



Seattle
Department of
Transportation

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The Seattle Transit Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City on matters related to transit and the possible and actual impact of actions taken by the City upon all forms of public transportation.

- City Council Resolution 31572

**Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board
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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 planning processes insofar as they relate to bicycling.

- City Council Resolution 25534

Seattle Transit Advisory Board & Bicycle Advisory Board

April 26, 2024

TO: Mayor Bruce Harrell
Councilmember Rob Saka
Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

RE: Draft Transportation Levy Proposal 2024

Dear Mayor Harrell, Councilmember Saka, and SDOT,

In the current Draft Transportation Levy Proposal, funding for Transit, Pedestrian and Bicycle projects is being squeezed, resulting in the City's own climate and transit goals being compromised.

After many years of under-investment in basic road and bridge maintenance, the city cannot rely so heavily on property tax revenue but will need to look for other revenue sources such as federal monies or grants. All mode shares are promised to benefit from the Levy and from the large amount dedicated to maintenance but even if this ends up being true, if we treat the Levy as a microcosm of the direction of transportation priorities in Seattle's near future, it simply **does not do enough to encourage the dramatic mode shift we need.**

For example, Transit, Pedestrian and Bicycle projects are the three primary means of creating a mode shift away from carbon producing transportation modes. If we do not invest boldly in these three areas, we will fail to make meaningful improvements on our climate goals as stated in the Climate Change Response Framework (CCRF) which sets goals to reduce trips in internal combustion engine vehicles from 65% to 35%, double ridership on transit, double travel by bicycles/micro mobility and increase trips on foot by 2030.

Some basic issues with the Levy's approach include:

- Improving only two transit corridors (7 and 36) and adding two east-west running routes over eight years. The 160 promised transit spot improvements are currently too vague in their scope.
- Constructing only 250 blocks of sidewalks when there are 11,000 blocks currently without sidewalks.
- Creating only five new neighborhood bikeways that will not result in a bike network accessible by all ages and abilities.

For transit, more specificity and transparency in the planned improvements are needed for people to understand what it is they are voting for. For example, when planning future projects in neighborhoods with increasing density, SDOT needs to provide adequate infrastructure to ensure pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders can safely connect to transit. To help achieve this, SDOT should support and collaborate with neighborhood stakeholders such as property owners on connectivity improvements.

Seattle Neighborhood Greenways estimates that this Levy allocates ~\$50 million fewer dollars to transit than the previous one when accounting for inflation. We request that the city not pare back money set aside for transit and instead, we request that funding amounts set for Transit be doubled to ~\$250M. This will allow the city to more quickly and effectively implement both transit projects that are planned as well as fund new projects to make it possible to create a meaningful shift away from fossil fuels, achieve the city's transit ridership goals and keep up with inflation.

We ask that SDOT be more specific about the bicycle projects that can be expected to be completed with Levy Funding. Right now, the public wants to bike safely and conveniently to get to where they need to go. That is very much dependent on what neighborhood you live in. We are pleased that the Maintenance repaving projects may create new Protected Bike Lanes, sidewalks and dedicated bus lanes. However, we believe greater specificity in where these projects will take place will build public support and confidence in the Levy; we also request that SDOT specify a process by which Bikeway gaps will be identified and projects prioritized. We specifically call on this levy to close priority gaps identified by the bike community including the Chief Sealth Trail gap (Myrtle to Webster), 14th Ave S (GT-SP trail south to the Green River Trail), and E Roanoke St (520 bridge trail to Eastlake Ave). Finally, SDOT must make good on its promise to address disinvestment in the south end of our city.

We believe that in order to achieve the ambitious goals set in the CCRF, there must be specific metrics and interim targets set so the City can alter its course if the expected results are not being achieved. For example, reducing the percentage of households living within ¼ mile of bike or multi use trail networks. These interim goals and metrics should be clearly stated in the Levy language. We request at a minimum, an investment in the bicycle infrastructure of \$150M, which would improve on the previous Levy and get us closer to achieving these goals.

Specific investments such as these will help ensure accountability, a clear vision for the near future, and a safe and equitable city that works for everyone.

Sincerely yours,

Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board (SBAB)

Transit Advisory Board (TAB)