



Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

*Stewards of the
Pedestrian Master Plan*

Jennifer Lehman, Co-Chair
Emily Davis, Co-Chair
Erin Fitzpatrick
Bianca Johnson
Emily Mannetti
Esti Mintz
Maria Sumner
David Flasterstein

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board (SPAB) Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2022 - Virtual Remote Meeting

Recorder: Simon Blenski, SDOT

Attendees:

Board Members Present

Jennifer Lehman, Co-Chair
Emily Davis, Co-Chair
Erin Fitzpatrick
Bianca Johnson

Emily Mannetti
Esti Mintz
Maria Sumner
David Flasterstein, Get Engaged Member

Members of the Public

Bryan Townley
Ankur
Glenn Doren
Doug MacDonald
Glenn Schwantes
Joey Manley
Kelli Maguire
Sahrah Dermish

Amber Udelhoven
Yaacov Tarko (Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board)
Becky Edmonds (SDOT Staff, presenter)
Brian Dougherty (SDOT Staff)
Ann Sutphin (SDOT Staff)
Tom Hewitt (SDOT Staff)

Vision Zero Update

- So far this year, one person was killed on a bicycle. Pedestrian deaths and fatalities have been trending up in the last few years.

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*

Public Comment

- Glenn Doren: Regarding the scooter presentation, Doug MacDonald shared an email with analysis and I have had several conversations with SDDOT staff. Scooter riding on the sidewalk is an extreme nuisance. When you watch the presentation, if it is the same version as December I believe it glosses over a lot of important stats.

Public Comment (cont.)

- Doug MacDonald: I have some issues with the scooter program and I think a lot of other people do too. I'm not interested in having a debate with Becky Edmonds. I am interested that the documents and background information that should be available to the public is made available. This program is going to City Council to be reauthorized at some point and my view is that there has to be an independent analysis of what has happened with this program including promises that have been made and pros and cons. I plan to talk more about the specific safety issues. Also, regarding safety statistics, I recently learned that the Vision Zero numbers that are compiled off the police department numbers are only reflective of collisions where an officer shows up and files a report. That means that a lot of things that harm people are not showing up in the safety statistics. SDOT found in the scooter survey that there were 500 injuries on scooters, which is more injuries reported through SPD through Vision Zero in 2020. We're not getting the full picture on scooter injuries or even the full picture on all kinds of injuries. We need an independent analysis that helps the Council determine how and whether this program should continue into the future.

Scooter Share Presentation

- Becky Edmonds: I have worked at SDOT for several years and recently started in the Micromobility Manager position. I'm going to share more about the past year of scooter share and other things related to micromobility and scooter share.
- Seattle has had micromobility share systems since 2014 when Pronto launched a station-based bike share in the city. Shared e-scooter system started emerging around the country in 2018 and several bike share companies started leaving Seattle in 2019. In the past few years, SDOT started surveying people about scooter share in 2019 and 2020 and the e-scooter share pilot launched in 2021.
- At least 224 cities in North America have a shared scooter or bikeshare system. More than half of these locations have scooter share.
- SDOT spent 1.5 years developing the scooter pilot, co-developing with the community and advocacy organizations, especially people with disabilities. SDOT took lessons learned with bike share and other cities and vendors. SDOT grappled with decisions such as sidewalk riding (ultimately deciding that sidewalk riding would not be allowed.)
- Currently in the pilot there are four scooter vendors: Lime, Link (by Superpedestrian), Wheels, and Spin. Some of these are standing style scooters and some are sitting style scooters. Each vendor has up to 1,000 or 2,000 scooters allowed in the city.
- The scooter pilot has five objectives: reduce Seattle's carbon emissions, ensure accessibility for and expand use by BIPOC, low-income people, immigrants and refugees; be safe and advance Vision Zero goals.
- SDOT manages the scooter pilot management through digital tools (including real time online dashboard), vendor relationships, infrastructure, evaluation and continuous improvement, outreach and engagement, access and affordability
- Regulatory oversight from SDOT includes permit conditions, compliance, and code changes
- The evaluation of the scooter pilot ran from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021 using data sources from trip level data feeds from vendors, aggregated membership reports from vendors,

