

TAB April 2025 Meeting Minutes

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Members in Attendance:

Deborah Barnard
Ashwin Bhumbla
Zachary Burton
Katie Freeman
Dexter Jenkins
Art Kuniyuki
Sandro Pani
Kyler Parris
Carolyn Tillinger

Public Comment Time

Jason Li is the co-lead of the Fix the L8 campaign, which previously presented to TAB in April 2024: Fix the L8 is advocating for improvements to Route 8. The route has a 30% reliability rate during summer rush hours. It is the second most late route, despite strong ridership and high demand. Stops are frequently missed due to overcapacity, which disproportionately impacts wheelchair users. Fix the L8 is starting a letter writing campaign to ask SDOT to implement two way bus lanes on Denny Way, and to give Route 8 buses accommodations to move smoothly during construction. They are requesting for TAB to support this campaign

Ashwin response: TAB would be open to a second presentation if there are substantial updates

Approval of Previous Minutes

Ashwin motions to approve march meeting minutes, Art seconds. Motion passes unanimously. March meeting minutes approved.

Adiam Emory - New Interim Director of SDOT

Interim-Director Adiam Emory is here to introduce herself to TAB. She appreciates collaboration and input from TAB.

Interim-Director Emory worked for 27 years at SDOT and then three years at the Mayor's Office. She is excited to lead the department where her career started. She always leads with transit and strives to create spaces that are sustainable and accessible to all. Interim-Director Emory recognizes that the level of service at SDOT needs to be exemplary if we are to encourage use of transit. One of her goals is to implement more 24 hour bus-only lanes.

Interim-Director Emory's leadership style is very transparent. She wants to share a lot of information with her staff, the community and with TAB. The STM renewal will be an opportunity for partnership with TAB to co-create the next phase of STM which will shape the next six years.

Questions from TAB:

Ashwin: You're coming in after Director Spotts left. When you compare yourself to Director Spotts, are there things you are doing differently? Policies? Styles? Priorities?

Interim Directory Emory: She's been in alignment with former Director Spotts while he led SDOT. She's also been involved in the levy deliverable plan. Interim Director Emory doesn't want too many interruptions or hiccups in SDOT's plans or strategies.

Interim-Director Emory emphasizes that she leads with people first. She recognizes that she needs to make the lives of employees easier, remove barriers, and give people resources. SDOT should be employees first. This requires breaking down silos internally, making space more efficient and effective and bringing in voices from external strong partners.

Deb: What is the intersection between freight and transit? Are there any current projects between the two?

Interim Directory Emory: There are special considerations for both freight and transit due to vehicle size. SDOT is testing hybrid lane usage on the Westlake corridor. There's a need to balance service for freight and transit.

Art: For those of us who have been on TAB for a while, we've had to endure provisos. The amount of money we manage is 50mill. Are you in favor of provisos? Are you consulted on those expenditures?

Interim Directory Emory: She doesn't have a lot of power over the council, which issues provisos. According to Emory, the Council is using provisos as power to elevate their priorities, which is "unfortunate". A lot of negotiating goes into determining where funds are spent. She will continue to work with the Council and Mayor's office in order to continue building the relationships and collaborative spaces that will get us into better decision making.

Metro Safety Updates

Maria Jimenez-Zepeda, Safety Emphasis Manager for King County Metro is here to present on Metro Safety Updates

Safety Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform

- Mission: Safe, accessible, and equitable transit that is co-created to support community well-being
- Reforms came about due to reckoning around racial justice in 2020
- Personnel:
 - **SaFE Ambassadors:** Mostly light duty bus operators. Helps people navigate the bus system. Identifiable by bright blue polos and jackets that say "King County Metro"
 - **Behavioral Health Support:** Non-uniformed. Trained in deescalation and can provide services and referrals
 - **Fare enforcement:** Fare Enforcement officers are contracted security officers. Trained in deescalation, not armed.

Return of Fare Enforcement

- As of March 31st, King County Metro will ask for proof of fare payment. This effort will primarily focus on high ridership routes and RapidRide. From March 31st-May 30th, riders will not receive official warnings or fines for non-payment.
- Fare enforcement will start on May 31st, enforcements will start. First and second violations will result in written warnings. Third and subsequent violations will incur a \$40 fine, which will be reduced to \$20 if paid within 30 days.

Safety Emphasis Coordination

- Improving transit safety is a responsibility shared across Metro, King County, jurisdictions, partner agencies and communities
- Focus is on improving safety through:
 - Outreach

- Enforcement
- Presence and activation
- Maintenance and cleanliness
- Built environment
- Communications

Question from Dexter: Is there a metric for determining areas of most incidents or most need for more Safe Ambassador?

Maria: Locations are chosen in partnership with City of Seattle. They are often near schools and other areas with high foot traffic. She will follow up to see what other ways King County Metro uses to determine service needs.

Vision Zero and Automated Traffic Safety Cameras Update

David Burgesser joins TAB from SDOT. He is the Planning Lead for Vision Zero Team.

Automated Traffic Safety Cameras (ATSC) - A Major Strategy for Vision Zero

How are we reducing crashes that lead to major accidents, harms, deaths?

