

# Seattle's Policy Framework for Integrating Walking, Biking, Transit, and Freight



Delivering a transportation system that provides safe and affordable access to places and opportunities

## Why a Modal Integration Policy Framework?

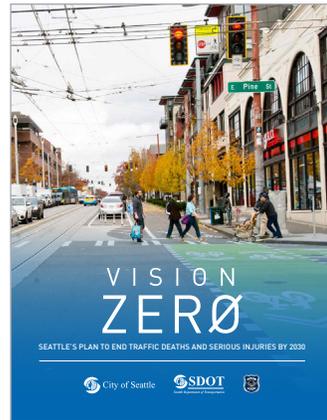
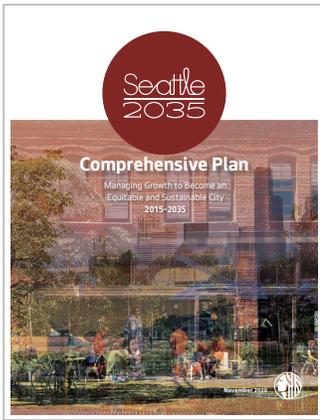
Across the city, some streets are not wide enough to accommodate the recommendations in the Pedestrian, Transit, Bicycle, and Freight Master Plans. Working with a diverse group of stakeholders, we've developed a policy framework for making decisions in these locations.

**The policy framework is one piece of a larger puzzle that helps us plan consistently, transparently, and equitably. Using it, we will:**

- Decide how to accommodate travel modes when the street is not wide enough for all to safely operate
- Use City plans and priorities to inform project decisions consistently and transparently in a way that the community understands
- Inform future policies/plans, prioritizing evolving needs and all travel modes
- Improve our ability to implement Seattle's Pedestrian, Bicycle, Transit, and Freight Master Plans
- Build on our existing policy to prioritize space-efficient movement of people and goods by delivering our modal plan priorities
- Identify considerations and opportunities for future policy and plan development that considers the full range of community priorities for our transportation system, in addition to delivery of our modal networks.

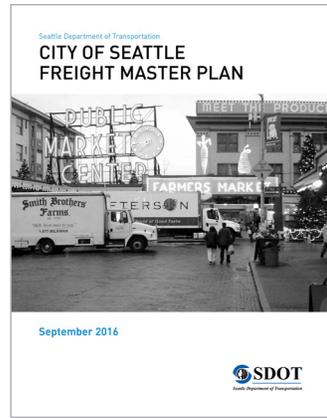
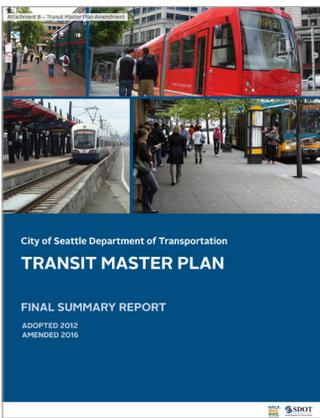
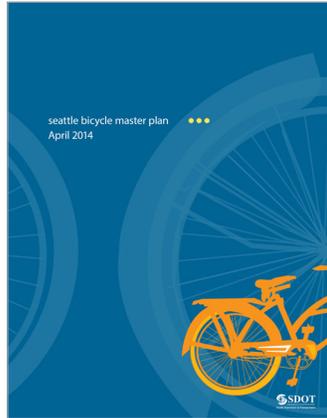
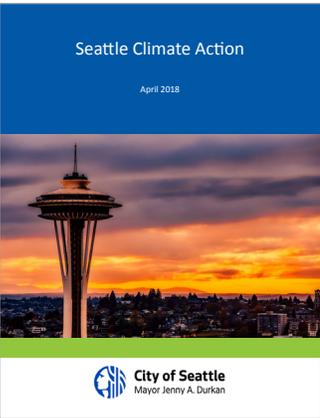


**Seattle**  
Department of  
Transportation



The policy is informed by years of work and broader City goals, policies, and community engagement including our:

- [Seattle Comprehensive Plan](#) establishes policies that prioritize space-efficient modes of transportation, which translates to discouraging our historical reliance on single-occupancy vehicles and focus growth within designated urban centers and urban villages.
- [Vision Zero Action Plan](#) to end traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets by 2030
- [Complete Street Ordinance](#) to promote safe mobility, best practice design, and convenient access for all users
- [Climate Action Plan](#) to help shift travel patterns away from vehicles using fossil fuels.
- [Bicycle Master Plan \(2014\)](#), [Transit Master Plan \(2012; amended 2016\)](#), [Freight Master Plan \(2016\)](#), and [Pedestrian Master Plan \(2017\)](#) to support travel for people and goods using these modes and guide investment decisions
- [Streets Illustrated](#) to provide design guidance and standards for implementing modal facilities
- [Race and Social Justice Initiative](#) to recognize and address race-based transportation disparities



When developing the policy framework, we identified themes to inform this policy and future directions for modal integration:

