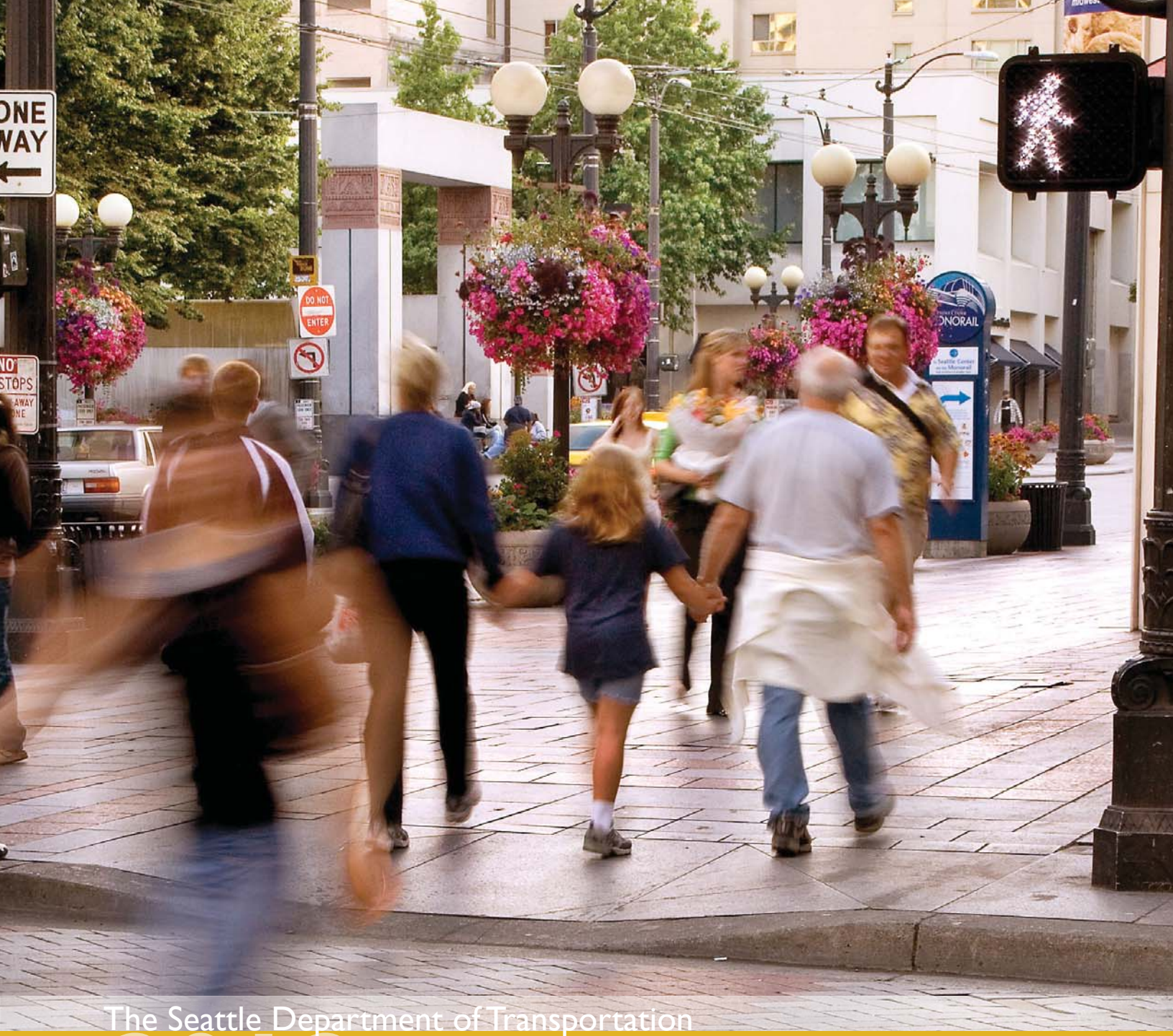


The Seattle Department of Transportation

# 2012 ACTION AGENDA

## Laying the Groundwork

SDOT
Seattle Department of Transportation

NO LEFT
TURN
EXCEPT TRANSIT
ONE

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# MESSAGE from the MAYOR

Dear friends,

Our streets are more than a transportation system. They are the canvas on which we build a great place to live. Streets provide mobility and access to homes, jobs, education, and services. They also reflect our values, allowing us to support our neighborhoods, address global warming, and build healthy communities.

Seattle's transportation policies should support those priorities. To do that, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has developed this Action Agenda. It lays out a clear set of policies and actions the department will advance over the next two years. In a time of tight budgets, we have to focus our efforts on actions that yield the biggest returns. We want you to know what we're working on, what we prioritize, and how we will get it done.

Our transportation system has to help the city accomplish a variety of goals – providing safe, affordable, and efficient means of travel; improving the transit connections between our neighborhoods; offering healthy choices like walking and biking; reducing our environmental impact; and supporting economic development and sustainable growth. Successful stewardship of the system requires thoughtful, deliberate, and strategic action.

I look forward to working with SDOT, the City Council, and the public to achieve our goals. I encourage you to read the Action Agenda and share your comments with me and SDOT. Together, we will protect what makes Seattle great and build a safe, healthy, thriving community.

Sincerely,

Mike McGinn
Mayor of Seattle

# MESSAGE from the DIRECTOR

Dear fellow Seattleites,

The Seattle Department of Transportation is charged with the responsibility for keeping the transportation system working for all who live, work, and visit this great city. This Action Agenda describes how SDOT intends to carry out this responsibility.

Making the transportation system work for everyone is a complex job that becomes even more of a challenge in times of financial hardship.

In addition, SDOT is part of a larger community working to improve the transportation system and affect public behavior. We rely on strong partnerships with transit agencies and state entities to enact change. For example, while we can help make buses run more reliably by improving streets and signals, it is King County Metro that ultimately delivers the service. There are many factors at play, and while we are not always in full control of the transportation network, we will continue to work with our partners.

We must keep our city moving, and we are up for the challenge. The Action Agenda makes our work easy to understand and lets you know what we intend to accomplish over the next two years.

With a shrinking budget, we've worked hard to adjust to our lower revenues and to focus on what is most vital to keep our streets safe, our infrastructure in shape, to enhance our communities and businesses, to involve the public and to spend your money wisely.

This document reflects my best thinking and that of my staff. It demonstrates the values of our mayor and council and what we have consistently heard from residents and businesses at many venues. I welcome your thoughts and ideas as we go forward.

Sincerely,

Peter Hahn
Director, Seattle Department of Transportation

# INTRODUCTION

Every day, people count on Seattle's transportation system to get to places for work, shopping, play, or learning – and then to get them home again. While connecting people, places, and products is the core mission of a transportation system, it provides so much more than just mobility. A robust transportation system can:

- Enable people to pursue opportunities by providing ready and affordable access to jobs, education, housing, and cultural activities
- Power our economy by moving goods and enhancing the attractiveness of business districts
- Improve health by making it easier to walk, bike, and ride transit
- Build community by inviting people to linger and enjoy places that contribute to neighborhood character
- Empower people by offering safe, efficient, and equitable choices for how and when to travel
- Improve our environment and address climate change through low-carbon travel options and the nurturing of trees, greenery, and urban wildlife in street rights of ways

In Seattle, we want people of all abilities – from our 5-year old kids to our 80-year old grandparents – to be comfortable moving about the city, whether on foot, by bike, riding transit, or driving a car.

In addition to relying on roads, sidewalks, and trails for our travel paths, we can make efficient, affordable, and safe travel choices available through programs that educate, encourage, and provide timely information. We ensure that quality services and facilities won't be limited to those who can afford and choose to own a car.

