

Overview of Facilities and Programs

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is responsible for maintaining, upgrading, and monitoring the use of the City's system of streets, bridges, retaining walls, seawalls, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and traffic control devices. Seattle's transportation system includes 1,524 lane-miles of arterial streets and 2,706 lane-miles of residential streets. The system also includes 142 bridges, 586 retaining walls, and 450 stairways in public right-of-way that Seattle Department of Transportation is responsible for inspecting and maintaining. On an annual basis, the Department paves more than 26 asphalt arterial lane miles; repairs more than 6,600 feet of bridge and stair railings and more than 2,800 lane-feet of bridge decking; maintains or replaces more than 28,000 traffic signs; services more than 300 traffic signals; and opens and closes the City's movable bridges more than 30,000 times.

Seattle Department of Transportation's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) outlines the Department's plan for repairing, improving, and adding to this extensive infrastructure. SDOT's CIP is financed from a variety of revenue sources that include the City's General and Cumulative Reserve Subfunds, state gas tax revenues, vehicle license registration fees (abolished under Initiative 776), federal and state grants, Public Works Trust Fund loans, partnerships with private organizations and other public agencies, and bond proceeds. For the Seattle Department of Transportation, the \$105 million capital budget is subsumed in the \$180 million operating budget appropriation.

Highlights

- ◆ **South Lake Union Street Car:** During 2005, the Seattle Department of Transportation will complete the planning and design of a streetcar route serving downtown Seattle and South Lake Union. The City received a \$3 million state appropriation and \$8.3 million of federal grants and appropriations for the design and construction activities. This project will provide local transit service, connect to the regional transit system, encourage economic development, and help create a vibrant, livable neighborhood in the South Lake Union area.
- ◆ **Fremont Bridge Approaches and Electrical Major Maintenance:** Seattle Department of Transportation received a \$13.25 million Federal TEA-21 grant awarded by the Bridge Replacement Advisory Committee and a \$10 million Public Works Trust Fund loan to replace the approaches, and electrical and mechanical systems that raise and lower the Fremont Bridge. Construction is expected to begin in 2005.
- ◆ **Bridge Way North and Fremont Circulation:** Seattle Department of Transportation was awarded a \$2.8 million state Arterial Improvement Program (AIP) grant to implement traffic and pedestrian improvements in the Fremont area. These improvements will help mitigate the impact that the construction of the Fremont Bridge Approaches project will have on the neighborhood and surrounding businesses.
- ◆ **Greenwood Avenue North Street Improvements:** Seattle Department of Transportation was awarded a \$2.2 million state Arterial Improvement Program (AIP) grant to widen the existing road and add a two-way left-turn lane. The improvements will also include pedestrian safety amenities such as sidewalks, lighting and intersection improvements.
- ◆ **Arterial Major Maintenance and Other Paving Projects:** Seattle Department of Transportation's 2005 Proposed CIP includes a total of \$4.8 million budgeted for the Arterial Major Maintenance and Arterial Asphalt and Concrete Programs in both 2005 and 2006. These ongoing programs resurface asphalt and concrete arterial streets to prevent further deterioration of street surfaces. In 2005, 13.4 lane-miles are set for resurfacing, primarily in northeast and south Seattle. Additional paving elements are included in other capital projects, including SR-519, 35th Avenue NE, South Jackson Street Improvements, and Lake City Way NE Multimodal.

- ◆ **Pay Stations:** The Pay Stations project will purchase and install up to 1,573 pay stations to replace approximately 85% of the single-space parking meters in the City between 2004 and 2006. This project will provide Seattle long-term parking management for the City and enhanced payment options for the public.

Project Selection Process

In making capital investments in its infrastructure, the City tries to balance three goals:

- ◆ Rehabilitation of existing facilities to avoid the higher costs of deferred maintenance;
- ◆ Increase in the capacity of existing facilities to meet growing demand; and
- ◆ Development of new facilities to provide additional services.

In developing its CIP, Seattle Department of Transportation used the following process to select projects for funding:

Project Identification: Seattle Department of Transportation identifies potential projects based on a variety of sources including: computer-based analysis of pavement conditions; field surveys of signals, structures, and other elements of the transportation system; requests from neighborhood groups and individual citizens; and analysis of special problem areas, such as freight mobility.

Project Screening: Within the framework of the Adopted Transportation Strategic Plan, Seattle Department of Transportation assesses potential projects against the following specific criteria: contribution to the maintenance of the existing transportation system, reduction of major traffic hazards, and increase in overall mobility.

Grant Evaluation: Seattle Department of Transportation evaluates opportunities to leverage state and federal grants to stretch local funds through grant programs, balancing these opportunities with other demands that may not be grant-funded.

Project Prioritization: Finally, Seattle Department of Transportation ranks potential CIP projects through a resource allocation process that compares the demands for operations, maintenance, and capital dollars against the available funding.

Anticipated Operating Expenses Associated with Capital Facilities Projects

In some projects, the Department has identified operations and maintenance costs of zero, or has not calculated a number (N/C). In these cases, the cost impacts of the project are either insignificant or are offset by cost savings realized by other projects. Projects that do identify operations and maintenance costs, such as the Burke Gilman Extension and Lake Union Ship Canal Trail projects, have the costs built into the Department's operating budget.