



## Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

*Stewards of the  
Pedestrian Master Plan*

Jennifer Lehman, Vice Chair  
Emily Davis, Secretary  
Ori Brian  
Akshali Gandhi  
Bianca Johnson  
Emily Mannetti  
Esti Mintz  
Han-Jung Ko (Koko)  
Maria Sumner  
Anna Zivarts

### Board Meeting Minutes

**April 14, 2021, 6 - 8PM**

**Board Members Present:** Jennifer Lehman, Esti Mintz, Anna Zivarts, Han-Jung Ko (Koko), Maria Sumner, Akshali Gandhi, Bianca Johnson, Ori Brian

#### Non-board member attendees:

Polly Membrino, SDOT  
Brian Dougherty, SDOT  
Allison Schwartz, SDOT  
James Le, SDOT  
Bradley Topol, SDOT  
Carol Haffar  
Doug MacDonald  
James Cooper  
Grant Peltier

Greyson Simon  
Erin Fitzpatrick  
Hasti Afkham  
Laurie Gelb  
Jane Dunkel  
Bryan Townley  
Ethan Campbell  
Stephen Fesler  
Jack Lynch

Approximately 2 other members of the public joining by phone

#### Welcome & Introductions - 5 min

#### Public Comment - 5 min

- Carol Haffar—I am a member of a community group, Concerned Neighbors of 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast, and we sent a letter to the mayor and SDOT director Sam Zimbabwe, but we have not heard back from them. We also reached out to Councilmember Pedersen.
- Doug MacDonald—I am very glad tonight that there is a presentation on Vision Zero and enforcement. I have two comments. Vision Zero rests on the three E's—engineering, education, and enforcement. If enforcement is not an integral part of Vision Zero, then we do not have a true Vision Zero program. If a radar gun identifies someone who is speeding, pulling the person over has become fraught with police problems.
- Carol—I would like to know how much automated enforcement costs and hope that will be incorporated in the presentation

#### SDOT Vision Zero and Enforcement

- Jennifer—Before we get to the Vision Zero presentation, I want to acknowledge the several people who have died while walking and rolling in our streets due to traffic collisions. Not only are we seeing too many people killed or seriously injured by drivers, we are also witnessing an uptick in

*The Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor and all the offices of the city on matters related to pedestrians and the impacts which actions by the city may have upon the pedestrian environment; and shall have the opportunity to contribute to all aspects of the city's planning insofar as they relate to the pedestrian safety and access.*

*-City Council Resolution  
28791*

- harassment and attacks targeting Asian and Asian-American people and continued killing of black and brown people during traffic enforcement.
- Full presentation is available on the SPAB website:  
<https://www.seattle.gov/seattle-pedestrian-advisory-board/meetings/documents/archived-documents>
- The Vision Zero team leads the charge on Seattle’s long-term initiatives to end traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets. The team is made up of five people at SDOT and key strategies are Engineering; education, engagement, and partnership; re-thinking the role of enforcement, and re-imagining community safety
- In 2020, vehicle volumes and collisions were down drastically, but the rate of serious injuries and fatalities were similar to previous years.
- 50% of fatal and serious injury crashes occur on 11% of street networks
- There are four main contributing factors to crashes:
  - Speed
  - Impairment (involved in about 40% of fatal crashes)
  - Distraction
  - Failure to yield to pedestrian
- We are not closer to ending traffic deaths, especially for our most vulnerable travelers—people walking and biking
- People walking and biking are involved in 7% of total crashes, but 66% of fatalities
- About 20% of people walking who have been killed in collisions were also likely to have been experiencing homelessness
- Looking at fatal collisions by race, we see that 7% of Seattle residents identify as Black, but 12% of pedestrians killed in collisions in Seattle are Black. Black people in Seattle are also ticketed at higher rates.
- Where would we like to go?
  - Vision Zero has been described as a data driven program, but we are re-evaluating our traditional programs
  - Traditionally the program relied on Engineering, Education, and Enforcement (the three E’s)
  - We have seen the murder of Black people at the hands of police in transit or in the right of way, including recently Duante Wright recently outside of Minneapolis
  - Toole Design group offered a new set of Es—Equity, Ethics, and Empathy
- An equity-centered approach that intentionally connects Seattle’s safety and climate goals, a safe system of self-enforcing streets includes:
  - Strategies:
    - Engineering and policy
    - Education and engagement
    - Partnership with community
  - Values:
    - Human-centered
    - Relational
    - Restorative
- Doing more of what works:
  - We want to slow vehicle speeds to save lives

