

Overview of Facilities and Programs

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is responsible for maintaining, upgrading, and monitoring the use of the City's system of streets, bridges, retaining walls, seawalls, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and traffic control devices. Seattle's transportation system includes 1,534 lane-miles of arterial streets and 2,412 lane-miles of non-arterial streets. The system also includes 150 bridges, 561 retaining walls, 479 stairways, and 1,000 signalized intersections in the public right-of-way that SDOT is responsible for inspecting and maintaining.

SDOT's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) outlines the Department's plan for maintaining, improving, and adding to this extensive infrastructure. A large portion of this work is funded by the Bridging the Gap transportation funding package. Other major funding sources include the City's General and Cumulative Reserve Subfunds, state gas tax revenues, federal and state grants, and partnerships with private organizations and other public agencies. SDOT's \$200 million capital budget is appropriated as part of its \$311 million budget.

Highlights

- ◆ **Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project:** The 2010-2015 Proposed CIP includes funding for City commitments related to replacing SR-99 along the Seattle waterfront. This work encompasses many projects that are collectively known as the "Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program" (AWVSR Program.) Components of the program include the SR-99 Bored Tunnel, Seawall, Central Waterfront Public Space, Mercer Corridor Project West Phase, Early Electrical Relocation, Battery Street Tunnel, Holgate to King South End project, Transit Enhancements, SR-519 Phase II, parking mitigation, and other surface street improvements.

In 2010, significant construction work will be underway on a series of "early implementation" projects that began in 2009. These include the Holgate to King South End major construction and utility relocation projects funded and managed by the State, and work on the parking mitigation program. The City will also continue efforts in planning, design, and support activities for the other elements of the Program and will continue to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on design and construction of components of the north seawall. In 2010, spending will include resources for the design of a seawall test section.

- ◆ **Transportation Funding Package:** The 2010-2015 Proposed CIP continues work funded by Bridging the Gap (BTG), a funding initiative proposed by the Mayor and approved by Council in 2006, to repair and improve Seattle's streets, bike trails, sidewalks, and bridges. The package includes a commercial parking tax, an employee hours tax, and a property tax levy that was approved by Seattle citizens in November 2006. The property tax measure is a nine-year levy, with the annual growth rate of levy revenue capped at one percent plus the value of new construction. The CIP includes transportation capital funding from Bridging the Gap revenues and funding from Limited Tax General Obligation bonds that are serviced with a portion of future revenues.

The Mayor has proposed, and the Council is considering, a repeal of the Employee Hours Tax. The Proposed CIP does not assume ongoing revenue from this source.

- ◆ **Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure Investments:** To strengthen pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure throughout the City, a new Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP) Implementation project is created and includes former smaller projects: ADA ("Americans with Disabilities Act") Spot Improvements, Pedestrian Lighting - Capital Costs, the Sidewalk Development Program, and the Stairway Rehabilitation Program. A total of \$856,000 is added from the Cumulative Reserve Subfund to the new PMP project. The Bike Master Plan (BMP) Implementation project is restructured to include Bike Spot Safety Improvements and Urban Trail and Bike projects and \$500,000 is added from the Cumulative Reserve Subfund. Many of the City's other pedestrian and safety improvements are supported by the Bridging the Gap Transportation Funding Package through programs such as the NSF/CRS Neighborhood Projects, Safe Routes to School, Sidewalk Safety Repair, Pedestrian Countdown Signals, and School Zone Signage Improvements.

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- ◆ **Multi-Use Trail Projects:** The 2010 CIP includes funding to complete the Burke-Gilman Trail "missing link" from 11th Avenue NW to the Hiram M. Chittenden (Ballard) Locks. The final phases of Burke-Gilman Trail Extension project are supported by revenue from the 2007 King County Proposition 2 Trails and Open Space Levy, the 2008 Parks Levy, Bridging the Gap funds dedicated to bike and trail improvements, and grant funding. The CIP also includes spending for the Cheshiahud Lake Union Loop, the Chief Sealth Trail, and the West Duwamish Trail.
- ◆ **Linden Avenue N Complete Streets:** Funds in 2010 and 2011 will be used complete the design and construction of the south portion of the Linden Avenue North Complete Streets project, which provides pedestrian, drainage, and roadway improvements and completes the final link in the Interurban Trail North.
- ◆ **Spokane Street Viaduct:** This project, a major component of Bridging the Gap, builds a new structure that will be parallel and connected to the existing one, which will widen the existing viaduct by about 41 feet. The project also includes design and construction of an eastbound Fourth Avenue off-ramp. This project is scheduled to be completed in advance of the major traffic disruption anticipated during the Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement project.
- ◆ **King Street Station Multimodal Terminal:** In 2010, construction work continues on the King Street Station. The Station will be remodeled and transformed into a transportation hub connecting express bus, commuter train, and light rail service. The City expects to partner with the Washington State Department of Transportation to complete the restoration of the building so that it complies with the City's Sustainable Building Policy using a combination of State, Federal, Sound Transit, and Bridging the Gap funds. The first phase of the project is expected to be completed in 2012. A funding plan for Phase II is in development.
- ◆ **Mercer Corridor Project:** This project, a major component of Bridging the Gap, implements a comprehensive package of transportation improvements in the Mercer Corridor in South Lake Union. Improvements include, but are not limited to a widened two-way Mercer Street, improved pedestrian safety and access to South Lake Union Park, and enhanced neighborhood circulation for all modes. The project aims to use existing street capacity more efficiently and enhance all modes of travel, including pedestrian mobility. It is a centerpiece for the revitalization of the South Lake Union neighborhood, which is expected to accommodate as many as 20,000 new jobs and 8,000 to 10,000 new households in the next 20 years, in addition to the new South Lake Union Park. This project is scheduled to be completed in advance of the major traffic disruption anticipated during the Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement project.
- ◆ **Mercer Corridor Project West Phase:** As a component of the Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement Program, a new Mercer Corridor Project West Phase is added to the CIP. This project funds the west phase of the Mercer Corridor Program, which creates an improved east-west corridor north of downtown Seattle, connects the Queen Anne and South Lake Union neighborhoods, and provides new pedestrian and bicycle facilities and connections. This project will convert Mercer Street to a two-way street between Dexter Ave and Elliott Ave West. The Mercer underpass at Aurora Ave will be widened to allow for six travel lanes and a bicycle/pedestrian shared use path between Dexter Ave and 5th Ave North. Roy Street, between Aurora and Queen Anne Ave., will also be converted to a two-way street with on-road bicycle lanes.
- ◆ **First Hill Streetcar:** The 2010-2015 Proposed CIP includes \$130 million of Sound Transit ST2 funding for the First Hill Streetcar project. This project constructs a modern, low-floor streetcar system connecting First Hill employment centers to the regional Link light rail system, including but not limited to the International District/Chinatown Station, and Capitol Hill Station at Broadway and John Street. The system will provide reliable, frequent service (headways of approximately 10 minutes during peak periods) and operate the same hours as the light rail system (at least 20 hours per day Monday through Saturday and at least 12 hours per day Sundays). A light maintenance vehicle storage base and procurement of a six-vehicle streetcar fleet is also included in the scope of the project. Design began in 2009 through an agreement with Sound Transit.

- ◆ **Arterial Major Maintenance and Other Paving Projects:** The 2010-2015 Proposed CIP continues significant funding for the Arterial Major Maintenance and Arterial Asphalt & Concrete Programs. These ongoing programs rehabilitate and resurface asphalt and concrete arterial streets to preserve and extend the life of street surfaces. In mid-year 2008, the Arterial Asphalt & Concrete Program was accelerated to provide paving in the corridors leading to and passing through downtown in anticipation of the Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement Project construction impacts.
- ◆ **Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS):** The CIP contains four projects that encompass a citywide intelligent transportation system: 15th Avenue W/Elliott Ave W Improvements, Alaskan Way Viaduct Intelligent Transportation System, Duwamish Intelligent Transportation Systems, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plan Implementation. Most of these projects will be completed in 2010. The projects provide tools to reduce traffic congestion such as Dynamic Message Signs, traffic signal interconnections, travel time measuring devices, and traffic cameras. The projects leverage local dollars with a significant amount of State, federal and County funding.

Project Selection Process

The City tries to balance three goals in making infrastructure capital investments:

- ◆ Rehabilitation of existing facilities to avoid the higher costs of deferred maintenance;
- ◆ Increase in the capacity of existing facilities to meet growing demand; and
- ◆ Development of new facilities to provide additional services.

SDOT prioritizes its projects to prepare recommendations on those to include in the budget, the CIP, and the grant development process. The process includes four steps.

Step 1: Identification of Transportation Needs

This step is an ongoing process during which projects for future funding are identified. These needs are developed from a number of sources (not listed in any priority order):

- Ongoing operations and maintenance programs
- Backlog of projects
- Projects in current CIP
- Transportation Strategic Plan
- Projects from SDOT planning
- Neighborhood plans and citizen requests
- Coordination with partner agencies

Step 2: Identification of non-discretionary programs and projects

This step identifies non-discretionary programs and projects that must be budgeted for completion. Criteria for these items are as follows (not listed in any priority order):

- Mandated, with serious consequences for failing to meet the mandate (e.g. debt service, judgment and claims payments, Metro “Ride-Free Zone” payment, federal or state law mandates)
- Essential for the Department to function on a daily basis (e.g. accounting, payroll, human resources, facility rental, vehicles and equipment)
- Reimbursable services to other City departments or outside agencies (e.g. street use permitting, repairing utility cuts)
- Restricted funding services (e.g. support for Sound Transit, Monorail, Metro, Alaskan Way Viaduct)
- Services that generate revenue for General Subfund (e.g. parking)

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- Currently in construction (stopping these projects would be more costly than completing them)
- Urgent safety or emergency need (e.g. landslide, sinkhole)

Step 3: Prioritization of Discretionary Projects

The projects remaining after Step 2 are then ranked based on a 100 point scoring system. This prioritization process evaluates each project based on its merits. Following are the criteria applied to this evaluation (not listed in any priority order):

- Safety
- Preservation and maintenance of infrastructure
- Cost effectiveness or cost avoidance
- Mobility improvement
- Economic development
- Comprehensive Plan/Urban Village land use strategy
- Improving the environment

Step 4: Ordering Projects for Implementation

Once projects have been grouped into priority categories, they are evaluated to determine their readiness for funding and implementation. For example, even though a project may be a high priority, other circumstances may determine that the project is not ready for funding and implementation. Four criteria are used to make this determination (not listed in any priority order):

- Funding availability
- Interagency coordination
- Geographic balance
- Constituent balance

SDOT staff evaluate the results of steps 3 and 4 together to identify projects for which funding will be sought through grants, appropriations or other sources. Funded projects are incorporated into the CIP.

Anticipated Operating Expenses Associated with Capital Facilities Projects

In some projects, the Department has identified operations and maintenance costs at zero, or has not calculated a number (N/C). In these cases, the cost impacts of the project are either insignificant or are offset by cost savings realized by other projects. Projects that do identify operations and maintenance costs, such as the Burke-Gilman Trail Extension and Lake Union Ship Canal Trail projects, have the costs built into the Department's operating budget.