestrian improvements. In 2004, the City of Edmonds Highway 99 Task Force commissioned two consultant studies by the firms Makers and Berk & Associates to assess economic development, urban design, and mobility for pedestrians and automobiles. The major recommendation was to work on identifying districts of activity within the corridor. Due to the growing cluster of international and ethnic merchants in one section, the obvious starting point was the Edmonds International District.

The district consists of numerous international-themed plazas. The City and business community would like to encourage more pedestrian activity between the different plazas on both sides of the highway.

Signage or artistic elements, which are lacking within the Edmonds International District, have proven effective in other international districts, such as around the Uwajimaya Village area in Seattle. As such, the City of Edmonds 2006 approved Streetscape Plan identified the area centering on the intersection of 76th and SR 99 as a key site for gateway identification.

The grant funded enhancements for this part of the district include:

- replacing approximately 7 existing poles with decorative street lighting in new foundations;
- adding signature streetscape/gateway elements to the poles through artist designed pedestrian-oriented arms and district ID signage;
- replacing street signs (i.e. 224th) with signs that incorporate way-finding and district identity objectives;
- resurfacing the median island at 76th and SR 99 with an enhanced hardscape treatment; installing an artist made gateway element; and adding ADA ramps to the sidewalk at the island;
- adding a CT bench by the northbound bus stop at 224th to improve bus rider comfort; and
- constructing signature streetscape/ gateway art element(s) for the district.

These enhancements will improve safety and attractiveness of the district for transit riders and pedestrians and the overall aesthetics for drivers through the area. From a marketing perspective, the intent is for these enhancements to help visually “brand” the Edmonds International District as the premiere international shopping area north of Seattle.

Process

The project is being managed by various City employees and contracts for professional services. The City Engineering Department is working on project specifications, and the City Arts Commission facilitated the competitive process for artist selection. There will be additional contracts for lighting, graphic design of signage, and other elements of the overall project.

Contact Information

Edmonds Cultural Services Manager Frances Chapin will be heading up the project with assistance from the Engineering Department and under the supervision of the Economic Development Director, Stephen Clifton. Frances Chapin may be reached with questions about the project:

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