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## Phase 2 of Sprague work will begin soon in Tacoma

### Final design plan to be presented at public meeting Wednesday

By EVA REVEAR

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Trees, a new median and a banner welcome drivers along Sprague Avenue on March 20, 2013.

In February, the city of Tacoma will begin finishing what it started two years ago at the Sprague Avenue entrance to state Route 16.

The city launched the Sprague Enhancement Project in 2011 to beautify and improve the drainage along the two portions of Sprague.

Phase one, completed this year, focused on landscape improvements along “big Sprague,” the arterial roadway that provides an entrance to and exit from Route 16.

Phase two will mainly involve the residential street, nicknamed “little Sprague,” that runs parallel to the arterial. The second half of the project will finish the landscaping that began during phase one and improve the drainage

along residential Sprague.

City staff will present the finalized plans for phase two to the public Dec. 4 at an open house at Stanley Elementary School.

“We are just really excited that a main gateway to our community can be revitalized and show what we are as a community,” said Justin Leighton, former Central Neighborhood Council chairman. He was involved in the initial planning of the project, which was split into two phases because of cost.

The project’s first phase was a collaboration between the city of Tacoma, the Washington State Department of Transportation, and the Central Neighborhood Council. The council initiated the project over concerns about the appearance of the entryway. During phase one, the city replaced a chain-link fence on big Sprague with a landscaped median and a gateway sign.

During the second phase, the city will plant additional trees along the west side of big Sprague from South 19th to 23rd streets. The city will spend \$200,000 for the additional landscaping.

It also will pay \$732,000 to install pervious concrete in the parking lane and sidewalks on residential Sprague from 19th to 25th streets to improve drainage for the adjacent houses. As part of the project, Tacoma Water will replace the water main from 19th to 23rd streets at a cost of \$230,000.

The city presented early plans for phase two to the Central Neighborhood Council in October. Tricia DeOme, vice chairwoman and secretary of the council, said the council was pleased with what it saw.

Leighton said that although the work on Sprague is a vast improvement, the council and neighbors would like to see the new median maintained more, as weeds grow quickly in newly planted landscaping. DeOme said last week that the council is planning to make a complaint in the hopes that the city will weed more often.

Rae Bailey, street operations division manager, said the city weeds and prunes the center island on a quarterly schedule. He said if city staff receive complaints, they will weed again as soon as possible. Once the landscaping is more mature in two or three years, it will require less maintenance, Bailey said.

If you go

**What:** Final design presentation of the Sprague Street enhancement project’s second phase.

**Where:** Stanley Elementary School cafeteria, 1712 S. 17th St., Tacoma.

**When:** 6 p.m. Wednesday.

**More information:** [cityoftacoma.org/sprague](http://cityoftacoma.org/sprague).

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