Of course, there are challenges. Transportation rights of way comprise nearly 27 percent of Seattle's land area, and pedestrians, bicycles, buses, cars, and trucks all compete for that limited space. Vehicles moving within this street space account for 40 percent of Seattle's greenhouse gas emissions, making transportation the primary climate change culprit.

Luckily, the transportation system also provides us with the opportunity to address these challenges head on. By offering people more choices, we can decrease the demand on our streets and reduce our impact on the environment. In doing so, we can build a network that supports healthy and sustainable communities, keeps more money in people's pockets, increases economic competitiveness, and adds to the character of our great city.

All of these conditions require significant investments and new solutions to meet our current and future transportation needs. The challenge is to do so in a manner that meets our residents' expectations for physical and economic well-being, while dealing with finite spaces and limited financial resources.

This document outlines a set of policies, actions, and measures of success that SDOT will use to achieve these ends. It is organized around five core principles:

1. Keeping it Safe: Safety is SDOT's number one priority. We are committed to improving safety for all users of the transportation system and reducing the number of fatalities and injuries.

2. Focusing on the Basics: Making sure our streets, sidewalks, and bridges are in good condition is vital to the success and safety of our city. We're focused on maintaining and enhancing infrastructure in a way that promotes long-term fiscal and environmental stewardship.

3. Building Healthy Communities: Neighborhoods are the core of our city. SDOT is dedicated to developing an equitable transportation system that offers healthy travel choices and great public spaces.

4. Supporting a Thriving Economy: The efficient movement of people and goods is essential to economic vitality. A robust transportation network can reduce household transportation costs by providing efficient and practical alternatives to driving, enhance our quality of life, and draw new businesses and visitors to our city.

5. Providing Great Service: A solid workforce is essential to carrying out the first four principles. We strive to be good financial stewards, deliver services equitably, and engage all parts of the community in our work.

Laying the Groundwork for

# KEEPING IT SAFE

*Engineer, educate, enforce, and evaluate.*

**Safety is SDOT's most important priority. Our long-term goal is a city with zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries.**

As one of the leading causes of death for younger people (ages 5 to 34), road safety is a public health concern. This is one of the reasons that safety is our number one priority.

People also expect to feel safe and comfortable as they are out and about on Seattle's streets, sidewalks, and trails. Well-placed investments that improve safety for our most vulnerable road users can encourage more people to try getting around on people power, especially for short trips. Additionally, safer streets are efficient streets. They have fewer and less severe collisions, allowing everyone to get where they are going safely and with less hassle.

Seattle has made substantial progress toward improving safety for the traveling public. The number of traffic collisions is steadily decreasing, a trend that is much more pronounced here than in national figures. Something good is happening in our city – it may be a combination of improved engineering, smart investments, alert travelers, and better enforcement.

Seattle has long been a leader in innovative transportation and traffic engineering, including the kinds of things that make our streets safer and more efficient for everyone. We were one of the first cities in the country to routinely deploy pedestrian countdown signals, bicycle sharrows, green bike lanes, and bike boxes. These newer methods make it easier and safer for people to get around in Seattle. We've found, however, that not everyone knows how these newer tools work, nor is everyone following the rules. To that end, we're working on educating the public and improving overall awareness.

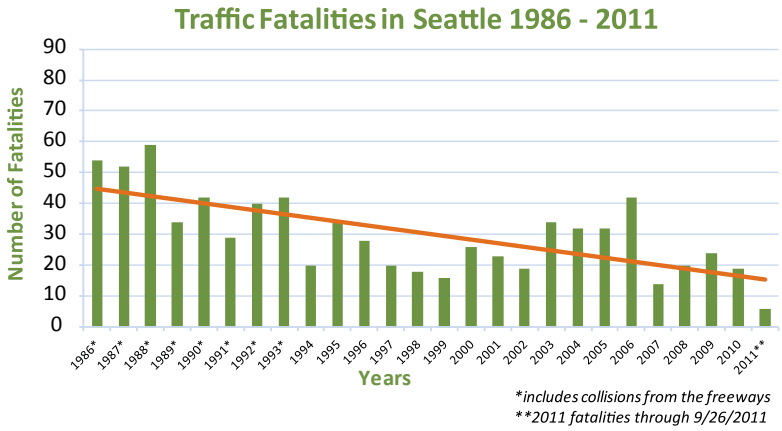
Our 30-year old neighborhood traffic calming program has served as the model for programs in other cities. We have built thousands of traffic circles, speed humps, and other traffic calming measures that have made reported residential street collisions a rarity. SDOT also recently deployed a small-scale social marketing tool kit for neighborhoods that want to raise awareness about speed on their streets, including yard signs and intersection repair. As part of our continuous improvement efforts, we are committed to evaluating physical changes in our street and safety programs to learn more about what works to reduce collisions.

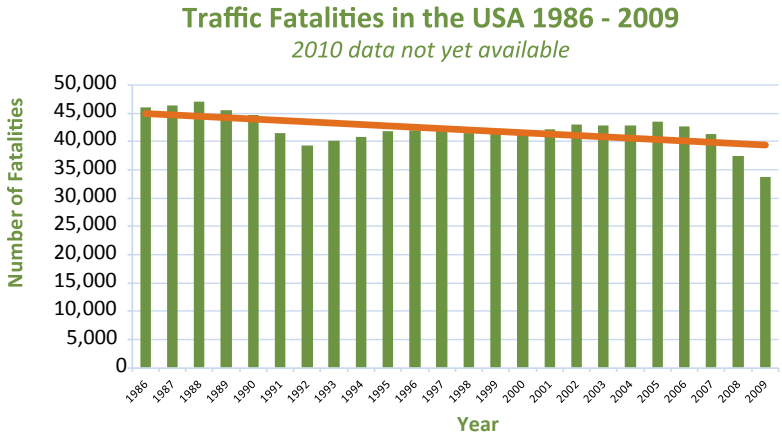
Keeping residents and visitors safe also means we must be prepared to respond to emergencies. SDOT's Winter Weather Plan is one example of our efforts to ensure we're ready for inclement weather incidents.

## Did You Know?

*Compared with cities with a population higher than 500,000, Seattle ranked sixth in traffic fatality rate, behind Boston, New York City, San Jose, CA, San Francisco and Washington DC.*

*National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2009*




Partnerships with the Seattle Police Department (SPD), schools, and advocacy organizations are critical to improving safety for our residents and visitors. We emphasize safety for elders, children, pedestrians, bicyclists, and people with disabilities, who are statistically more vulnerable in a traffic collision.

Our Safe Routes to School and School-Zone Automated Speed Enforcement programs, annual holiday pedestrian safety campaign, and ongoing partnership with the Washington Traffic Safety Commission's corridor safety program contribute to improved safety.

Through these efforts we saw traffic fatalities decrease more than 26 percent and fatalities involving pedestrians decrease nearly 55 percent from 2009 to 2010. While significant, this still falls short of our ultimate goal of zero traffic collision fatalities.

# Road Safety Summit

In late 2011, Mayor McGinn and members of the Seattle City Council convened a Road Safety Summit to collect public input and review data about the safety of our streets. They assembled a working group made up of elected offi cials, major employers, advocates, business leaders, and community leaders to help determine next steps for road safety in Seattle. Through public meetings and an online survey, the city received over 3,000 comments and suggestions.

Using these comments and their expertise, the working group recommended that the city and community partners develop a long-term, sustained campaign with the long-term vision of zero traffi c fatalities and serious injuries on our roads.

