

CHAPTER 2: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Goals and Objectives

The two primary goals of this Bicycle Master Plan are:

Goal 1. Increase use of bicycling in Seattle for all trip purposes. Triple the amount of bicycling in Seattle between 2007 and 2017⁷.

Goal 2. Improve safety of bicyclists throughout Seattle. Reduce the rate of bicycle crashes by one third between 2007 and 2017⁸.

These goals essentially encompass all activities of the City related to bicycling and provide the underpinning for all of the Plan recommendations. Many of the Bicycle Facility Network improvements within the Plan can be achieved easily by making improvements using the Complete Streets approach (e.g., incorporating bicycle facilities into roadway reconstruction projects, repaving projects, etc.). The Plan also targets substantial capital investments at key locations within the network that may require additional funding and public support. Both short-term and long-term projects are necessary to create the accessible, connected network of bicycle facilities that is critical for attracting additional bicyclists and making bicycle trips safer.

Seattle will develop a continuous, complete network of bicycle facilities to make it safer and easier for more people to bicycle throughout the City.

The City has identified four principal objectives for achieving the goals of the Plan. Chapters 3 through 6 describe the objectives in detail. Strategic performance measures are also tied to each principal objective to monitor progress in implementing each recommendation. Monitoring of performance measures will occur periodically - some will be measured on a yearly basis, and others will be measured over longer periods of time, depending on the availability of source data. More detail on performance measures is provided in Chapter 7.

Objective 1. Develop a safe, connected, and attractive network of bicycle facilities throughout the City. One of the most important outcomes of this Plan is a detailed assessment of Seattle’s transportation system, resulting in specific recommendations for new facilities throughout the City. This Plan identifies the location and initial design concept for a system that encompasses over 450 miles. This system extends to all parts of the City, and will be designed to meet the needs of all types of bicyclists. The system will include bicycle lanes and other facilities on arterial roadways, a citywide bicycle route system, and completion of the Urban Trails and Bikeways System. The Plan will also result in bicycle safety improvements at roadway crossings, and improvements to the maintenance of the bicycle network. For more information on this objective, see Chapter 3.

Two strategic performance measures have been established to measure progress towards this objective:

- o Percentage of Bicycle Facility Network completed.

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⁷Tripling the amount of bicycling is contingent upon the completion of 10 critical bicycle connections. The amount of bicycling is measured by counting bicyclists at a consistent sample of locations in the City.

⁸The rate of bicycle crashes is the number of bicycle crashes in a year divided by the number of bicyclists counted at the sample locations and by the annual change in motor vehicle traffic volumes throughout the City.

- Percentage of bicycle-related spot maintenance requests addressed in two working days or less.

Objective 2. Provide supporting facilities to make bicycle transportation more convenient. In order for bicycling to be a fully viable form of transportation in Seattle, other programs and facilities are needed to compliment the Bicycle Facility Network. This includes integrated bicycle and transit services, adequate bicycle parking at all destinations, showers at employment centers, convenient repair services, and coordination with a variety of other essential components of a multi-modal transportation system. Partnerships will be needed with area transit agencies and other service providers to accomplish these actions. For more information on this objective, see Chapter 4.

Three strategic performance measures have been established to measure progress towards this objective:

- Number of bicycle racks installed through the SDOT Bicycle Parking Program.
- Percentage of estimated 2017 bicycle parking demand met by current bicycle racks and lockers at transit stations in Seattle (recommended for consideration by Sound Transit and KC/METRO).
- Number of bicycles carried on KC/METRO and Sound Transit buses (recommended for consideration by KC/METRO and Sound Transit).

Objective 3. Identify partners to provide bicycle education, enforcement, and encouragement programs. As the Bicycle Facility Network is built and more people are encouraged to ride, new programs will be needed to educate bicyclists and motorists about how to co-exist safely in the roadway environment. Partnerships will be needed between SDOT, the Seattle Police Department (SPD), the Bicycle Advisory Board, the Bicycle Alliance of Washington, and Cascade Bicycle Club in order to accomplish this objective. For more information on this objective, see Chapter 5.

