



Kristi Rennebohm Franz, Chair
Adam Bartz, Vice-Chair
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Don Brubeck, Secretary

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Michael Wong

September 22, 2015

From: Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board

To: Mayor Ed Murray
Tom Rasmussen, Chair, Seattle City Council Transportation Committee
Scott Kubly, Director, Seattle Department of Transportation

Subject: Rainier Avenue S Rechannelization – Ithica Place to City Limits
SW Admiral Way Safety Project – California Ave SW to 63rd Ave SW

The Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board would like to offer our support for these two projects, reviewed at our August 5, 2015 meeting. We have also had the opportunity to see the presentation material for the revised version of the Admiral Way SW plan.

Both of these projects will help improve traffic safety for all road users by reducing vehicular speeding, by providing more protection for vehicle and bicycle turning movements at intersections and driveways, and by providing more visibility and space for drivers to see and pass people on bikes and to see people crossing on foot at intersections. These projects are steps to implement Seattle's Bicycle Master Plan and the city's Vision Zero goals.

They are also steps to achieve the carbon emission reduction goals of Seattle's Climate Action Plan, which relies upon "expanding transit, walking, and bicycling infrastructure and services to provide safe and effective choices for getting around", and "tripling the amount of bicycling from 2007 levels by 2017". Furthermore, the CAP notes, "Residents who can meet many of their daily needs by walking, bicycling, or riding transit also benefit from lower overall household costs, improved health, thriving local business districts, and increased opportunities for housing and jobs."

We recognize that losing publicly funded on-street parking spaces is controversial. These projects may require some refinement to avoid hardships in particular spots, but they both appear to be removing on-street parking in places that will not pose hardships. Most of the locations for car parking removal are at greenbelt frontage, or at through lots with houses facing another street. With the rights-of-way at a fixed dimension, there is no way short of using the power of eminent domain to widen the roadways to convert these arterial streets back to a form that works well for more than just automobiles. Something has to give. When a buffered or protected bike lane can be located without parked cars adjacent, the danger from collisions with people opening their car doors without looking back is greatly reduced. This allows people on bikes to ride fully in the bike lane, with greater separation from vehicle traffic and better sightlines at driveways.

The Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the city on matters related to bicycling, and the impact which actions by the city may have upon bicycling; and shall have the opportunity to contribute to all aspects of the city's planing processes insofar as they relate to bicycling.

- City Council
Resolution 25534



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These projects represent quick and easy steps toward full development of “complete streets” to serve all modes of transportation.

Paint and plastic posts do not offer people on bikes the protection from vehicle impact that a true Protected Bike Lane with solid vehicle barriers can give. Our hope is that these projects, relying on driver attention to paint stripes, will be evaluated, adjusted, and improved to more permanent and effective separation of traffic modes wherever the speed differentials and traffic volumes make such separation valuable for safety. This is an essential element in creating the more “forgiving” street design needed to achieve Vision Zero. It will lead to a connected network of bicycle routes truly accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

We offer our thanks and encouragement to SDOT staff and City leadership for developing and approving the Rainier Avenue South and SW Admiral Way Safety projects.

Sincerely,



Kristi Rennebohm-Franz
Chair



Adam Bartz
Vice Chair



Merlin Rainwater
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