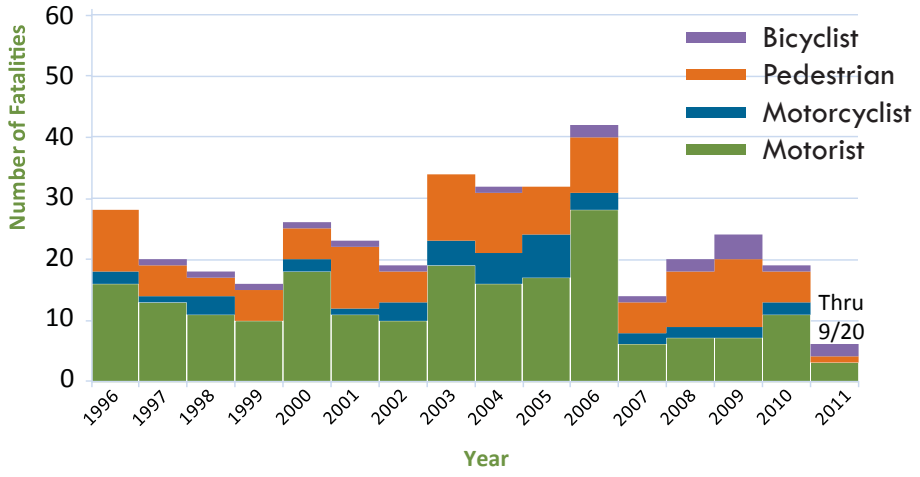
The city is currently developing strategies to achieve these goals using a multi-pronged approach consisting of education, enforcement, engineering, evaluation, and empathy. In order to be successful, this effort will rely on a larger community of people that are committed to creating a lasting change on Seattle roads.

The policies and actions listed in sections one through three of "Keeping it Safe" are all supportive of the Road Safety Summit effort. Later in 2012, more actions will be identified citywide (not just through SDOT) that will help get us move closer toward our long-term goal of zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

# 1 Reduce collisions for all modes and work toward zero fatalities and serious injuries

- Perform engineering reviews at all traffic fatality and high collision locations
- Implement roadway design features and traffic controls that have been demonstrated to reduce collisions and their severity
- Implement measures to calm traffic and reduce speeds on streets where excessive volumes and speeds warrant traffic calming
- Support changes to lower non-arterial speed limits and increase penalties for motorists who cause a collision with pedestrians or bicyclists
- Use intelligent transportation system (ITS) technology to provide real-time information that alerts roadway users of traffic incidents
- Implement safety spot improvements as funds support
- Continue to develop and implement the recommendations from the Road Safety Summit

**Fatalities on Seattle Streets by Mode**



## Improving Safety on Nickerson Street

In August 2010, we reconfigured the travel lanes on Nickerson Street (from 13th Avenue West to Florentia Street) to **improve pedestrian safety and increase driver compliance with the speed limit.** We added two new marked crosswalks and monitored traffic speeds over the next year.

The year following the rechannelization saw a **23 percent reduction in collisions over the preceding five-year average.** The project improved traffic safety by dramatically reducing the percent of drivers traveling more than 10 miles per hour over the speed limit. The percent of drivers traveling over the speed limit has been reduced by more than 60 percent, and top-end speeders have fallen by 90 percent. Meanwhile, traffic volume remains roughly the same as it was before the rechannelization, with no evidence of traffic diversion.

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Collisions per 1M vehicle miles traveled | 60 | 56 |
| Number of collisions | 11,913 | <11,000 |
| Number of fatalities | 19 | <10 |
| Pedestrian collisions per 100,000 residents | 87 | <75 |

# 2 Educate the traveling public to respect and protect one another

- Invest in education measures that increase mutual awareness among motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists
- Continue to work with Seattle Police Department to use enforcement measures that keep traffic at or below the speed limit
- Replace all pedestrian signal heads with countdown-style heads
- Continue SDOT's Holiday Pedestrian Safety Campaign
- Continue to implement the Safe Routes to Schools program
- Continue to develop and implement the recommendations from the Road Safety Summit

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Percent of elementary schools participating in Safe Routes to School | 30% | 56% |
| Percent of identified corridors where 85th percentile speeds are at or below speed limit* | 30% | 40% |
| Percent of signals with countdown-style heads | 24%** | 35% |

**Identified corridors include Aurora Ave N, Stone Way N, 24th Ave NW, Rainier Ave S, and Fauntleroy Way SW. 85th percentile refers to the speed at which 85 percent of motorists are traveling at, or below.*
***2011 baseline*

# 3 Minimize conflicts in the right of way to accommodate all travelers

- Coordinate use of the right of way for all major activities and permitted uses
- Inspect all permitted work to ensure safety and accessibility standards are met
- Encourage private contractors and partner agencies to achieve permit compliance by providing a process that is more efficient and predictable
- Work with the Department of Planning and Development to enforce code-required clearances for privately maintained trees and other encroachments in the sidewalk and right of way
- Maintain code-required clearances over roadways and sidewalks on all SDOT-owned trees

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Percent of Street Improvement Plans reviewed within 6 weeks | 70% | 70% |
| Average wait times for walk-in customers for over-the-counter Street Use permits (minutes) | <15 | <15 |
| Number of SDOT-owned street trees pruned to address height clearances | 1,000 | 1,215 |

## Aurora Traffic Safety Corridor

Between April 2005 and March 2008, there were **1,581 collisions on Aurora Avenue – that's more than 40 per month.** SDOT began a two-year safety corridor project in June 2009. Washington Traffic Safety Commission provided funding for the public education component of the project, managed the Seattle Police Department and Washington State Patrol overtime funds, and are the main drivers of the Corridor Safety Program. The goal was to reduce collisions by 25 percent.

We installed new curb ramps, radar speed signs, reflective pavement markers, and crosswalks and launched an education campaign. **Collisions have decreased 20 percent.**

# 4 Be ready to respond to emergencies

- Conduct regular and ongoing training for all Incident Management Team staff and crews
- Ensure that resources are in place to meet anticipated incident demands, such as wind, snow, downed trees and ice events
- Participate in regional emergency preparedness exercises and drills
- Perform seismic upgrades to bridges and roadway structures
- Analyze landslide prone areas and develop mitigation projects
- Expand the intelligent transportation systems network to respond to emergencies and incidents
- Increase public awareness of the Winter Weather plan

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Percent of incident management staff completing 24 hours of annual training | 70% | 75% |
| Percent of high-priority bridges that have undergone seismic retrofits | 40% | 53% |
| Number of Winter Weather brochures distributed and downloaded | 47,700* | 52,600 |

**2011 baseline*

# Winter Weather Plan

Here in Seattle, some winters bring heavy snowfall and other years see no snow accumulation at all. A weather phenomenon called the Puget Sound Convergence Zone causes some parts of the city to get inches of snow, while other parts get rain or even sun.

Steep topography, like the Queen Anne Counterbalance, First Hill and the intersection of 35th Avenue SW and Avalon Way, add to the complexity of snow fighting in Seattle. Hills can consume lots of time and effort and still not be drivable. A few stuck cars can tie up an important arterial for hours. SDOT commits to clearing snow from identified routes throughout the city within a specified time frame. We've developed a map that shows what streets we'll plow first - our top priority is to maintain emergency vehicle access.

We commit to using all the tools at our disposal to make sure that the people of Seattle as well as our interagency partners are fully informed and involved in our snow response. SDOT and King County Metro have worked together to ensure that bus routes will be clear. People will be able to get around the city by bus, making it easier to leave their cars at home. Property owners, both in residential and business areas, are responsible for shoveling their sidewalks and steps.