- Sustainability and racial equity values must guide street allocation policies
- Street allocation decisions require careful consideration of trade-offs
- Future modal planning should holistically address mobility needs rather than focusing on one travel mode



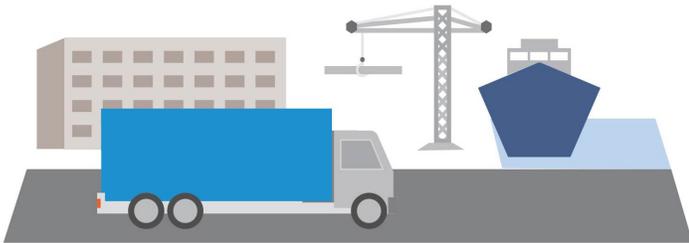
# So, what's the policy framework to support integrating modes?

The Modal Integration Policy Framework provides guidance on how to support integration of our 4 modal plan priority networks and, when necessary, how to prioritize modes where there is not enough space to accommodate all planned network improvements and other priority functions.

In urban villages and centers, we prioritize **pedestrians**.



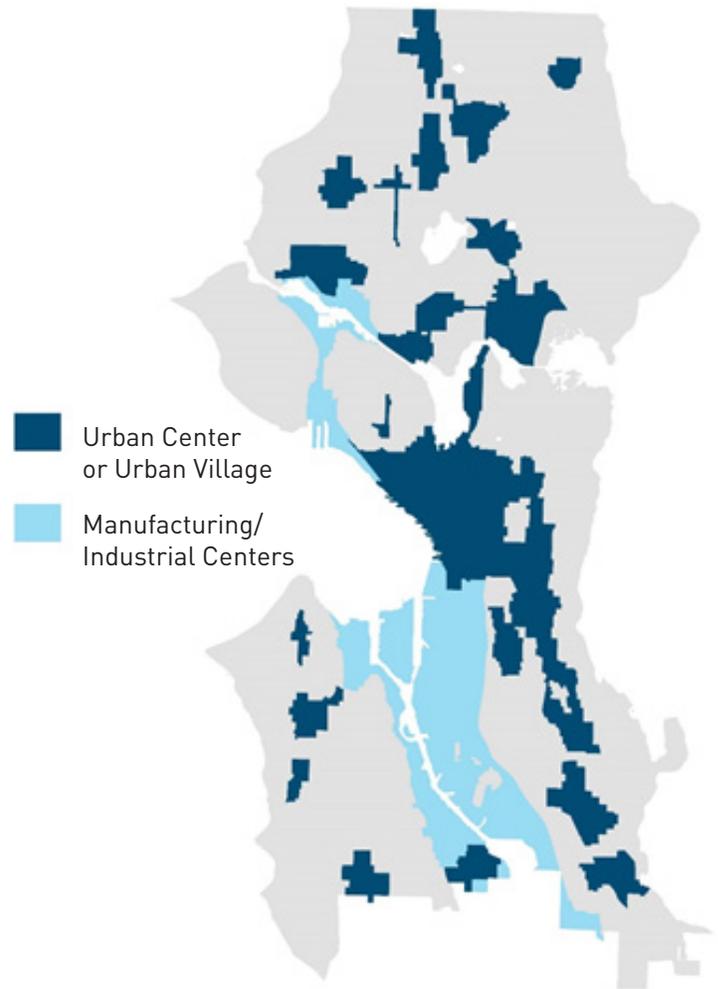
In manufacturing and industrial centers, we prioritize **goods movement**.



Between urban villages and centers, we prioritize **transit**.



Citywide, at critical connections, we prioritize **the bicycle network**.



Identifying “**critical bicycle connections**” is a citywide strategy to help us complete our network of bicycle facilities, especially where our right-of-way is constrained and there are limited options. Critical bike connections are connections where bike infrastructure should be implemented along an arterial route per the Bicycle Master Plan, to achieve an All Ages and Abilities network because analogous parallel routes or streets don't exist. Within those critical segments, this policy recommends first prioritizing space for bicycle infrastructure to ensure we are able to build connected facilities and networks to encourage safe and convenient cycling trips, regardless of the geographic context.

## We've identified a range of next steps to turn this framework into action:

### 2021

Looking beyond those streets that aren't wide enough, we will complete new policies to affirm a pedestrian-first approach in urban centers and urban villages and establish when and where to designate transit-only lanes, transit + business access (BAT) lanes, freight-only lanes, and shared freight-and-transit lanes.

Prepare project development tools in consultation with advisory boards including a map illustrating where our streets are too narrow, Critical Bicycle Segments map, communications tools, and curbspace priority/flex zone guidance.



### 2021 and beyond

Integrate our modal plans into one citywide transportation plan, contingent on funding availability. A citywide integrated transportation plan will allow us to further the work of the Modal Integration Policy Framework and align with our City's next Comprehensive Plan update which will set our overall growth strategy. This is an opportunity to engage the community in a discussion about their mobility and pedestrian realm needs and aspirations for their streets in a way that cuts across all modes and uses of the right-of-way.