- o Posting lower and more frequent (every ¼ mile) speed limits have an effect on people speeding
- o Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs)
  - SDOT surpassed the 2020 goal, installing more than 300+ LPIs with 60 more to come in 2021
    - We have seen a 30% reduction of collisions at intersections with LPIs
- o Rechanneling roads for other modes of travel also has a positive impact and frees up right of way for pedestrians and other modes of travel
- Reimagining Community Safety
  - o Communities most harmed must be central to defining what it means to reimagine community safety
  - o SDOT is hosting regular internal meetings on re-imagining community safety and is working to align efforts with the Transportation Equity Workgroup and BIPOC communities.
- Current Vision Zero and enforcement
  - o Re-imagining community safety: evaluating our approach with a racial equity framework
  - o Examining automated enforcement programs via Racial Equity Toolkit
  - o School safety cameras turned back on with return to in-person schooling
  - o Not requesting additional targeted/high visibility enforcement
  - o Active coordination and relationship building with Seattle Police Department
- SDOT meets monthly with Traffic Investigation Squad and meeting quarterly with public affairs team, and Race and Social Justice Change Team at SDOT is meeting with counterparts at SPD
- Where does enforcement revenue go?
  - o Non-Traffic (revenue—55% to City, 44% to State, 1% to County)
  - o Approximately 93k School Zone and Red-Light infractions in 2019 (revenue—100% School Zones to SDOT, 100% Red Lights to City General Fund)
  - o Approximately 28k traffic infractions in 2019 (revenue—55% to City, 44% to State, 1% to County)
  - o Approximately 451k traffic infractions in 2019 (100% to City General Fund, except disabled placard violations)
- School safety cameras—number of tickets issued by cameras installed in 2012 has decreased every year
- School zone report for 2020 will be issued by SPD by June 2021
- Overall reduction of 67% in the number of tickets issued at these locations
- School safety cameras:
  - o Vast majority of people who receive a ticket do not receive a second one
  - o About 2% of people are repeat offenders who receive 3 or more tickets
- People of Color face more cases with more fines and fees
- Traffic infraction fine disproportionality—Black people are issued higher fines and at higher rates
- Automated transit/restricted lane & block the box
  - o Lower Spokane Street Swing Bridge implemented in January
    - Response to West Seattle High Bridge emergency closure

- Prioritizes life/safety, transit, and freight/business
  - o Four transit lane and two block the box locations this year
  - o SDOT does not have complete data for these locations yet
- Key challenges and opportunities
  - o SDOT wants to do more of what is proven to work and less of what does not
  - o There are resource and funding constraints for the Vision Zero team
  - o Citywide initiative requires greater partnership
  - o It is possible to connect the dots between multiple City goals: safer streets, climate, racial equity
- Vehicle License Fee funding may be a beneficiary of these funds and the Vision Zero team will continue to seek funding from grants
- Vision Zero has helped reduce traffic deaths in other cities, such as Oslo, which had zero pedestrian and cyclist deaths in 2019

### Vision Zero and Enforcement Q&A

- Anna Zivarts—Thank you for the presentation. An article on Publicola talked about conversations around moving enforcement from SPD into SDOT or other community oversight. Crash reporting was not discussed, but can you share more information on that? I am also curious about how SDOT can get a sense of where crashes are happening, particularly minor crashes when many people may not want to involve SPD.
  - o Allison—yesterday the Mayor proposed legislation to transfer some enforcement from SPD to SDOT, particularly around parking enforcement in a new department related to community safety. This is an ongoing conversation, and I can point people to others at SDOT who are working on this
  - o Allison—Yes, you are only going to report the crash to the police if you feel comfortable involving the police. If people do not call the police, then the crash is not accounted for in the data, but not everyone will be comfortable doing that. Our team is working more closely with the Fire Department to get more data on crashes. Also, our data unfortunately will not include the near misses that we all experience.
- Anna—I have heard there are conversations around moving crash reporting out of SPD and this is an important conversation.
- Akshali Gandhi—In the beginning of the presentation, you mentioned expanding the definition of safety from traffic safety to personal safety as well. What kind of programming or data would you look at to get an idea of what kind of issues residents are facing in regard to personal safety? I am thinking about seniors, people who live in the Chinatown-International District, and others.
  - o Allison—Great question and it involves how people at SDOT and at the City are thinking about this issue more broadly. Our Safe Routes to School team did an excellent job of engaging with Title I schools regarding racial equity. Residents expressed concerns about things like personal safety as it relates to lighting, having activated corridors. We have quantitative and qualitative data, but we do not know how we are incorporating that into our program at this time. We are going to continue to engage BIPOC residents to learn more about what safety means to you.
- Maria Sumner—You talked about asking for grants and getting more funding. Is it normal to not have full funding for programs that we say we are committed to?