## Did You Know?

*Throughout the January 2012 snow storm, SDOT dispatched 22 pedestrian crews to downtown and various business districts to apply deicer and shovel snow and ice from over 2,000 sidewalk landings and public stairs.*

*In total, over 55,000 gallons of anti-icing magnesium chloride was applied, 3,373 tons of rock salt was used, and 5,015 labor hours clocked.*

Laying the Groundwork for

# FOCUSING ON THE BASICS

*Maintain, protect, preserve, and enhance our capital assets.*

**The public trusts SDOT to be the steward of the right of way. Being a good steward means that we must have reliable information, make wise decisions about how limited resources are spent, and get the best value from the public's transportation dollars.**

SDOT manages and maintains over $13 billion in transportation assets. From substantial and long-lasting structures such as bridges, roadway pavement and sidewalks, to smaller, more frequently maintained assets like signs, street trees, traffic signals, bike racks, and marked crosswalks – we are responsible for it all.

Focusing on the basics is about maintaining, preserving, and protecting our transportation infrastructure. It's also about looking for opportunities to enhance, expand, and improve our system. For example, SDOT is focused on repairing existing sidewalks and building new sidewalks to make it easier for more people to walk.

And as we build new or repair existing assets, we look for ways to reduce our impact on the planet, especially because the transportation sector is the primary contributor to local greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a basic underpinning of the work we do as a transportation agency to help the city reach its commitment of carbon neutrality by 2050. Through our internal environmental management system, GreenDOT, we can maximize the environmental benefits of our projects and contribute to a healthier city.

In 2011, we filled over 25,000 potholes, repaired 25 blocks of sidewalk, planted over 800 street trees, restriped 1,100 lanes miles of pavement. and installed 15 miles of bike lanes and sharrows. We also issued nearly 19,000 permits – for sidewalk cafes and new street improvements projects – to ensure that work in the right of way was done safely and that projects were built sustainably.

To keep infrastructure in the best condition possible and prolong its useful life, we must make regular investments in preventive maintenance. Over the years, a backlog of deferred maintenance has amassed, and the inventory has grown. Even though Seattle is in better financial shape than many cities in the nation—especially due to the voter-approved Bridging the Gap transportation levy—the needs far outweigh available dollars.

When simple repair is no longer an option and full reconstruction is necessary, costs escalate substantially. With regular maintenance, a well-built road can easily last nearly a century, while one deprived of maintenance will have one-third the lifetime.

To make the best investments possible, SDOT has an asset management program—an industry "best practice" that enables us to assess, maintain and track the quality, costs and value of our infrastructure. This information allows us to make informed decisions on the highest priorities for maintenance before the asset requires high cost reconstruction or full replacement.

SDOT continues to focus on the basics by maintaining what we have and planning for the future. We are fine tuning our systems to address backlogs while building new infrastructure to keep people and goods moving, and to enhance the overall built environment of the city. As we do so, we're also improving our work through programs that utilize new technologies, encourage community interaction, and celebrate creativity. We take our stewardship role seriously and are dedicated to creating and maintaining a truly sustainable transportation system.

# 1 Build and maintain transportation infrastructure to meet the latest standards

- Continue to invest in street paving projects and major maintenance programs
- Respond to pothole and sidewalk shim requests in a timely manner
- Maximize the life cycle of new construction projects
- Regularly maintain crosswalk markings
- Regularly inspect bridges and roadway structures and prioritize maintenance operations
- Remove graffiti on signs, traffic signals, and parking pay stations
- Ensure accountability for timely and high-quality repair of street restorations
- Optimize traffic signal corridors, taking into account the needs of all modes
- Continue replacing street signs
- Continue replacing roadside safety devices, such as guard rails and crash cushions

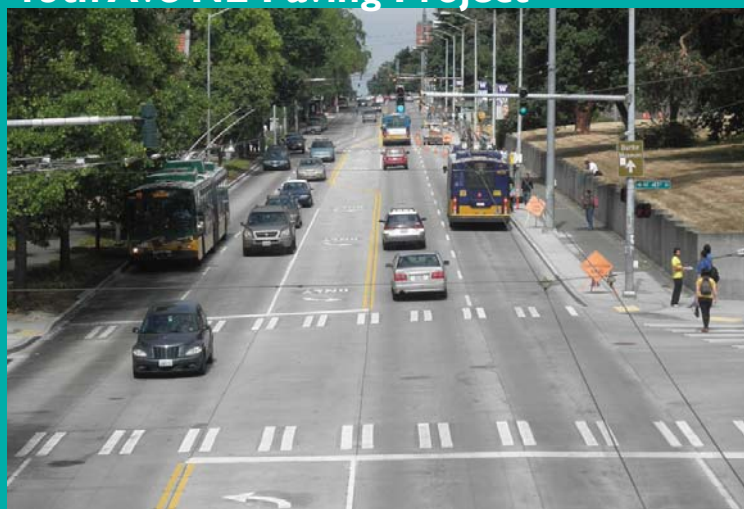
## Did You Know?

*You can report a pothole online or by calling (206) 684-ROAD, and track the status of your request on SDOT's Pothole Map at http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/potholes.*

## 15th Ave NE Paving Project

In 2011, we rebuilt 15th Avenue NE between NE Pacific and NE 50th streets with new concrete pavement and resurfaced the roadway between NE 50th and NE 55th streets with asphalt.

The project team also installed 52 curb ramps to improve accessibility, placed 6 new bus shelters, installed 4 new pedestrian lights, 7 new street light poles, and 16 new stormwater catch basins to improve water quality, and rebuilt nearly 6,500 linear feet of sidewalk.



| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Percent of pothole repair and sidewalk shim requests responded to within 3 business days | 59% | 80% |
| Percent of street name sign replacement program completed | 67% | 95% |
| Percent of reported graffiti removed within 6 business days | 95% | 95% |

# 2 Maximize the environmental benefits of the transportation system

- Work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Continue to support and implement SDOT's environmental management system, GreenDOT
- Reuse and reduce construction materials whenever possible
- Increase the use of "green" concrete and asphalt for roadway and sidewalk projects
- Reduce vehicle idling at bridges, schools, and loading zones
- Improve water quality by enhancing and expanding the Street Sweeping/ Vacuuming for Water Quality Program partnership with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)
- Develop and implement standards for green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) projects in partnership with SPU
- Reduce electricity used to operate bridges and lighting

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Percent of capital projects reviewed to maximize the use of "green" concrete and asphalt | 34%* | 75% |
| Percent of lane miles swept for water quality (out of total lane miles swept) | 60%* (9,758/15,998 miles) | 71% |

**2011 baseline*

# Elliott Bay Seawall Project

The Elliott Bay Seawall is the foundation for Seattle's future waterfront. It runs from South Washington Street to Broad Street along Elliott Bay and was built between 1916 and 1934. Over the last 70 years, the seawall has deteriorated significantly and could fail in the event of an earthquake or even a large storm. Replacing the seawall is a critical public safety issue and is a top priority for the City of Seattle. The need to replace the seawall and the removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct also presents Seattle with an opportunity to enhance critical marine habitat along the shoreline.

Failing to replace the seawall puts our local economy at risk of major disruptions. Major transportation facilities—ferries, railways, and roads—provide commuters access to work, freight access to markets, and visitors access to the waterfront. Seattle's front porch, which includes historic piers, tourist activities, passenger cruise lines, office buildings, and residential buildings, is supported by this important structure.

The project team has completed 35% design of a staff-recommended alternative and is actively seeking permits and environmental approvals for the project. The project will move into final design this spring, maintaining a very aggressive schedule in order to address this critical safety project as quickly as possible.

Construction of the seawall is planned to occur in two phases, beginning as early as September 2013. The goal is to complete the first phase of seawall construction—from Washington to Virginia streets—prior to the demolition of the Alaskan Way Viaduct's central waterfront section in early 2016.

# 3 Manage Seattle's public street trees and landscapes

- Plant, prune, and care for street trees to increase tree canopy, improve neighborhood streetscapes, and address public safety concerns
- Update the Street Tree list to ensure the right tree is planted in the right place and to reduce maintenance needs
- Maintain trees and vegetation around intersections, crosswalks, regulatory signs, etc. to increase visibility
- Maintain tree pits to meet the dual goals of tree health and pedestrian safety
- Educate the public and tree service providers on proper planting and extended care, and on reporting illegal pruning or removals
- Enforce regulation related to tree retention and protection

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Percent of tree canopy coverage within the right of way | 16% | 18% |
| Percent of customer inquiries on 684-TREE hotline responded to within 2 business days | 90% | 95% |
| Tree maintenance pruning cycle (number of years) | 13.4 | 13.4* |

**Maintaining the 13.4 yearly cyle is an increase, as inventory continues to grow each year*

# Community Tree Program

When it comes to reducing the impacts of climate change, there is no substitute for responsible behavior. Planting trees can help lessen some of the problems that face us today, while providing benefits that enhance our neighborhoods and our lives.

Trees reabsorb carbon dioxide out of the air. They can reduce energy needs, by cooling homes in the summer and blocking cold winds in the winter. They capture storm water and filter dust and dirt from the sky. They beautify our neighborhoods, encourage song birds, and help increase property values.

Thanks to the voter-supported Bridging the Gap initiative, SDOT is planting over 800 street trees per year. We're interested in finding neighborhoods where we can plant about 100 trees within about a 4- to 5-square block area. These trees will be planted, watered through establishment, and maintained by SDOT.

## Did You Know?

*You can request free street trees for your neighborhood. Check out http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/btg_streettrees for guidelines, or call (206) 684-TREE.*

Laying the Groundwork for

# BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

*Support sustainability, livability, and equitable growth.*

**Streets and sidewalks provide pathways to get us from point A to point B. But if we look closer, we can also see them as opportunities for making community connections, supporting active lifestyles, and contributing to vibrant neighborhoods.**

A key ingredient to a great city is public space that encourages people to linger, enjoy, and connect with neighbors and strangers. SDOT sees placemaking as an essential part of sustainability, livability, and equitable growth. We are rethinking how to use the right of way and how the transportation system contributes to the overall physical feel of the city. We're prioritizing transit, building more sidewalks, making more space available for bicycles, and creating hubs where people can connect between modes.

In addition to making streets friendlier for all travelers, we are calming neighborhood streets to increase safety, reduce vehicle speeds, and re-route auto traffic from neighborhoods onto arterial streets. We are designing neighborhood greenways that promote bike and pedestrian travel on streets with low volumes and speeds. And, we are making buses and rail a real option for many trips from our neighborhoods to major destinations. In doing so, SDOT develops streetscape designs that consider the function, form, and feel of a space and its place within the larger community.

By making it easier to ride transit and offering non-motorized options, people can choose to lead more active and environmentally sustainable lifestyles. These choices often influence our decisions about where we live, shop, go to school, work, and recreate. They can affect stress levels, finances, our sense of independence, and the time we spend with our friends and family.

Although many people wouldn't consider it a determinant to health, the way our transportation system is planned, designed, and built has far-reaching implications for our risk of obesity, diabetes and injuries. This is significant considering that over half of adult residents and 30 percent of school-aged children are overweight or obese in King County. And the prevalence of obesity among African American adults is 60 percent higher than for whites, which makes achieving equity a serious challenge.

We have an opportunity to provide healthy, affordable choices and create great places that encourage people to get out and enjoy streets on foot or by bike. In doing so, we can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions, smog and soot. We can also improve the health of our residents, support environmental sustainability, and bring people together in places where they want to be.

## WALK BIKE RIDE

We're at a turning point in transportation. We can't sustain the financial, environmental, and health costs of a transportation system that is overly reliant on automobiles. We need a new path forward that enables people to make healthy, affordable, and convenient choices.

Launched in 2010, the Mayor's Walk Bike Ride initiative encourages a balanced approach to how we use our streets, how we spend our transportation dollars, and how we collaborate with partner agencies. It commits us to giving people better transit choices and safer routes for walking and biking. In doing so, we can build a transportation system that supports safe and healthy communities, creates a dependable, connected, and equitable network, and promotes placemaking. Walk Bike Ride is about making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Our neighborhoods and the way they're designed affect the way we get around in the city. Our lifestyles and activities have changed, and the obesity trend has hit an alarming trajectory in a very short time period. By designing our communities in the context of health and equity trends, and by providing better walking, biking, and transit opportunities for all Seattleites, we can begin to reverse these negative impacts.

In 2011, over 1,800 people signed up for the Walk Bike Ride Challenge and pledged to convert at least two car trips per week. This resulted in over 300,000 miles of driving converted to walking, biking, and transit, and prevented over 300,000 pounds of greenhouse gases from entering our atmosphere. We aim to increase the number of participants by 5 percent each year.

WALK
BIKE
RIDE

# 1 Increase mobility and access for everyone

- Use equity criteria for prioritizing transportation investments and maintenance activities
- Respond to curb ramp requests and continue to install them through other projects
- Continue to install accessible pedestrian signals
- Minimize obstacles in the right of way that interfere with pedestrian and bicycle access
- Ensure that SDOT capital projects consider the needs of all modes, consistent with the city's Complete Streets ordinance
- Use real-time and static maps to provide information to all travelers

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Percent of crossing improvements completed in high priority areas (defined in Pedestrian Master Plan) | 63% | 75% |
| Percent of requested curb ramps completed to date | 65% | 80% |

# 2

## Make transit the efficient, affordable choice for a variety of trips

- Implement the recommendations of the Transit Master Plan
- Use transit infrastructure and facilities to create public spaces that attract people and connect walking, biking, and transit
- Partner with transit agencies to implement programs that encourage riding transit
- Work with Metro to further enhance RapidRide bus rapid transit corridors
- Work with Metro to ensure that route planning and service hour allocations best serve the city's transit priorities
- Install real-time bus schedule technology at stops on high ridership bus routes

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Miles of operating streetcar lines | 1.3 | 3.8 |
| Citywide bus ridership (average weekday boardings) | 282,000 | 303,000 |
| Miles of completed bus corridor projects | 9 | 30 |

### Transit Priority Corridors

SDOT is building better public transportation infrastructure through projects that improve corridors and connections. The goals of these projects are to:

- Help transit run faster and more reliably
- Improve overall capacity to move people around the region
- Improve transit connections and rider experience

# 3 Make healthy travel choices the easy choices

- Implement the recommendations of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans in collaboration with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Boards
- Complete the update to the Bicycle Master Plan
- Partner with agencies, non-profits, and private organizations to promote walking and biking
- Expand pedestrian and bicycle wayfinding signage to encompass more destinations
- Add more bike parking in urban centers and villages

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Pedestrian volumes* | 25,700 ** | 26,500 |
| Bicycle volumes* | 3,900 ** | 4,000 |
| Percent of Bicycle Master Plan on-street bike facility network (bike lanes and sharrows) completed | 4% | 25% |

** These are an average quarterly aggregate of evening peak-hour counts conducted at 50 locations throughout the city*
*** 2011 baseline*

# 4 Activate public spaces

- Designate pedestrian plazas and festival streets in the right of way
- Improve public access to shoreline street ends
- Continue issuing permits for festival streets, mobile food vending, farmers markets, and block parties

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Number of street food vending carts and trucks, sidewalk cafes, and farmer's market permits issued | 311 | 326 |

## Did You Know?

*In July 2011, the city passed legislation that created new rules for mobile vending on city streets. The new permit type helps activate the street and supports local businesses.*

## Painted Intersections

Painted intersections lend a sense of place to a community and are a great way to organize your neighborhood around a common goal. SDOT allows painted intersections on residential (non-arterial) streets. Our Street Use Division made it easier for neighborhoods to create street murals by developing step-by-step instructions for painted intersections. Our Neighborhood Traffic team works with the community to make their design a reality while meeting SDOT standards.