Citywide device parking audits (collected by SDOT staff), user survey with 5,189 respondents about safety and rider behavior, Police reports, and constituent feedback

- Looking at key metrics, in the first twelve months of the pilot, SDOT saw about 1.5 million trips, which is more than the number of bike trips over the same amount of time. On average, 2,646 scooters were deployed per day with a peak of 5,134 trips on 9/21. Trips decrease in the fall and winter.
 - The average trip was about 15 minutes or 1.4 miles costing about \$6.63
 - There are estimated to be at least 262,825 riders.
- Cost is potentially a barrier, but the vendors offer reduced fare plans and some people sign up for monthly plans which could bring the cost down for individual rides.
- The survey was conducted in November 2021, targeting people who had used bike or scooter share and was promoted through vendor emails and apps. The survey had over 5,000 respondents and helped inform SDOT about users, experience, and behavior.
 - According to survey respondents, 15% of users identified as having a disability, 65% identified as men, 33% identified as women, and 4% identified as another gender. Racial demographics generally aligned with Seattle's demographics.
 - Household income for respondents varied—31% of users reported \$49,999 household income or less.
- Regarding equity, SDOT requires that 10% of their fleet are deployed to the equity focus areas in Northern, Central, and Southern Seattle. Over 15.5% of devices were deployed in equity areas during the pilot and there is still more work to do to make scooters feel like a more accessible option for all residents.
 - Vendors are also required to offer reduced fare plans and SDOT set a required cap of \$1.50 per hour for the reduced fare fee. At least 400 people have signed up for the reduced fare program. Reduced fare riders averaged 64 trips per rider compared to just 3 trips per rider for non-reduced fare users. To be eligible for the program, residents must show that they have qualified for another low-income program such as ORCA lift.
 - SDOT partnered with five community based organizations which led focus groups and held outreach events. The BIPOC community focus groups identified some of the following barriers: lack of knowledge about how to use, lack of access to helmets and safe places to ride, and affordability.
- SDOT also focuses on adaptive cycling and accessibility and uses permit fees to expand Outdoors for All, which has 250 adaptive cycles available for people to use. The pilot also prioritized the seated scooter offering (Wheels).
 - There are additional opportunities that SDOT is pursuing in working with Outdoors for All
- Regarding safety, vendors have a reduced speed for the first ride and require people to take a riding and parking behavior quiz afterward. The City requires helmets, but 70% of survey respondents reported never or almost never wearing a helmet.
 - The City disallowed sidewalk riding in most circumstances and 73% of users reported most of their last trips were not on the sidewalk. The main reason users ride on the sidewalk is because they report choosing to ride where they felt safest, which may be the sidewalk in some scenarios.
 - The City is looking into hosting more outreach and learning opportunities for residents to learn more about how to ride scooters and where to ride. The City also wants to continue to educate drivers to watch out for others
 - Police reports indicated 17 scooter-related collisions filed; all injuries reported to police involved a collision with a motor vehicle. This included one fatality in October 2021.

- In the user survey, 2.6% of users reported experiencing an injury for which they sought medical attention (and approximately 12% of users reported experiencing an injury)
- The survey also revealed a large range of injuries from knee scrapes to broken bones and concussions. Some people identified weather conditions (wet roads), time of day (darkness), road obstacles, and interactions with vehicles
- SDOT is going to work with local hospitals to see who is showing up in the emergency room to get a better picture of scooter injury rates
- Safety also has to do with keeping sidewalks clear of scooters. The goal for the pilot is for no more than 3% of scooters being an obstruction hazard (in the way of pedestrians, making sidewalks less than six feet wide of space for pedestrians). The team conducted in-person parking compliance audits on 68 days during pilot period. Obstruction hazards decreased for all vendors between Q4 2020 and Q3 2021. There are also some strategies like geofencing which only allows for designated parking areas (such as the case near Alki beach), and this may be expanded
- Regarding climate, all micromobility devices are zero emission. There were over 2.2 million miles traveled on scooters in the pilot year. The survey found that over half of trips start or end near frequent transit and 24% of scooter users surveyed said they would have driven a personal vehicle for their last trip and 30% said they would have used a rideshare/ride hail vehicle or taxi if they hadn't used the scooter. 12% said they would not have made their trip without the scooter.
- Key takeaways—people are riding scooters, connecting to transit, and replacing car trips. We need to continue to expand access and help more people feel more comfortable using scooter share. SDOT will continue to improve education about safety for users and non-users (including drivers). Device parking did improve over time and there is still room to improve to make sure scooters aren't obstructing sidewalks.
- Next steps for 2022—SDOT extended permits for existing vendors through 2021 and is looking toward selecting the next round of vendors. SDOT will continue to conduct a robust audit for parking obstructions and add sidewalk riding data collection. SDOT will expand awareness campaigns to improve riding and parking behavior and helmet use. SDOT will also continue to improve education and outreach with focus on equity (including expanding partnership with Outdoors for All)