Two strategic performance measures have been established to measure progress towards this objective:

- Number of Seattle Bicycling Guide Maps distributed
- Number of Seattle residents participating in pedestrian or bicycle safety education programs or events (recommended for consideration by Seattle area bicycle advocacy organizations)

Objective 4. Secure funding and implement bicycle improvements. In order to implement this Plan, it will be necessary to include bicycle accommodations in all future transportation projects, secure grant funding, train staff, integrate the recommendations of the Plan into City policies and regulations, and coordinate with other jurisdictions in the region. In addition, new roadway design treatments will be evaluated for their effectiveness, and performance measures will be monitored to measure progress over time. Finally, it will be important to reassess priorities and update this Plan in future years as new needs and opportunities are identified. For more information on this objective, see Chapter 6.

Three strategic performance measures have been established to measure progress towards this objective:

- Percentage of targeted SDOT staff who participate in training on bicycle planning, design, and engineering issues.
- Amount of grant funding applied for and obtained for bicycle programs.
- Number of Bicycle Spot Improvements completed.

Policy Framework

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Bicycling is consistently supported in numerous City, regional, and state policies as not only an important element of Seattle's multimodal system, but of achieving sustainable growth and encouraging healthy communities:

Destination 2030 is the Puget Sound region's transportation vision that lays out policies and strategies for meeting its commitment to the state's Growth Management Act. The plan calls for creating a regionally integrated network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities linked to urban centers and transit facilities, and seeks to have non-motorized trips account for 20% of all trips within the region by 2030.

"Walking and bicycling can be practical alternatives to driving, especially for short trips. They can also contribute greatly to neighborhood quality and vitality, and help achieve City transportation, environmental, open space, and public health goals."
--Seattle Comprehensive Plan, January 2005

Seattle's Comprehensive Plan is the guiding vision for the City and includes the establishment of the Urban Village Land Use Strategy and the Urban Trails System. The plan seeks to facilitate walking and bicycling as a viable transportation choice "in, around, and between urban centers and villages."

The SDOT Transportation Strategic Plan (TSP) provides direction for the accelerated provision and maintenance of a comprehensive bicycle network through improved safety and access to urban villages, schools, and the Urban Trails System, as well as through bicycle education and promotion. A key goal of the TSP is the routine accommodation of bicycle facilities as a component of all SDOT reconstruction, channelization, resurfacing, and paving projects, as well as other capital investments that affect Seattle's right-of-way.

By increasing the convenience and safety of bicycling in the City, the Bicycle Master Plan will help achieve the following principles laid out in the TSP:

- Make the best use of the streets we have to move people, goods and services.
- Increase transportation choices.
- Make transit a real choice.
- Encourage walking and biking—they're the easy, healthy way to get around.
- Improve our environment.
- Connect to the region.
- Make the most of transportation investments.

Seattle's Climate Action Plan is a commitment by the City to meet or exceed the Kyoto protocols for reducing greenhouse emissions. Among the top recommendations put forth by Mayor Nickels' Green Ribbon Commission is a significant expansion of Seattle's bicycle facilities, including a completed Urban Trails System and regulations or incentives for bicycle parking, lockers, and showers in new development.

"Since motor vehicle emissions are the single largest source of climate pollution in Seattle, the City must do even more to provide climate-friendly transportation choices such as public transit, biking and walking — and to encourage greater use of those alternatives."
--Seattle Climate Action Plan, September 2006

Complete Streets is a policy adopted by the City of Seattle in September 2006 that codifies the routine accommodation of bicycles as a part of all roadway system improvements. The guiding principle of this policy is "To design, operate and maintain Seattle's streets to promote safe and convenient access and travel for all users; pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and disabled users, as well as cars and trucks."