Laying the Groundwork for

# SUPPORTING A THRIVING ECONOMY

*Keep people and goods moving and create great places that attract businesses.*

Seattle has a rich history of industry, ingenuity, and entrepreneurialism – from manufacturing and trade activities to new technologies and start-ups. Transportation plays a critical role across this spectrum, as it moves goods and people into and around the city.

Freight and goods make up a significant sector of our local economy. In 2010, our manufacturing and maritime sectors supported more than 90,000 jobs, generated $6 billion each year in taxable retail sales, and contributed to over $37 million annually in business and occupation taxes. Container ships, trains, trucks, airplanes, and delivery vehicles all play a role in what we consume and what we export to the world. Moving goods safely and efficiently is vital to our city's economic success.

People also rely on a solid transportation network to get around. Transportation is the second largest expense for American households – accounting for nearly 20 cents of every dollar spent – more than food, clothing, and health care. Research shows that a two-person household that uses public transportation saves an average of $6,251 annually compared to a household with two cars and no public transportation accessibility. By providing convenient and affordable transportation choices, we can move people efficiently and keep money in their pockets. Every dollar saved means more money retained in the local economy.

In addition to saving money, an efficient transportation network saves time. Consider all the time spent in traffic back-ups that could have gone toward developing and implementing new ideas. Or circling the block in search of a parking space when you could have been shopping or dining. A thriving city is one in which people can access jobs, educational opportunities, retail districts, and community services quickly and easily.

Lastly, a high-quality transportation network contributes to a thriving economy by adding to the vibrancy of our city. A well-designed transportation network, pleasant streetscapes, and great public spaces attract people and spur economic development. To maintain this competitive advantage, we must continue to grow intelligently and recognize the vital role that transportation plays, not only in moving goods and people, but also in attracting new economic opportunities.

# 1 Keep freight and goods moving efficiently

- Continue the freight spot improvement program to reduce bottlenecks and improve safety
- Work with the Seattle Freight Advisory Board and other stakeholders to plan for current and emerging freight needs
- Develop travel time guidelines along Major Truck Streets and other arterials
- Collect truck volume data on the arterial network to inform decision making
- Use intelligent transportation system (ITS) technology to alert drivers of delays at traffic bottlenecks
- Partner with Washington State Ferries to improve access at ferry terminals

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Number of annual spot improvements for freight mobility | 11 | 15 |

## Did You Know?

*Every billion dollars spent on public transportation creates over 10,000 jobs.*

*Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2009*

# 2 Increase efficient and affordable access to jobs and education

- Prioritize transportation investments that serve major employment and education centers
- Increase the speed and reliability of priority bus corridors that connect people to major employment and education centers
- Leverage transportation investments with private development opportunities
- Implement programs that inform employees and students about travel options

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Percent of commute trips to Center City using non-drive alone modes | 65% | 68% |
| Number of Walk Bike Ride Challenge participants | 1,886* | 2,100 |

**2011 baseline*

## Mercer Corridor Project

The Mercer Corridor project will widen Mercer Street to create a two-way boulevard, reconstruct Valley Street as a local access street, provide new and wider sidewalks, improve connections to transit, and add bicycle lanes. The project replaces major utility infrastructure and integrates many environmentally-friendly and sustainable design features.

In addition to improving mobility for over 100,000 people each day, the project will create 600 direct construction jobs, support 22,000 new jobs in South Lake Union, and improve links to Port facilities, industry and research/development uses.

# 3 Build great streetscapes to promote economic vitality

- Work with business districts to design streetscapes that address the needs of the retail community
- Utilize public art to promote street activation
- Finalize the Pedestrian Lighting Plan
- Maintain trees and landscapes in business districts and the Center City to encourage and attract customers
- Work with the Department of Planning and Development to designate and develop Green Streets projects

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Number of annual SDOT-sponsored art projects | 7 | 8 |
| Number of annual pedestrian lighting projects completed | 7 | 5 |

## Waterfront Seattle

Waterfront Seattle is a partnership between the City of Seattle and the entire community to create a dynamic public waterfront along 26 city blocks from Pioneer Square to the Olympic Sculpture Park. With the Alaskan Way Viaduct coming down and the replacement of the Elliott Bay Seawall, Seattle has a unique opportunity to make a range of improvements to our waterfront, creating an exciting destination with vibrant public and cultural spaces, access to the water and a new urban street that will accommodate all modes of travel and provide an important connection in the City's transportation system.

This effort is led by Seattle's Department of Planning and Development, SDOT, and the Department of Parks and Recreation. The project's guiding principles are to create a waterfront for all, put the shoreline and sustainable design at the forefront, reconnect the city to its waterfront, embrace and celebrate Seattle's past, present and future, improve access and mobility for people and goods, create a bold vision that is adaptable over time, and develop consistent leadership – from concept to construction to operations.