Scooter Share Q&A with the board:

- Emily Davis: Thanks for showing up to present. A lot of times the goal of these micromobility programs conflicts with our goals for safe pedestrian safety. Riding a bike or scooter in car lanes is scary, so I see why people want to ride on the sidewalk. Has there been a general cost benefit analysis to see what it is costing the city and what we are getting out of it? Are permit fees covering staff time? How many people are scooters a hazard for?
 - Becky: The permit fees do cover the cost of the program so there is not a deficit. The one part of the program that uses general fees is the partnership with Outdoors for All. Regarding the costs and benefits, that is more difficult to answer and we're hoping to do more research. In the past, we conducted a survey of shared micromobility and talked to users and non-users. We might repeat this survey to see the benefits and costs for people not using the scooters to better understand pros and cons.
 - Emily: I'm glad you're surveying people who don't use scooters because that is the majority of the population.

- Becky: Yes, in the past we surveyed people at random addresses, so we may do that again since the landscape has changed since that survey.
- David Flasterstein: I was hit by a scooter at a low speed on the sidewalk on Madison. He was saying that he couldn't stop and I was not injured. The hills in the city may make it more challenging for some people. I've also seen scooters blocking the sidewalks and street around Capitol Hill. What are the difference in safety between scooters and bikes?
 - Becky: In our latest survey we asked people about bikes and scooters. The survey did not make for the best comparison the way that it was set up, but the injury rate was lower among people who used the bike share program. We don't have comparable data for injury rates, but we know that it happens and it's something we need to evaluate to better understand how scooters compare to other modes.
- Maria Sumner: Thanks for the presentation. I don't have as much experience with the pedestrian concerns as others have since Northeast Seattle does not have as many sidewalks. It seems like at a high level the goals with scooter shares are aligned with pedestrian board goals regarding more equitable access around the city. I'm wondering if there are any quick fixes to acute concerns that the City could work on regarding signage or other strategies.
 - Becky: We have talked about signage or stencils on sidewalks like what LA does. We have a geofence around Pike Place which makes people slow down, but there are other technologies that are not necessarily a quick fix that we are working on. We may also look at messaging within the app.
 - Maria: Looking at connecting to public transit, after light rail opened a lot of bus schedules changed. Are you looking at last mile connection to light rail?
 - Becky: Yes, we have scooter parking areas at the Roosevelt light rail and one thing people said in the survey is that transit doesn't always get people to where they want to go so we definitely see scooters as a good first mile or last mile connection to transit.
- Erin Fitzpatrick: I want to echo Emily's question. What is the benefit that Seattle is getting out of scooters? We know this isn't the safest way to get around. We know that people are getting injured, that they are not wearing helmets, and that they are riding on sidewalks. What level of "unsafeness" is worth it and what is Seattle getting out of this that makes scooter share worth it?
 - Becky: We are seeing that it helps a lot of people get around, connect to transit, and that about 22% people use it as a zero-emission option for their commute. There isn't necessarily a short answer to what the benefits are, but we are seeing that it another mode to help people get around.
- Jennifer Lehman: Is there a way to gauge safety concerns from people who are not users? It would be interesting to capture that data. Also, looking at the cost, I'm glad to hear that there is reduced fare for people who qualify. If there is a way in the future RFP to require the companies to advertise reduce fares more. For those who don't fall within the income threshold, the cost goes up significantly, which has been my experience. It seems like scooters are really costly for users who don't meet the threshold.
 - Becky: We are envisioning a survey that targets users and non-users. We may also have people out on the street counting where people are riding scooters, either on the sidewalk or street.
- Bianca Johnson: When you have new things it can be difficult for people to adjust, so I'm wondering if you have similar concerns for bike share when that was introduced. Are there lessons that can be learned from bike share that could be applied to scooter share?
 - Becky: When we started with the free floating bike system there were concerns about bikes blocking sidewalks. In Seattle, bikes are allowed legally to be on sidewalks, so that

is one difference between programs. There are some differences between scooters and bikes in that on the scooter it can be harder for people to ride over bumps and scooters can have smaller footprints

- Emily Davis: Related to cost, it seems that scooters are priced per time there could be a safety conflict. If people are being charged per time they may not choose to ride more safely because they are being charged for ride time.
 - Becky: Yes, most vendors charge by time with \$1 to unlock and then about 39 cents per minute. We could look at that and we want to make sure the vendor can continue to operate, but maybe we want to charge trips by distance regardless of how fast you do it. That could be a good model to look into.
- Erin Fitzpatrick: Regarding accessible bikes, there is money going to Outdoors for All for accessible bikes. Is that in lieu of adaptive cycles being available through vendors?
 - Becky: Yes, we learned that there are so many different types of adaptive cycles and a free-floating program might not connect people to the bike that they need. Outdoors for All already had an adaptive cycle program and other cities have similar programs that we are looking into.
 - Erin: If it's accessible for someone with a disability then it's usually accessible for everyone. I could ride an adaptive cycle even if I don't need one. These companies are pulling in 17 million dollars or more per year so if we tell them they have to prioritize accessibility then they will do that. We should be fighting more for accessibility in these programs.

Board Business

- December and January meeting minutes approval—Emily D moves to approve both minutes, seconded by Erin. Board unanimously approves the minutes.
- Jennifer: The City of Seattle has a Move Seattle property tax which funds a number of projects. There is a civic oversight committee that talks about funding and project status. Written into the ordinance, we have a seat on that committee. I have been filling that role, but as you might be aware I will be terming off the board next month due to other commitments. I will not be pursuing another term so I'm looking to see if anyone has interest in replacing me on that board.
 - Maria: Is this a once per month meeting?
 - Jennifer: Yes, it's the first Tuesday of the month and it can be anyone from the board who is interested. I think it's been really interesting because you see the meat of how decisions are made and you get to hear more about that and contribute to that. Councilmember Pedersen is on the board so he and his staff and other senior officials from SDOT and the Mayor's Office attend the meeting. It's a good way to get exposure to those officials if you have input to share with them.
 - Emily: This also ties into our recruitment update and since our co-Chair Jennifer is leaving we will want another co-Chair and want to spread these responsibilities. We don't need to decide this now, but it's something we can think about.
 - Jennifer: I will be attending the LOC meeting in March, so it would be starting in April.
 - Emily: I will say that being a co-Chair is not hard. It is mostly setting the agenda for the meeting.
 - Jennifer: If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me, Polly, or Emily.
- David Flasterstein: Yaacov and I will present the letter that we wrote, and I will share the letter on my screen.

