

Seattle Department of Transportation

# SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL 2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT



September 2017 to August 2018



**Seattle**  
Department of  
Transportation

VISION  
**ZERO**  
SAFER STREETS FOR SEATTLE

The Levy to  
**MOVE SEATTLE**  
A row of five circular icons representing different modes of transportation: a bus, a train, a car, a bicycle, and a pedestrian.

# INTRODUCTION

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national movement to make it easier and safer for students to walk and bike to school. The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) use a combination of strategies to improve safety and get more students walking and bicycling to school. The 6 strategies below are based on the national SRTS movement and have been adapted to best fit Seattle's needs. The 6 E's are best used in concert.

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Education     | Ensure that everyone learns how to travel safely     |
| Engineering   | Design streets for safety and predictability         |
| Enforcement   | Apply traffic safety laws and target risky behaviors |
| Encouragement | Promote walking and biking in the school community   |
| Evaluation    | Track progress toward our shared goals               |
| Empowerment   | Provide resources to school champions                |

In 2015, we launched our first ever [Safe Routes to School 5 Year Action Plan for Seattle](#). This is our third annual report tracking our progress. We've broken down the report into each of the 6 E's with relevant case studies for each section.

# EDUCATION

## **Walking and Biking Safety Education**

The Let's Go walking and biking safety education program that serves all 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade public school students completed its second full year in the 2017-18 school year. This 3-week program is administered in physical education classes and provides a solid foundation of skills required for students to safely walk and roll through the build environment. We are continuing to fund the adaptive elementary program for students with disabilities, so that kids of all ability levels can participate.

We are working with Seattle Public Schools to expand the program to middle school to include grades 6, 7, and 8. The program would provide 6 consecutive years of walking and biking safety education so that key messages are reinforced yearly, and kids develop the skills needed to keep themselves safe while walking and biking to school.



# ENCOURAGEMENT

## Banana Brakes

During the 2017-18 school year, we held ten Banana Brake events at schools where we celebrate kids who walk and bike to school with healthy snacks and small prizes like wrist bands and stickers. We also chat with their parents about how to find the best route to school and any upcoming projects in the neighborhood.

- Bailey Gatzert Elementary School
- Dearborn Park Elementary School
- Dunlap Elementary School
- Emerson Elementary School
- Genesee Hill Elementary School
- MLK Jr Elementary School
- Rainier View Elementary School
- Roxhill Elementary School
- Van Asselt Elementary School
- Wing Luke Elementary School



*Handing out resources and healthy snacks at a Banana Break at Rainier View Elementary*



## Bike Parking at Schools

In 2017 and 2018, SDOT and the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) have worked together to update bike parking municipal code requirements for all types of development across the city. This update includes bike parking requirements for school redevelopment. The new requirements greatly increase the amount of required bike parking at schools so that we can continue to get more kids biking to school and so those who do bike will have a dry, secure place to leave their bike for the day.

For example, a new school with 30 classrooms would previously have had 30 bike parking spaces which would serve about 5% of students. Under the new requirements, that school will now be required to have 120 spaces, 90 of which will be long term spaces. That will provide bike parking for nearly 20% of kids at that school.

Long term bike parking is generally considered to provide greater security from theft and shelter from weather. Bike parking design guidelines will be developed next year to provide guidance on what constitutes long-term bike parking.

### *Pre-2018 Bike Parking Requirement:*

| Use   | Long-term spaces | Short-term spaces |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| Schools, elementary                         | 1 per classroom  | None              |
| Schools, secondary (middle and high school) | 2 per classroom  | None              |

### *New Bike Parking Requirements:*

| Use                            | Long-term spaces | Short-term spaces |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Schools, primary and secondary | 3 per classroom  | 1 per classroom   |



*Full bike racks at an elementary school*





*Walking School Bus workshop at Rainier View Elementary School*

## **Rainier View Walking School Bus**

During the 2017-18 school year, we supported a Walking School Bus program at Rainier View Elementary School. We funded a Walking School Bus Coordinator at the school, who organized students, parents, and volunteers into a walking school bus program. PedNet Coalition, a national walking school bus consultant, hosted a workshop at the school and provided technical assistance and training for the Walking School Bus Coordinator throughout the school year.