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These policies and strategies have guided the development of the Bicycle Master Plan, and will play an important role in building support for its full implementation.

Seattle's Complete Streets Policy - Guiding Principle: "To design, operate and maintain Seattle's streets to promote safe and convenient access and travel for all users; pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and disabled users, as well as cars and trucks."

--City of Seattle Complete Streets Policy, September 22, 2006, Resolution 30915.

Coordination with Other Modes

Bicycle mobility improvements are an important component of creating an efficient, safe multi-modal transportation system in Seattle. As part of the vision for a multi-modal transportation system, the Bicycle Master Plan recommendations have been compiled with consideration for the needs of pedestrian, transit, freight, and automobile modes. The type of bicycle facility provided in each roadway corridor depends on available space, the role of the roadway in the overall Bicycle Facility Network, and the designation of the roadway relative to other modes of travel in Seattle.

There are a number of corridors in the Bicycle Facility Network where bicyclists must share the roadway with transit vehicles. Buses and bicycles are able to co-exist on roadways when they give each other space when passing, and make predictable movements. Recommended bicycle facilities in transit corridors, such as bicycle lanes, climbing lanes, and shared lane pavement markings help indicate the roadway space that is needed for bicyclists and improve the predictability of their movements, resulting in positive effects on motor vehicle and transit operations. Special attention will be paid to the City's Urban Village Transit Network (UVTN) corridors where transit service must be fast, frequent and reliable. Minimum performance thresholds have been established for UVTN corridors to monitor transit speed and reliability and make adjustments as needed.

Most of the recommended bicycle facilities can be developed by painting new lines or markings in the roadway or narrowing existing travel lanes. These actions are likely to have minimal impacts on other modes. In several corridors, bicycle facilities will be provided by removing existing travel lanes, which may potentially impact transit service (depending on bus frequency, intersection and bus stop spacing, traffic volume, on-street parking, overall roadway width, etc.). Therefore, it will be particularly important to coordinate bicycle facility recommendations with transit service improvements as Seattle's Urban Village Transit Network is developed. Urban Village Transit Network roadways (including the proposed Streetcar Network) should be designed to meet or exceed performance thresholds for a reasonable level of speed and reliability for transit service while maintaining safe conditions for bicyclists. Appendix C: Key Locations for Coordinating Bicycle Facility Design with Future Rapid Transit Service includes a map showing these locations.

Development of the on-road bicycle facility recommendations tried to minimize bicycle facilities on major truck streets. The exceptions are critical links in the recommended citywide bicycle system (see Appendix D: Key Locations for Coordinating Bicycle Facility Design with Freight Transportation), and will undergo thorough traffic engineering review for compatible operation with trucks during the design process.

In order to give full consideration to the needs of other transportation modes, the Bicycle Master Plan process included meetings with other SDOT divisions as well as a wide variety of agencies and organizations representing these modes. The planning process also included a thorough review of numerous relevant City and regional planning documents, including the policies cited in the previous section and the documents listed below:

- Seattle Transit Plan (including the Urban Village Transit Network)
- Freight Mobility Strategic Action Plan
- Open Space 2100 Plan
- Puget Sound Regional Council Destination 2030 Plan
- Seattle Right-of-Way Improvements Manual

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Relevant sections of Title 11 of the Seattle Municipal Code (the Traffic Code)
Subarea and Corridor Plans (e.g., Center City Circulation Report, Southeast Transportation Study, South Lake Union Transportation Study, University Area Transportation Study, Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan)
Bicycle Facility Reviews and Maps (e.g., Seattle Bike Map, Left by the Side of the Road Puget Sound Regional Bicycle Network Study (PSRC and Cascade Bicycle Club), Seattle Bicycle Facilities Collaborative Report, Urban Trails Plan, PSRC Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Implementation Strategy for the Central Puget Sound Region)

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