

SIDEWALK FOR WEST SIDE OF HARVARD AVE. E., N. OF LAKEVIEW BLVD.

The barriers of topography and Interstate 5 make Harvard Avenue E. the only direct walking route between parts of North Capitol Hill and the Lakeview/Melrose, Colonnade, and South Lake Union areas.

Unfortunately, the sidewalk that for almost a century was on the west side of Harvard Ave. E. north of the Lakeview Blvd. intersection was removed and never restored when I-5 opened in 1962. This omission magnified the problem that for 300 feet to the north, the sidewalk on the east side of Harvard Ave. E. is steeply elevated (precluding access between the street and sidewalk) and is reachable only via stairs near Lakeview Blvd. (See attached photos and location map.)

It's terribly unsafe and unfair. Anyone who wants to move between the existing sidewalk and Harvard Avenue E. simply can't because it is steeply elevated above the street. And people with disabilities or baby strollers can't use the sidewalk at all because there are only stairs at its south end. As a result, most people walk in the street, where they are vulnerable to increasing cut-through traffic

The most urgent need at present is to install a sidewalk on the west side of Harvard Avenue just north of Lakeview Blvd. for 300 feet to where the sidewalk on the east side of Harvard Avenue E. at least comes down to street level. Pedestrians on the new west sidewalk would need to cross Harvard Ave. E. to the east sidewalk but at least they would have that option.

(In the long run, the sidewalk on the west side of Harvard Avenue E. should be put back for the full five blocks it used to run north to E. Miller St., giving safe access to a spectacular viewing area that was opened up by I-5 west to Lake Union, the Olympic Mountains, the downtown skyline, waterscapes and unmatched sunsets.)

The Eastlake Community Council's eastern boundary is I-5, but ECC is advocating for this sidewalk just east of I-5 in the public interest after having been contacted by a young mother who lives in North Capitol Hill and runs into this problem with her baby stroller.

The Seattle Department of Transportation and the East District Council are asked to support this important safety improvement for funding through the Neighborhood Park and Street Fund. For more information, see the pedestrian page of the ECC web site at <http://eastlakeseattle.org/?page=pedestrian>. Questions or comments are welcome to info@eastlakeseattle.org or (206) 322-5463.