The Walking School Bus Coordinator recruited families to participate, sought volunteers, developed routes, and provided training to Walking School Bus route leaders, which included University of Washington students and Seattle Police Officers.

We partnered with the Woodland Park Zoo to give free zoo tickets to participating kids and we also hosted Banana Brake events to support and acknowledge participating students.

## Learning Landscapes

We began a partnership with the Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) on a Learning Landscapes pilot project at Northgate Elementary School. Learning Landscapes is a concept developed by Kathy Hirsh-Pasek at Temple University to address educational inequities in urban areas. By integrating Learning Landscapes concepts into the design of a sidewalk, we aim to:

- Encourage safe walking to school for kids and families
- Encourage adult-child and child-child interaction
- Provide opportunities for cognitive and basic skills development

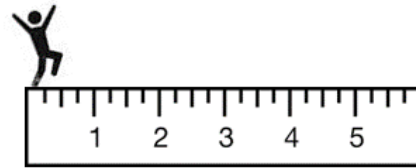
For example, a Learning Landscape design could be a life size ruler painted on the sidewalk. This would encourage kids to playfully explore measurements like how far they can jump, how far they can walk in five steps, and how tall they are, to name a few ideas.

We held a Learning Landscapes Design Workshop with representatives from SDOT, DEEL, Temple University, Seattle-King County Public Health, and Kaiser Permanente, to build a coalition of Learning Landscapes supporters and brainstorm initial design concepts for the Northgate Learning Landscapes project.

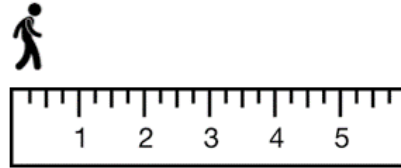
Then we held a meeting with teachers and staff at Northgate Elementary School to find out what learning objectives are particularly challenging for students so that our designs can provide students with additional opportunities to explore those concepts outside the classroom.

We are taking what we learned and working on the development of a set of designs that we will bring back to the Northgate Elementary School community next year to get feedback. We will also explore opportunities for an evaluation of the effectiveness of the project.

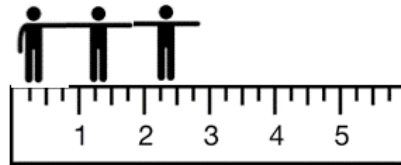
Measure how far you can jump!



Measure how far you can walk with 5 steps!



Measure how far you can stretch holding hands!



## Back to School Events

The past few years we have held Safe Routes to school Kickoff Events in August before school starts when families are starting to get in back-to-school mode. We talked to families about how they choose to get to school, promoted walking and biking to school, provided educational resources to make that easier, and gave away an assortment of Safe Routes to School goodies. Starting this year, we are participating in community- and school-hosted Back to School events, rather than hosting separate events.

For example, we were a community sponsor of the Rainier Beach Back2School Bash, an annual event that gets neighborhood kids ready for school with backpacks, school supplies, and information about neighborhood and educational resources.

# ENGINEERING

## Engineering Improvements around Schools

Between September 2017 and August 2018, we've completed 44 engineering projects at priority schools. Numbers reference the map of the all the school engineering projects.