- Yaacov Tarko (Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board Get Engaged member): This is a joint letter from the bike board and ped board. The bike board approved it last week. We are saying that we support pedestrianizing Pike Place market and we approve removing traffic other than vendors for loading and unloading in Pike Place and believe that it would provide significant benefits to vendors including increasing pedestrian space, reducing pedestrian-car conflicts, reducing air pollution from cars in the market area, reducing noise from cars that are idling, allowing vendors quick access to their loading/unloading spaces, and connecting people to the waterfront and the coming 20 acre Waterfront Park opening in spring 2024. Our job is not to represent the market here but rather to represent what cyclists and pedestrians need.
- Jennifer: I am in support of this letter and we can call a vote soon. Whenever I'm at the market I always wonder why there are cars driving through the market. It would be more enjoyable if there was more space for pedestrians there since it is so crowded.
- Erin: I think the letter looks great. Good work.
- Maria: This is great.
- Emily M: This is consistent with what we are trying to accomplish. Good job.
- Jennifer: Does anyone feel they need more time to read the letter? [No response from board.] All in favor of adopting the letter say aye or raise your hand. Letter is unanimously approved by the board.
- Emily D.: There was potentially a letter from the joint meeting about the search for a new director for SDOT. Nobody from our board volunteered to write it, so I'm not sure if another group has at this point.
- Jennifer: Someone on LOC is writing a letter and they asked if any of the modal boards wanted to add to the letter. I'm not exactly sure what the content of the letter is, but that could be a vehicle for us to say that we want to weigh in on the search for a new director.
- Emily D: That sounds great and I would be excited to hear more about that.
- Polly: The recruitment update is that we are waiting on some final approval for advertising the vacancies. We are aiming to officially open recruitment in the next couple of weeks and have interviews in March. I will keep everyone posted and please share the applications with your networks.
 - Bianca: Are there any changes for meeting virtually versus meeting in person?
 - Polly: We have not heard of any changes to the Governor's Proclamation, but I will keep you posted and hope that the board can decide whether to have meetings in person, online, or hybrid in the future.
 - Emily: How we do leadership on the board is up to us. I am happy to continue being a co-Chair, but I don't want to do it by myself. Having new people will be helpful, but I am assuming new people won't necessarily want to be Chair.
 - Maria: How many people are staying on beyond March?
 - Bianca: I'm not sure because I might be moving, but if not I would possibly be interested in the Chair position. I wish we could be in person because that would be easier.
 - Maria: I am also staying on but I'm not sure about the Chair position.
 - Esti: I haven't been here enough to feel like I can stay on for another term.
 - Emily: It sounds like we will have a lot of new members. This is a discussion we can continue in the next meeting.
- Jennifer: The last part of board business is related to the March meeting discussion. We might have someone from sidewalk repair come to talk to the board. It might be good to get an update on that. I will strongly push for the sidewalk repair update. I would encourage SDOT to figure out

how to give that presentation. Any other board business before we move early to public comment? [No response from board.]

Public Comment

- Ronny Gale: How would I petition for the installation of a rectangular rapid flash beacons pedestrian crossing light? I am a vet assistant at the Roosevelt Vet Care. I work at 68th and Roosevelt Way and it is hard to cross this intersection. Every morning, there are a lot of high schoolers who use that crosswalk and essentially have to play frogger. In the evening we are wearing gray scrubs and it is uncomfortable to cross. You have to put yourself out there so other cars can see you. How would I go about that to get a button to have flashing beacons at this intersection? Today an older lady was crossing and I took a sign to run into the middle of the road so that the older woman could walk across.
 - Jennifer: In typical years I would direct you to Neighborhood Street Fund, which is a city program which can help prioritize transportation projects that are built by SDOT. Apparently due to budget shortfalls it isn't happening now.
 - Emily M: I live around the corner and I know those are super expensive. I would reach out and see if there are traffic counts to warrant that kind of improvement.
 - Polly: Ronny, please email me about this intersection and I will make sure that it gets to the right people at SDOT.
- Glenn Doren: It would be nice if Becky was here to take questions from the public. I have been talking to Becky and her group since almost a year ago and the replies that I have received are basically saying that we are planning to do another survey. What are you doing with feedback? What type of feedback and impact do you all have? Related to signage and educating, whenever I see people on the sidewalk riding scooters I tell people that they can't ride on the sidewalk and the majority of the time people don't care. Signage won't work because people don't care about it. We were hearing in April of last year about the technology working better in the future. I work in software and it doesn't just get better. They are kicking the can down the road and it's frustrating to hear them kick the can down the road.
- Glenn Doren: I heard the comment from a board member just now who said you can't do much, but what is the point of attending the meeting if you can't do much?
- Jennifer: I would say that was one member's comment and I would say not all members agree with that.
- Emily: We are here to advise the mayor, city council, and SDOT and they come to us for feedback and input. We also write letters to them as well.
- Jennifer: As a reminder, public comment is for members of the public to share comments and not necessarily to engage in a back and forth dialog. Are there any other members of the public who want to share comments at this meeting?

No other public comment. Meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.