- o Allison—We are committed to ending traffic deaths by 2030. We have made improvements to many streets where we see a lot of collisions like Rainier Ave, Aurora, etc., but we do not have funding that we need to make improvements to these streets. There are other programs that are underfunded; this is not unique to Vision Zero. We are trying to target these corridors, but we are also trying to make system-wide improvements as well.
- Maria—Second part of the question is about targeted enforcement. In areas where we are not doing targeted enforcement, are there things that are being replaced with?
  - o Allison—Yes, we are trying to make the case through grant funding to get funding to deploy traffic calming improvements. The Rainier Beach Action Coalition has a Corner Greeter’s program, which is very successful and embodies community led safety, for example. We want to have more community led safety programs.
- Maria—How can we as a board help achieve Vision Zero goals?
  - o Allison—Continue to push us. We are pushing ourselves, but you carry weight with elected officials, so you can use your voice for that. We could also partner with the board on education efforts because there is a lot that needs to be done in that area as well. We want to build on a culture of safety in Seattle, so the board could further partner on the education side of things. We can also engage more regularly with this group.
- Jennifer Lehman—I have a question about speed limits. Have there been measurements since speeds have reduced to see if driver behavior has changed? Are there other design elements that will go along with these changes?
  - o James Le—We just installed the speed limits as of last month. 90% of our streets now are 25 MPH or less. We are waiting for traffic volumes to go up more to compare it to baseline speeds. Regarding other engineering changes, we have projects in design that will start incorporating that new speed limit. Areas with more holistic traffic calming like the Home Zone program should see reduced speeds. We have also re-timed our traffic signals with shorter signal cycle lengths to match the speed reduction to 25 MPH or less. We do not have data yet because the changes are so recent, but we did see reduced speeds and speeding in our pilot projects in urban villages and that is without targeted enforcement or outreach, just speed limit signs.
- Bianca Johnson—How are you prioritizing what gets your attention, given that this is such a complicated issue?
  - o Allison—We are prioritizing corridors that see the highest number of serious and fatal crashes, which are the high injury network of streets. More recently, we are tweaking our research methodology to look at fatal and serious crash incidents as well as the Office of Planning and Community Development Race and Social Equity Index to make sure that we are advancing racial equity and safety. Using this data, we generated a list and maps that showed us which streets to prioritize in this context, while also focusing on system wide improvements.
- Doug MacDonald—I listened to the presentation. I am 76 years old; I am visually impaired; I live one block from Aurora, and I walk on Aurora every day for shopping and appointments. It sounds like my group of people will face much greater risk because of reduced enforcement. We know that automated enforcement reduces speeds, so why doesn’t SDOT prioritize automated enforcement as it is in school zones so that speeding will be reduced?

Why is it that the simple device not being used? We need automated speed enforcement on Aurora, and I need it because I am a disabled elderly person who lives on Aurora. Please prioritize automated speed enforcement on Lake City Way, Aurora, and Rainier Avenue south.

- o Allison—We are currently constricted by our ability to place speed cameras, which currently can only be placed in school zones. We can bring this up with the state legislator and it is not off the table. There are great benefits to automated enforcement that improve safety outcomes, but there are also disadvantages because they financially disproportionately affect people of color.
- Doug—Fifteen years ago we tried to get enforcement of drunk drivers. I am sorry if this financially burdens people if they speed, but we must decide whether or not speeding matters. We must have protections for people who rely on this enforcement. I would like to see the City go to the state legislator to talk about this issue. It should not just be not off the table, but it should be on the table. I have been working on this for fifteen years and I would like to see it on the table.
- Carol Haffar—Thank you, Doug. I believe that populations on arterials are more diverse than those in neighbors. I know this because I have talked to people and knocked on doors. It is important to do this research. Also, ticketing is education. Everyone I know who has a ticket in a school zone will tell me when we are driving into a school zone. The education component is really important, and I would like to hear more about that. Also, if you cannot afford a ticket, you should be able to take a Vision Zero class or do it online or something like that. Many people who speed have nice cars around here. I think cameras would be great.
- Steve—I live in North Seattle and I have spoken on the phone before. There was a statistic about the number of citations given out. Are those citations that have been paid, or just the number of issued citations? Do you know if there is a difference regarding whether or not they have been paid?
  - o Allison—I am not sure with 100% certainty. It is not clear if they have just been issued or if they have been paid.
- Steve—It sounds like some of those could be unpaid.
  - o Allison—Correct
- James Cooper—Has SDOT considered a modal hierarchy so that pedestrians go first, and then bikes. I have taken a lot of SDOT and it does not feel like SDOT gets it. We are still getting design proposals for Route 40 that have two car lanes in each direction, which I think is unacceptable.
  - o Allison—Our colleagues in our planning division at SDOT are trying to integrate the different modal planes. I'm not sure if it would lead to a modal hierarchy, but they are developing a plan that will get to values. Maybe that team in policy and planning could present to the SPAB.