**1 Aki Kurose Middle School and St Edwards School**

Speed humps on streets around the school

**3 Bailey Gatzert Elementary School**

**4** Flashing beacon on 12th Ave S, concrete curb bulb at 14th Ave S and S Washington St

**5 Beacon Hill International Elementary School**

Speed humps on streets around the school

**6 Louisa Boren STEM K-8**

**7** Speed humps on Croft Pl SW, walkway on SW Juneau St from Delridge Way SW to 23rd Ave SW

**8 Broadview Thomson K-8**

**9** Speed cushions on 3rd Ave NW between NW 132nd St and NW 137th St, asphalt path connection on N 138th St at street end near Linden Ave N

**10 Chief Sealth High School, Denny Middle School, and Roxhill Elementary School**

Flashing beacons on SW Trenton St

**11 Christ the King School**

Speed humps on streets around the school

**12 Cleveland STEM High School**

**13** Flashing beacons on 15th Ave S and S Lucile St, crosswalk beacon on 15th Ave S at S Orcas St

**14 Concord International Elementary School**

**15** Speed humps on streets around the school,  
**16** planter strip improvement on 7th Ave S, lane narrowing on S Cloverdale St

**17 Dearborn Park Elementary School**

Planter strip improvement and curb ramps on 28th Ave S from S Juneau St to S Graham St

**18 Franklin High School**

Artist painting on staircase along S Hanford St between 25th Ave S and Cheasty Blvd S

**19 Garfield High School & NOVA High School**

**20** New school crosswalks, speed humps on streets around the school, flashing beacons on E Cherry St, crosswalk beacon at midblock crosswalk on E Cherry St

**21 Genesee Hill Elementary School**

Curb ramps on SW Andover St at 49th Ave SW and 50th Ave SW

**22 Graham Hill Elementary School**

Crosswalk beacon at S Graham St and Wilson Ave S

**23 Green Dot Middle School**

School zone signs and flashing beacons on Rainier Ave S

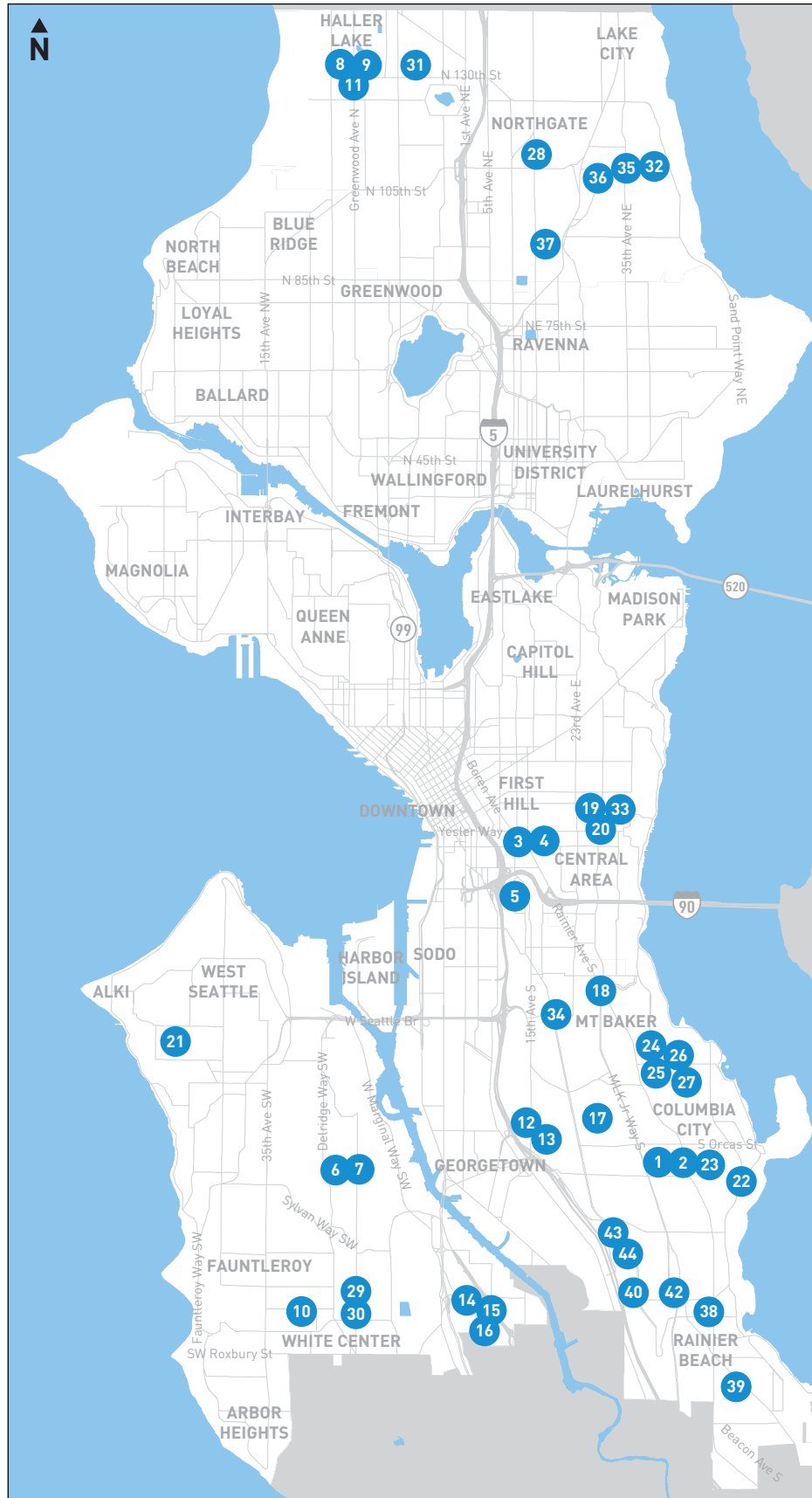
**24 Hawthorne Elementary School**

**25** Crosswalk improvements at S Genesee St and Cascadia Ave S, S Dakota St at 38th Ave S and Angeline Ave S, and 42nd Ave S and  
**26**  
**27** S Conover Way



- 28 Hazel Wolf K-8**  
Crosswalk beacon at 15th Ave NE and NE 115th St
- 29 Highland Park Elementary School**  
**30 Crosswalk** beacons on 16th Ave SW at SW Thistle St and SW Trenton St
- 31 Ingraham High School**  
Speed humps on streets around the school
- 32 John Rogers Elementary School**  
Pathway improvement along 39th Ave NE at NE 113th St
- 33 Leschi Elementary School**  
Painted pedestrian island at Martin Luther King Jr Way and E Alder St
- 34 Mercer Middle School**  
Neighborhood greenway crossing upgrade at S Spokane St & Lafayette Ave S
- 35 Nathan Hale High School and Jane Addams**  
**36 Middle School**  
Flashing beacons on 35th Ave NE, speed humps on 30th Ave NE
- 37 Sacajawea Elementary School**  
Flashing beacons on 15th Ave NE and relocated school crosswalk
- 38 South Shore K-8 and Dunlap Elementary School**  
Crosswalk beacon at 46th Ave S and S Henderson St
- 39 St Paul School**  
Speed humps on 57th Ave S
- 40 Van Asselt Elementary School**  
Speed humps on streets around the school
- 41 West Seattle Elementary School**  
Speed humps on 34th Ave SW
- 42 Wing Luke Elementary School**  
**43 Pedestrian** lighting on S Kenyon St stairs,  
**44 flashing** beacons and sidewalk maintenance for temporary school location

# SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ENGINEERING PROJECTS







*Louisa Boren STEM K-8 Before*



*Louisa Boren STEM K-8 After*



*Cleveland HS Before*



*Cleveland HS After*



*Mercer MS Before*



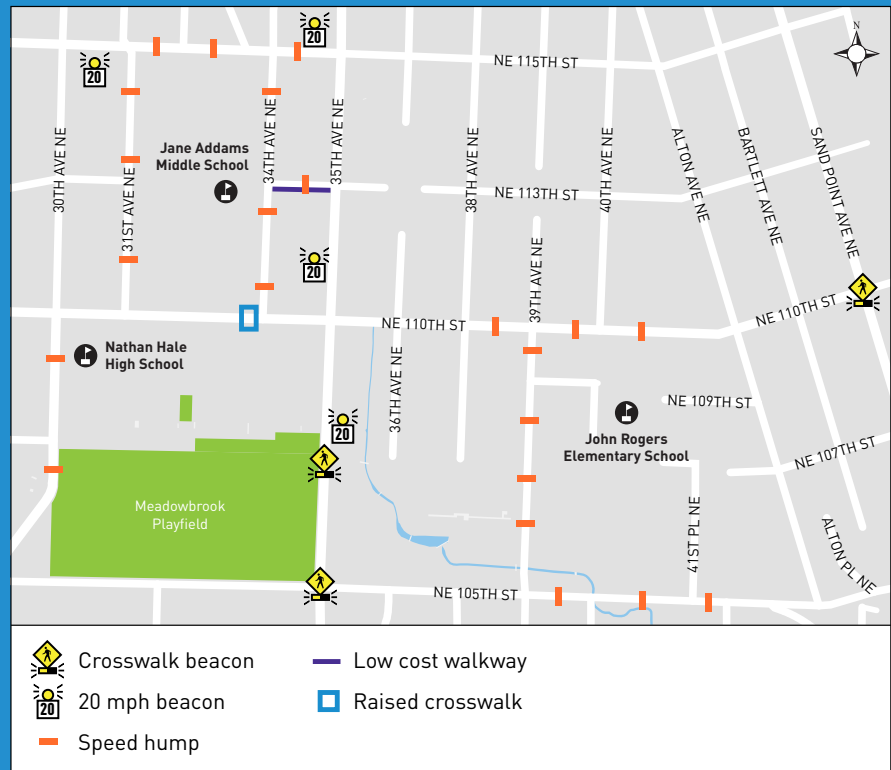
*Mercer MS After*

# SPOTLIGHT:

## Traffic Calming for Meadowbrook Schools

We made comprehensive traffic calming improvements for kids walking to the three schools in the Meadowbrook area, including Rogers Elementary School, Jane Addams Middle School, and Nathan Hale High School. The projects included speed humps on all residential streets in the school zones, 20mph flashing beacons for the arterial school zones, and new flashing crosswalk beacons at key locations.

We received an overwhelmingly positive response from neighbors who were excited about the improvements coming to the neighborhood.



*Map of Traffic Calming Improvements in the Meadowbrook Neighborhood*

*"Please allow me to extend thanks from neighborhood parents to you and SDOT staff for making these projects happen. Although no one wishes summer to end, now I actually look forward to September with much less anxiety, knowing our kids will have a safer way to school!"*

*– Meadowbrook resident*



# SPOTLIGHT:

## Wing Luke Elementary Staircase Lighting

The staircase along S Kenyon St connects Wing Luke Elementary School at the top of the hill to the New Holly neighborhood at the bottom of the hill. After learning from staff at Wing Luke Elementary School that students felt uncomfortable walking along the staircase in the dark before and after school, we set to work to make this a safer route to school.

We found out from parents and kids which pedestrian lighting option they liked best and installed five new lighting fixtures along the staircase and pathways.



*Parents and kids weigh in on which lighting fixture they want to see installed on the Kenyon stairs*

# ENFORCEMENT

## **School Safety Camera Program**

We collected speed data for the third year in a row in school zones on arterial streets nearby public and private schools. Based on the speeds we found in each school zone, we made recommendations for additional safety improvements like 20 MPH flashing beacons, traffic calming, and potentially new safety cameras.

To reduce speeds and improve safety, we worked with the Seattle Police Department to identify, based on speed data, 10 new school zone speed cameras in 5 school zones to evaluate further. However, this process was delayed because the contract with the safety camera vendor will expire soon. SPD will select a vendor and the safety camera evaluation process will resume next year.

## **School Safety Emphasis Patrols**

Building off the grant we received in 2016 from the Washington Traffic Safety Commission to run a driver safety campaign around three middle schools, we continued this campaign in 2018. The campaign included direct mail in multiple languages, ads on Metro buses, gas station ads, digital advertising including ethnic media, social media ads in multiple languages, banners and A-frames at schools, and traffic safety yard signs.