- Since 2015, 1,850 people have been seriously injured and 253 people have been killed in a traffic crash.
- Number of people lost total stayed level from 2023-2024
- There has been a decrease in serious injury, especially in people walking and biking

Contributing factors to crashes:

- Speeding (21%)
- Inattention/Distracted (32%)
- Driver Error (3%)
- Non-motorist Error (12%)
- DUI (16%)
- Other (16%)

Safe System Approach

- SDOT adopted the Safe System Approach in the updated 2024-2026 Vision Zero Action
- USDOT national paradigm for roadway safety:
 - Approach safety with multiple layers of safety
 - Reduce likelihood of crashes
 - Reduce harm when crashes do occur

Safer Speeds

Safer Speeds is a key element of the Safe System Approach

- Traffic cameras are a research-based proven safety countermeasure
- Cameras have been used in Seattle since 2006
- 2024 state law changes provide an opportunity to update and expand Seattle's safety camera program

Key 2024 State Law changes:

- Allows citation review by civilian employees
- Requires safety and equity analysis for siting new or relocation existing cameras
- Increases annual reporting requirements
- Permanently authorizes pilot authorities
- Repeals racing zone speed camera authority
- Simplifies allowable types of full-time speed zone cameras
- May adopt ability-to-pay calculator to process and grant reduce penalties
- Requires granting 50% penalty reduction for first violation to recipients of government assistance

Allowable Camera Types, New as of 2024:

- Railroad crossing
- Ferry queuing
- Full time speeding
 - High crash risk
 - Park and hospital
 - School walk
 - Work zones

Key Automatic Traffic Safety Camera Program Updates:

Updated fine schedule to include new camera types

Program Financial Policies:

- Remove limitations on using revenues from one camera type to administer another camera type
- Create automated traffic camera safety fund to replace existing school safety traffic and pedestrian improvement fund
- Unifies different siloed aspects of program

Programs to reduce impact of fines

- Ticket debt reduction hearings
- Payment Plans

- Community Service Plans
- Unified Payment Program
- 50% first-violation penalty reduction

Privacy Protection and Data Retention

- Very strong guardrails for data and privacy protection
- Recorded images cannot be used for any purpose other than enforcing traffic violations (RCW 46.63.220)
- City specifies timelines for deleting recorded images

Draft Safety Camera Implementation Guidance

- Program administration, annual report and programmatic modifications
- Siting Analysis procedures
- Community engagement strategy

School Speed Zone Safety Camera Expansion

- Preparing to install 37 new school speed zone cameras
- Determined by safety needs analysis and equitable distribution
- Only prioritizing locations after flashing beacons are not sufficiently influencing speeds

Next Steps

- Spring 2025: City Council finalize ATSC legislation
- Spring-Summer 2025: SDOT to publish ATSC Implementation Guidance
- Spring 2025-Winter 2026: Deploy and activate new school zone safety cameras
- Early 2026: Deploy and activate pilot full-time speed cameras at priority locations

Questions:

Kyler: Could SPD access cameras for other reasons besides the automated traffic violations?

David: SPD has access, but can only be used for enforcement of traffic violations. The cameras only records license plates and back of vehicles

Deborah: How does Vision Zero's tools address transit buses that are running red lights?

David: Unsure if they do

Dexter: Why do the cameras only take pictures of the rear?

David: The cameras are only allowed to record the vehicle. They cannot capture pictures of the person/driver due to privacy concerns. The citation goes to the person registered to the vehicle.

Ashwin: School cameras are only installed when flashing beacons don't affect speeds adequately. How well do those flashing beacons actually impact speeds?

David: Unsure. Will look into question and get back to TAB

Ashwin: How does the transportation levy affect vision zero?

David: Many of the levy deliverables advance Vision Zero priorities. These include safety corridors, arterial traffic calming, much more robust program on high collision locations, proactive counter measures, scaling up no turn on red, and left turn phasing.

Kyler: Are there any discussions on the bus lane cameras on buses like they're rolling out in New York?

David: This is happening, but at the county level.

Zach: It sounds like there are no more warnings for violations, it's a fine for the first time.\

David: There will be 30day warning period when cameras are first turned on. But after that, the first violation will be fined.

Board Business

Presentation Follow Up Action Items

- Additional information from Carolyn: STM funds are being used SAFE ambassadors on King County Metro. This was recently called for in a proviso on STM funds.
 - Ashwin: When was this proviso implemented?
 - Carolyn: Last budget season

Ashwin: What was the timeline on the one year study on freight/bus lanes on Westlake Avenue

Carolyn: Study is still ongoing, it hasn't been a full year yet

Ashwin: Interim SDOT director mentioned the Green New Deal Advisory Committee

- Seems like there are funds under Green New Deal for ST3 staff salary. Could be an alternative to using STM funds. However, GND committee seems unwilling to spend on transit. They see transit as part of Green New Deal
- Would like to communicate with the GND board to learn more on their funding and oversight board.

May & June TAB meeting scheduling

- June 5th will be the multi-modal board meeting
- Ashwin proposes cancelling the May meeting in lieu of the June 5th meeting. Will keep regularly schedule TAB june meeting
- TAB will receive a draft of the STP delivery plan before the June meeting. We would like to form a subcommittee so we can come into the June meeting with comments prepared
- All TAB members agree to cancel May meeting

Subcommittees:

STP Delivery Plan Subcommittee

- Art asks why we aren't coordinating with other modal boards?
 - Ashwin: we are planning to reach out before June meeting, but going to create our letter independently in case we can't coordinate
- Who's interested in joining the STP Draft Subcommittee?
 - Carolyn
 - Zach
 - Art
 - Kyler
 - Ash

STM Budgeting Subcommittee

- Priority: Look at STM spending throughout the year so far
- Who's on the subcommittee?
 - Art
 - Katie
 - Ash
 - Zach
 - One spot open

Letter regarding Route 8

Context: Route 8: consistently runs very late. It is mentioned in the levy delivery plan, but no guarantees of bus lane additions and other road improvements. Would like to voice opinion on Route 8 and what needs to be done to make it better

Art: What is the plan for communication? He thinks we should hold off on a letter so we can collaborate with other groups, such as TRU, South Seattle Greenway, