

Sounding Board Bike Tour Summary

August 20, 2015 3:30-5:30 PM

Overview

Sounding Board member, Jessica Szlag, from Commute Seattle offered to take the Center City Bike Network Sounding Board and other business representatives on a bike tour throughout downtown.

Commute Seattle and SDOT staff guided the tour through parts of downtown and about half the participants ended at the Commute Seattle office for an informal debrief.



One of the tour stops on Seventh Ave

Bike tour attendees

Name	Affiliation
1. Greg Smith	Sounding Board
2. Kristi Rennenbohm Franz	Sounding Board
3. Steve Kennedy	Sounding Board
4. Andrea Clinkscales	Cascade Bicycle Club
5. Kelli Refer	Cascade Bicycle Club
6. Jeff Aken	Cascade Bicycle Club
7. Mike Rimoin	Commute Seattle
8. Jeffrey Linn	Commute Seattle
9. Sally Bagshaw	City Council
10. Don Brubeck	Bassetti Architects
11. Carl Leighty	Alliance for Pioneer Square
12. Liz Stenning	Alliance for Pioneer Square
13. Jemae Hoffman	Via architecture
14. Dawn Schellenberg	Project team
15. Kenneth Loen	Project team
16. Sam Woods	Project team
17. Sara Colling	Project team

Planned bike tour route and stops for discussion

The map below shows the planned route, but the two tour groups modified their routes based on time constraints.



Discussion summary

Below is a summary of the discussion during the bike ride and informal debrief following the ride, as well as evaluation form comments and emails following the tour.

One-way or two-way protected bike lanes:

- One participant commented that one-way protected bike lanes are more effective because they keep people on bikes moving and turning with car traffic.

- Another participant noted that a network of two-way protected bike

lanes can be safer because people on bikes riding against traffic can see the vehicle movements in front of them.



Waiting to turn left onto Mercer protected bike lane

Second Ave Protected Bike Lane:

- Vehicles are turning left across the protected bike lane illegally. The turn signals should hang above the lane so they are more visible.
- Encourage automated vehicle enforcement of illegal left turns.
- Second Ave signals are often timed for people driving to move fast and for people on bikes to hit every red light.
- I've been biking more frequently on the 2-way lane on Second Avenue. Personally, I haven't had many issues with cars. My concerns are mostly with other cyclists – cyclists passing in the lanes, motorcycles using a lane, cyclists running lights intentionally on red lights and other poor behavior. By and large I see cyclists obeying rules of the road. If 2-way lanes become more the norm, there should be good discussion on how to keep cyclists safe in the lanes.

Connection between Capitol Hill/First Hill to South Lake Union:

- Could put a greenway on Terry Ave N or nearby.

Fifth Ave:

- The concept to move parking under the monorail and add a protected bike lane on the west side of the street has a lot of potential benefits to people who bike and businesses. It would also eliminate illegal turns under the monorail.
- SDOT should consider angled rather than parallel parking so businesses will get on board with a potential protected bike lane on Fifth Ave.

Seventh Ave:

- Seventh Ave has constraints for a protected bike lane such as traffic congestion and scarce space.
- Seventh Ave is a good potential north/south connection serving many destinations and also would connect to the protected bike lane that Amazon is constructing.
- The flattest route should be prioritized when selecting protected bike lane routes.

Pike/Pine:

- Pine could be a better protected bike lane connection than Pike because avoids the convention center overhang.
- It is really important to consider connections to Pike/Pine. A safe connection to Capitol Hill is a top priority of the Connect Downtown group. Linking the downtown network to the Broadway Cycle Track will help people understand what a complete citywide network would feel like.

Bell St:

- A counter flow connection on Bell would be great.

Third Ave:

- Vehicles should be regulated on Third Ave during off-peak hours as well during peak hours.

Fourth Ave:

- The fact that no one from our group wanted to ride up Fourth Ave is a good indicator that the dramatic end to the bike lane and sharrows do not cut it as a safe, reliable bike route.

Taylor St:

- General excitement about the idea of a greenway on Taylor St. Taylor St is a good connecting route from the Seattle Center to downtown. Connecting intersections just need to be comfortable for all ages and abilities.

Construction detours:

- Construction detours vary from project to project. There should be a way to ensure more consistent and safe detours during construction.

Parking:

- The abundance of off-street parking should be included in the discussion of swapping parking for bike infrastructure. Recommend putting stickers on street pay stations that say "You would have gotten a better deal in a garage."
- West Seattle should meter on-street parking.

Transportation plan:

- Downtown Seattle is the only neighborhood without a transportation plan.
- London has a useful model for planning transportation.

- Portland timed traffic at signals to slow traffic to 17 miles per hour in one location. Slow speeds are better for safety.

Freight deliveries:

- Freight Advisory Board members such as Charlies Produce would want to do deliveries at night when they can move through the city quickly and smoothly. Current noise restrictions prevent night deliveries.
- Night deliveries could help free up curbspace during the day for travel.

New bike infrastructure designs:

- Seattle's bike boxes could be tweaked to be more effective.
- Seattle should consider creating protected intersections.

Bike facility connections:

- Exiting the Second Ave protected bike lane feels dangerous and is confusing, particularly when we were unsure of what to do at Yesler and 2nd Avenue. The lack of connectivity is a major factor in people not using or supporting protected bike lanes. A connected network would make more sense and encourage ridership and perhaps even better compliance of traffic signals.

Evaluation form comments (verbatim)

Please check how you primarily travel downtown (walk, drive, transit, bike, freight, other):

Comment 1: Bike

Comment 2: Bike

Comment 3: Bike

What were your favorite parts of the ride?

Comment 1: Beautiful day – 2nd Ave, corridors where bikes are safely separated from cars.

Comment 2: Mercer St PBL for first time. Excellent clarity for all road users of who goes where.

Comment 3: The new Mercer bike lane.

What were your least favorite parts of the ride?

Comment 1: Where corridors end and bikes are thrown into traffic (like 4th Ave northbound at Spring).

Comment 2: [blank]

Comment 3: Riding in traffic.

How would you improve the bike tour for the next group?

Comment 1: Start 2nd group 1 minute after 1st group.

Comment 2: [blank]

Comment 3: More discussion at some of the stops.