Overall, the driver safety campaign made about 4 million impressions. We sent postcards about where and when to drive 20mph in multiple languages to 15,000 households within ½ mile of Wing Luke Elementary, Mercer Middle School, Washington Middle School, and Jane Addams Middle School. The social media ads ran for one month when school started in English, Spanish, Amharic, Vietnamese, and Chinese. We found the Spanish and Amharic ads performed the best out of the translated ads.





*Driver Safety Campaign on buses, at gas stations, and on social media*

# EVALUATION

Starting summer 2017, we kicked off a thorough racial equity analysis on our program. First, we developed a workplan based on the Racial Equity Toolkit provided by the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative and which included an Inclusive Public Engagement Plan. We formed a Steering Committee made up of internal staff representing different subject matter areas. We hosted a focus group with key Department of Neighborhood's Community Liaisons to review our outreach methodology, identify key groups to reach out to, and learn about their own challenges and needs in getting their children to school.

Our outreach strategy includes two phases, phase 1: problem identification, and phase 2: strategy identification. During phase 1, we used two outreach strategies, focused outreach and a citywide survey. The purpose of our focused outreach strategy is to gain in-depth knowledge and perspectives on traveling to and from school from a select number of people and groups that represent people of color, immigrants, refugees, and English Language Learners. The purpose of the citywide survey is to gain information from as many people as possible on their experiences with traveling to and from school so that we can understand larger trends.

Then, we created a racially equitable vision and set racial equity outcomes for the program:

## **Racially Equitable Vision**

Our vision is for Seattle school children to start their day experiencing the benefits of walking and biking to school, including having fun, feeling safe, strengthening their connections to their community, arriving at school in time for breakfast and ready to learn, and improved physical and mental health.

## **Safe Routes to School Racial Equity Toolkit Equity Outcomes**

1. These groups are represented in all phases of public outreach and engagement when conducted by the Safe Routes to School program
2. These groups benefit equitably from projects and programs conducted by the Safe Routes to School program
3. Parents of all kids, schools, and neighborhoods are empowered to take ownership over getting kids in these groups to school safely
4. Greater awareness and empathy is fostered so that all who use City streets feel responsible for these students getting to school safely

Our focused outreach strategies include three approaches:

1. School-based approach: we engaged with specific schools, prioritized based on their demographics and with feedback from the Seattle Public Schools Equity & Race Advisory Committee.
2. Geographic-based approach: we connected with community groups that work in specific neighborhoods of Seattle where diverse communities live, such as Rainier Beach Action Coalition and South Park Neighborhood Association.
3. Racial/Ethnic group-based approach: we met with community groups that work with specific racial and ethnic groups, like the Ethiopian Community in Seattle and Refugee Women's Alliance.

We identified the broad landscape of groups that we could reach out to and then narrowed down to a manageable list based on feedback from the RSJI Change Team, RET Steering Committee, Department of Neighborhoods Community Liaisons, and the Seattle Public Schools Equity & Race Advisory Committee.

We conducted focus groups and hosted informal coffee chats with parents, teachers, and community members to gain insight into the lived experiences of communities of color when getting their kids to and from school.

Our citywide survey had over 2,200 respondents, including many people of color. To get the citywide survey out to as many people as possible, we mailed it to all Seattle households with school-aged kids, partnered with neighborhood and ethnic media to advertise the survey, worked with priority schools to get the survey completed by



*Racial equity analysis community engagement in New Holly*

families in a variety of languages, attended nearly 70 community events, often with interpreters to help people fill out the survey, provided the survey online, and created an online high school survey.

Our outreach process will continue next year with phase 2, where we will loop back to the groups we first engaged with to gain their perspectives on new strategies for how we can best serve our diverse city. We will also analyze the citywide survey data to learn about larger trends across the city. This process will wrap up next year with a final report outlining our findings and new strategies.



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