# 4 Support Center City and neighborhood business district access

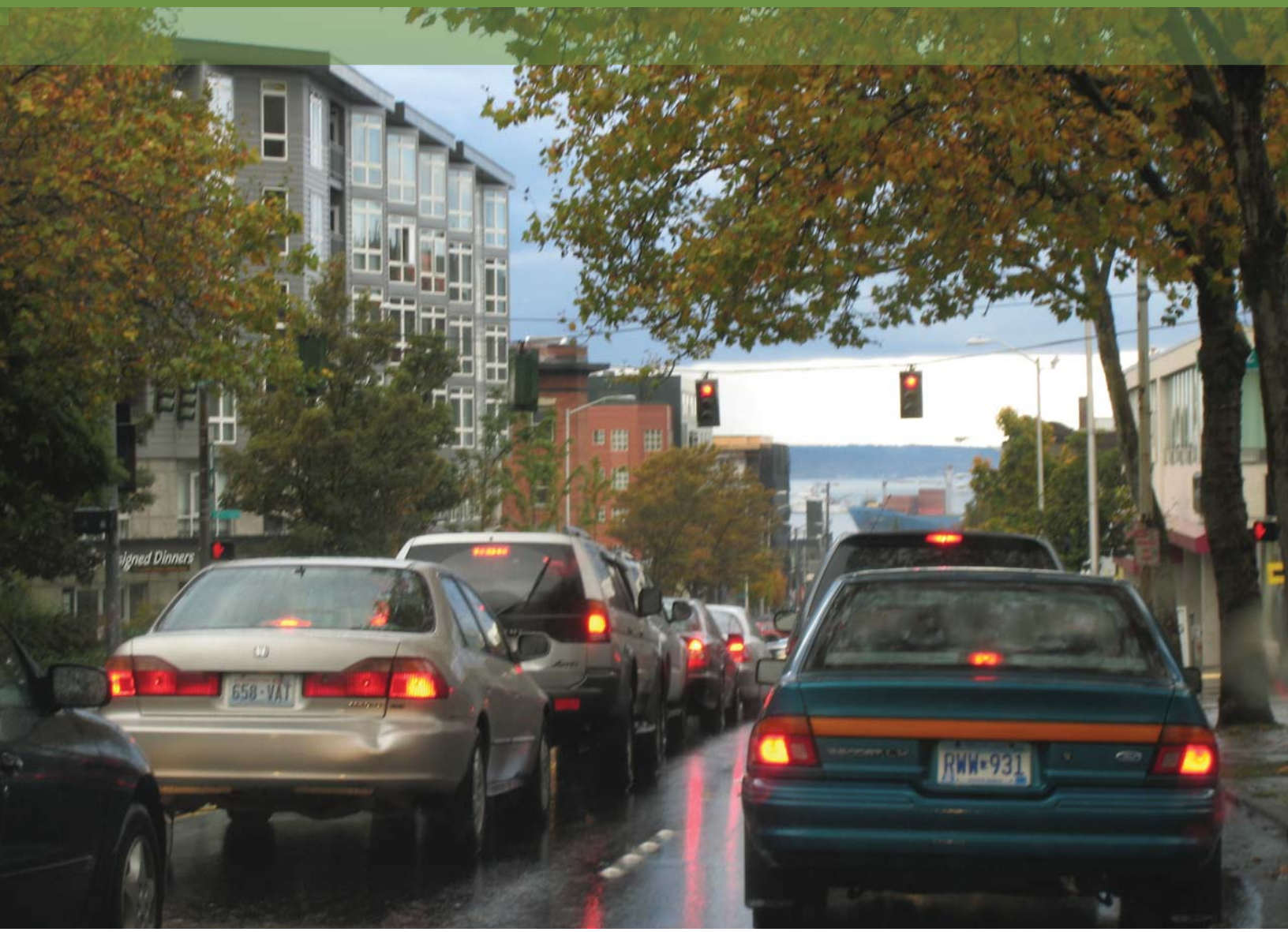
- Partner with business districts to improve loading and customer access and educate the public about on-street parking rules
- Adjust parking rates and hours based on annual data collected to improve parking access
- Guide Center City visitors to short-term off-street parking through the e-Park electronic parking guidance system
- Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and transit investments that serve urban villages and centers
- Minimize construction impacts on business districts
- Integrate pay-by-cellphone technology into on-street parking pay stations

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Number of parking facilities in e-Park | 6 | 10-15 |
| Percent of paid parking areas with occupancies within the range of 1-2 available spaces per block face | 32% | 60% |
| Percent of new bike parking spaces installed that are in urban villages and centers | 70% | 70% |

## e-Park

Downtown Seattle shines with world-class arts, shopping, dining, and entertainment. e-Park signs let you know space availability in six garages throughout the Downtown Retail Core and Pike Place Market.

Look for dynamic signs at key points to guide you to participating garages. The signs show how many spaces are currently available in each garage. Real-time information takes the guesswork out of parking and helps reduce congestion.



## Did You Know?

*In 2010, Washington and Oregon combined paid about $16.6 billion for oil imports—over $1,550 per person, or more than $6,200 on average for a family of four. The increase in oil prices in the first part of 2011 has put the region on track for its highest level of petroleum spending ever.*

*Sightline Institute, 2011*

Laying the Groundwork for

# PROVIDING GREAT SERVICE

*Help people access transportation services and information.*

**Customer service is at the core of what we do. Designing safe streets, paving roads and filling potholes, keeping people and goods moving, and making it easier to walk, bike, and ride transit – we do all of these things for the public's benefit. The way in which we deliver services and communicate our projects is a critical component of our work.**

Behind all of our projects is a quality workforce that strives to implement innovative, cost-effective, and sustainable solutions to Seattle's transportation challenges. SDOT continues to invest in building the skills and expertise of our staff to meet the complex demands of an urban transportation system.

Seattle is a diverse community with a broad range of transportation needs and concerns. We strive to create a workforce whose composition reflects the diversity of the community we serve. And we have a responsibility to ensure services we provide are equitably delivered.

To provide great service, we need to understand constituent needs. To do this, we must listen to the community, and communicate our work clearly and through a variety of inclusive outreach methods. Participating in community meetings, going door-to-door to share project information, and responding to letters, phone calls, and emails will continue to be central elements of our strategy.

We also recognize the increasing reliance on technology and are actively using Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, online surveys, and a blog to update our customers, take input, and answer questions. With a few clicks of the mouse, people can go online and find the latest traffic alerts, construction and event street closures, and a map of on-street and off-street parking. We're working hard to maintain and upgrade SDOT's technology to help people travel smarter.

And, we're exploring creative methods of community outreach that connect with different audiences, including those who don't speak English as a first language or who might not normally attend a public meeting. Our transportation system must serve everyone.

Lastly, it is our goal to deliver quality projects and service in a timely and financially-responsible manner. The public entrusts us with its purse, and this is a relationship we take seriously. Incorporating performance measures, gathering feedback, and continually evaluating our work will strengthen SDOT as an organization and improve our ability to meet community needs. It's our job to serve the public, and we intend to do just that.

## Did You Know?

*Every year, SDOT responds to over 1,200 email inquiries and 2,580 phone calls on the 684-ROAD line.*

## Public Engagement

In late 2011, SDOT partnered with other city departments to engage eight different language groups about long-range city planning. We used an interactive voting tool to get immediate feedback around a series of questions about growth, transportation, and climate change. Participants enjoyed using this new tool and seeing live results.

# 1 Ensure a quality department workforce

- Provide on-going training opportunities at all occupational levels
- Reduce incidents of on-the-job accidental injuries and vehicle collisions
- Recognize employees who perform "above and beyond"
- Explore the development of apprenticeship programs and vehicle operations training programs
- Establish preferred training levels for technical employees

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Percent of employees completing Race and Social Justice Intiative training | 96% | 100% |
| Percent of employees injured per 100 workers | 12.4% | 9% |

# 2

## Be inclusive and transparent in public engagement

- Use social networking tools to share information and engage the public
- Reduce response time for customer requests and inquiries
- Keep all project websites udpated, accessible, accurate, and easy to navigate
- Improve community connections and outreach tools to work effectively with Seattle's diverse population
- Work with neighborhoods on the selection, design, and implementation of Neighborhood Street Fund projects
- Make more SDOT data available on Data.seattle.gov

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Number of SDOT Facebook page followers | 457* | 1,000 |
| Percent of large capital projects using RSJI** public engagement toolkit checklist | n/a | 100% |

**2011 baseline*
***Race and Social Justice Initiative*

### Did You Know?

*You can connect with SDOT on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and our blog at http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/interactive.*

# 3 Ensure equity in service delivery, hiring, and contracting

- Deliver transportation projects based upon objective criteria and demonstrated need
- Provide information and technical assistance to women and minority-owned business enterprises (WMBEs)
- Strive to make SDOT workforce reflect regional demographics
- Provide internships and training opportunities for high-school and college students

| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| Number of information meetings held for WMBEs | 3* | 4 |
| Number of Summer Youth Employment Program interns | 12 | 12 |

**2011 baseline*

## Race and Social Justice Intiative (RSJI)

SDOT employees are becoming more engaged and better aware of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) – an effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in our communities. SDOT's RSJI Change team has developed and implemented a comprehensive workplan. One of our priorities is to increase Women and Minority-Owned Enterprise (WMBE) contracting, which not only raises awareness of issues of race, but also helps us connect with our community. The King Street Station Project is exceeding goals of 6 percent Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and 10 percent WMBE set for this project by achieving 7 percent DBE participation and 21 percent WMBE participation.

Our workforce is becoming more empowered and better able to understand RSJI because of our ongoing efforts through Lunch & Learns, newsletters, and increased conversations about race and equity with senior leadership. These efforts equip employees to engage the public on issues of race and social justice and provide equitable service to our customers.

# 4 Demonstrate strong financial stewardship

- Meet Bridging the Gap (BTG) levy and $20 Vehicle License Fee (VLF) objectives and deliverables
- Complete all construction projects within engineer's estimated budgets
- Manage all projects within respective lines of budget control as adopted by the city and resolve financial issues in a timely manner
- Secure grants to help fund the city's transportation priorities
- Use documented objective criteria to prioritize transportation projects and programs
- Work with city departments and other governmental agencies to make the most of capital investments

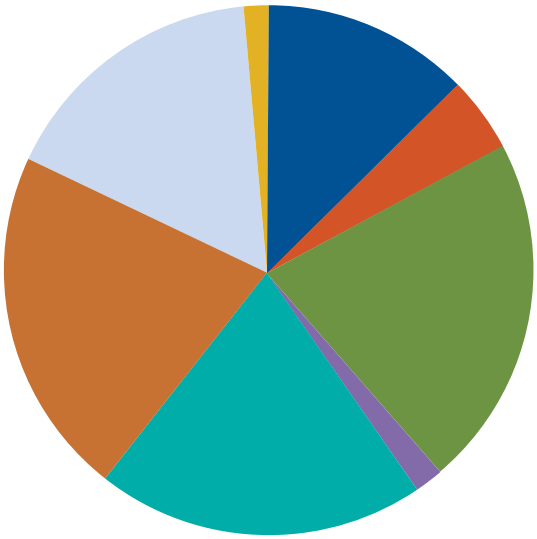
| MEASURE | 2010 BASELINE | 2014 GOAL |
|---|---|---|
| BTG and VLF projects delivered on time and on budget | 100% | 100% |
| Grant funding secured | $24M | $19M |

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

# BY THE NUMBERS

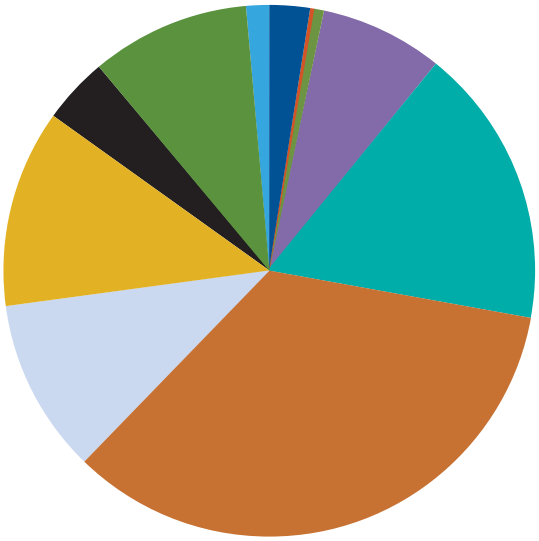
At a time when belt-tightening is the norm, we have been fortunate to have the voter-approved Bridging the Gap transportation levy, as well as other grant and partnership funding. These dedicated funds have allowed us to implement transportation improvements despite declining revenues.

In 2011, revenues and expenditure budgets decreased by approximately $3.8 million from 2010. This decrease reflected continued economic weakness, with stagnant General Fund and Gas Tax support losing ground against inflation, as well as decreased capital funding.



2011 Revenue: $306 million

- General: Fund $39M (13%)
- Gas Tax: $14M (4%)
- Debt: $66M (22%)
- CRF: %5m (1%)
- BTG: $63M (20%)
- Charges for Service: $66M (22%)
- Grants & Other: $51M (17%)
- Fund Balance: $4M (1%)



In 2011, SDOT's expenditure budget decreased with substantial reductions in major maintenance, partially offset by increased spending on major projects such as the First Hill Streetcar, Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall replacement, and Spokane Street Viaduct.

2011 Budget: $306 million

- Bridges & Structures: $8M (2%)
- Department Management: $1M (0%)
- Engineering Services: $2M (1%)
- General Expense: $23M (7%)
- Major Maint/Replacement: $53M (17%)
- Major Projects: $105M (34%)
- Mobility-Capital: $33M (11%)
- Mobility-Operations $37M (12%)
- ROW Management: $12M (4%)
- Street Maintenance: $30M ((10%)
- Urban Forestry: $4M (1%)

Here's a snapshot of our 2011 accomplishments, by the numbers. In many cases, this list goes into more detail than the information provided in the performance measures, and it adds another level of detail on how we're providing core services to the community. The orange text signifies work that was funded in part or entirely with Bridging the Gap levy revenues.

| BIKES AND PEDESTRIANS | 2011 |
|---|---|
| Bike lanes and sharrows installed (miles) | 15 |
| Bike route signs installed (miles) | 31 |
| Pedestrian/bike trails built (segments) | 0 |
| Bike parking spaces installed | 210 |
| Bike maps issued | 34,366 |
| New sidewalks built by Sidewalk Development Program (blocks) | 10 |
| Sidewalk blocks rehabilitated | 25 |
| Crosswalks remarked | 306 |
| Curb ramps constructed | 295 |
| Stairways retrofitted | 3 |
| Walking routes to schools improved for safety | 6 |
| Signage of school zones improved | 10 |
| Pedestrian crossings improved | 51 |

| BRIDGES | |
|---|---|
| Bridge repairs completed | 230 |
| Bridges painted | 1 |
| Guardrail replaced (feet) | 1,891 |

## PARKING

| | 2011 |
|---|---|
| Pay station inquiries resolved | 9,660 |
| Pay station transactions processed | 10.5 million |

## PAVEMENT

| | |
|---|---|
| Lane-miles paved | 52 |
| Potholes filled | 25,110 |

## TRAFFIC

| | |
|---|---|
| Construction and Special Event Traffic Control Plans Approved | 2,436 |
| Lane - miles of pavement restriped | 1,151 |
| Regulatory traffic signs replaced | 5,065 |
| Street name signs replaced (number of intersections) | 1,156 |
| Radar speed signs installed | 12 |
| Speed watch trailers deployed | 51 |

## TRAFFIC SIGNALS

| | |
|---|---|
| Traffic Signals Optimized | 107 |
| New traffic signals installed | 3 |
| Traffic signals maintained | 1,055 |
| Pedestrian countdown signals installed | 26 |

## URBAN FORESTRY

| | |
|---|---|
| Street trees planted* | 822 |
| Street trees pruned | 3,385 |
| Landscape maintained (square feet) | 912 |

| OTHER | 2011 |
|---|---|
| Transit hours secured | 44,000 |
| SDOT public website visits | 5,630,023 |
| Grants/appropriations/authorizations received | $23,649,000 |
| Grants/appropriations/authorizations submitted for future funding | $44,240,000 |
| Percentage of contracts issued to women and minority business enterprises for Goods and Services** | 8.2% |
| Percentage of Completed Construction Projects by Women and Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (WMBE) contracts ** | 11.25% |

** SDOT either plans or facilitates*

*** Dollars expended with WMBE vendors are reported based on actual payments in the current year*

## making a DIFFERENCE

To minimize printing costs and reduce paper use,
a limited number of copies were printed on recycled paper.

The document is available to view at
http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/sdotreports.htm

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