#### **Sidewalk Access at 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Yesler and Other Areas**

- Jennifer Lehman—The board received an email from a gentleman who was concerned about the lack of ADA access at 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> and Yesler. The board met to discuss this email but came short of a specific ask of the City and recommended alternate pedestrian access adjacent to

the sidewalk, similar to construction sites. We invited this person to come to the April meeting and listen in as we discuss this topic amongst the board. SDOT gave an update:

- Polly—This is the update from SDOT:
  - *4th and 5th Ave at Yesler underpass were clean and clear as of Thursday (and again on Friday last week) SDOT has done everything we can to provide additional cleaning and sanitation on associated streets, sidewalks and stairs around these locations following the clearing of the site. That work will continue as long as it is safe for our employees to do so. We will continue to monitor the location and are expecting this to be an ongoing body of work to keep these areas clear. Keep in mind that if obstructions do show up, we will be aware and will be working proactively with Parks, HSD and SPD as needed to return the space to full public access as quickly as possible, though it may not be immediate.*
- Jennifer—Do you know where people were relocated to?
  - Brian Dougherty, SDOT—I'm not sure because that is related to HSD (Human Services Department), but you could invite them to a meeting to talk more about that.
- Jennifer—There was a hesitancy on the board about asking for these areas to be cleared, based on our last meeting.
- Anna —Yes, that is what I remember from last meeting. I think people are hesitant and concerned that people would use the board to enact sweeps of homeless people.
- Maria Sumner—It sounds like the area is clear at 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> and Yesler, but there should be another way for residents to voice their concerns, maybe through the Find It, Fix It app.
- Jennifer—Thank you for the input. Does anyone have suggestions for next steps? It sounds like we might want to follow up with the City, maybe with a letter.
- Akshali—What if every quarter we group the outstanding public comments and then send them to SDOT so that there is a middle ground.
- Polly—SDOT sees emails that come into the SPAB email address, so when it is forwarded to the board it is something for the board to discuss.
- Esti—I don't think we should wait and respond once per quarter. We need to do it right away. If someone from the public takes the effort to find us and send us something, we have to respond to it. Maybe we don't need to take action, but we do have to respond to it and forward it to the right person to take action. We cannot actually do anything about it, but we can find the right person at SDOT who can do something about it.
- Jennifer—We did respond to this member of the public who wrote the email. Do we want to leave it at that and move on or do we want to do additional follow up with the City?
- Koko—Polly, what is your opinion if we follow up? How impactful would it be?
- Polly—As the liaison, I share the emails from the individuals to the appropriate people at SDOT. If the email is directed to the board or something the board could respond to, then I will also send it to the board. When the board writes a letter to SDOT, or people at the City then it is circulated as a board-endorsed letter, rather than an email from an individual.
- Maria—Can we forward the email from Jennifer to other people at SDOT?
- Koko—The situation was about blocking the sidewalk and safety. Maybe we could discuss this as a broader issue, centered around sidewalk safety and use rather than having it as an individual case. I also understand boards serving as a tool for one individual, but we could open it up to a broader discussion. We don't have to decide today, but at some point, we

could talk about how we decide topics in our meetings, and this might be good because there have been several comments about the right to use sidewalks in the past few months.

- Jennifer—Let's do two votes.
  - Do we want to forward the email as a board-approved response?
    - Board votes: 7 votes in favor, 1 abstained, 0 voted no. This is the majority of the board
  - Second vote: Do we want to talk about encampments on sidewalks in general as a future board topic?
    - Board undecided and will discuss later

### **Board Business**

- Akshali moves to approve the March minutes, seconded by Ori
  - Board unanimously votes to approve March minutes
- No updates on document sharing at this time; Bianca will send documents to the board
- Jennifer: Since nobody has stepped up to be the Chair, we discussed the contingency plan of Jennifer and Emily Davis acting as co-Chairs, but due to the low board attendance today, we will move the vote to the May meeting.
- Jennifer: Do any SPAB applicants have questions for the board?
  - No questions

### **Public Comment**

- Carol Haffar—Who responded to the member of the public's question?
  - Polly: Darren Morgan from SDOT responded to the question
  - Brian Dougherty: We talked to Darren Morgan about this and sidewalk blockages. Darren or someone from his team could come, but he requested that someone from HSD join to have that conversation.
- Carol—Do you think he had consulted with HSD?
  - Brian: Yes
- Esti—Also, regarding sidewalk blockage, if we forward this letter to SDOT, we need to send it to the member of the public as well.
  - Polly—Yes, we already sent the email to him.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.**