

## Upper Sims Way Improvement Project

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### Frequently Asked Questions

**The following questions and corresponding responses are intended to clarify and explain the issues associated with the construction of the improvement for Upper Sims Way:**

#### **Can trucks and emergency vehicles use a roundabout?**

*Roundabouts are designed in a manner that allows trucks and emergency vehicles to safely use them. WSDOT has adopted standards that ensure that all roundabouts constructed on state highways can safely and efficiently accommodate trucks and emergency vehicles.<sup>1</sup> The Roundabouts designed for Sims Way (SR 20) have been reviewed by WSDOT and meet these standards.*

#### **Why is the City considering intersection improvements now?**

*As Port Townsend residents know by experience, traffic volumes along upper SR 20 (Sims Way) have increased to the point where delays are common. Sims Way is the primary entry and exit to Port Townsend for visitors and residents alike. In addition, many residents drive to the area to shop at the commercial uses along upper Sims Way but have difficulty accessing the businesses. Current land use development patterns indicate that in the near future, more residents will be living and shopping in the area. Over the years, the City has considered specific strategies to address the increase in both traffic and neighborhood residents. These include the installation of signals and/or roundabouts and access control along Sims Way. The improvements being constructed along Upper Sims Way are intended to improve access to businesses, reduce accidents and enhance the Gateway into Port Townsend.*

#### **Who will be responsible for the maintenance of the landscaping?**

*The landscape will be maintained by both the City and adjacent property owners. The landscaping within the medians and roundabouts will be maintained by the City. The property owners will be responsible for the landscaping along their property frontage.*

#### **What will access be like during construction?**

*To the extent possible, access to the businesses will remain open during construction. The business owners will be allowed to use sandwich board signs and other means of signage (as approved) during construction. The signs used during the construction period will need to be removed after construction is complete.*

*Emergency vehicles and fire truck will have access to the businesses and through the construction site at all times. The flaggers on the project are trained to give priority to emergency vehicles.*

*Transit buses, school buses and mail carriers will have priority through the construction as to keep these entities on schedule to the extent possible.*

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<sup>1</sup> See approved Chapter 915 update to the WSDOT Design Manual: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/EESC/Design/DesignManual/desEnglish/915-E.pdf>

## **Will Sims Way ever be closed to vehicles, bikes and pedestrians during construction?**

*There maybe times when Sims Way will be temporarily closed during construction. These times will be minimized to the extent possible.*

## **What is “Access Management”? Will this mean that I can’t get into or out of some businesses on Sims Way?**

*The Federal Highway Administration’s official definition of access management is “the process that provides access to land development while simultaneously preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding system in terms of safety, capacity, and speed.” In practical terms, it means managing the number of driveways that a vehicle may encounter without hampering reasonable access to a property and removing slower, turning vehicles from the arterial as efficiently as possible. A key approach to access management is to limit the number of “uncontrolled”<sup>2</sup> left turns possible for vehicles entering or leaving a property fronting on a road. Left turns create points of conflict that are directly linked to causing accidents. Techniques that can be used to reduce left turns include consolidation of driveways, limitations on left turns (“right-in, right-out”); the construction of “backage” roads that support overall area circulation and the use of controls such as medians and curbing.*

## **Additional questions, concerns or comments?**

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<sup>2</sup> Uncontrolled left turns are those that do not occur in a turn lane or at an intersection.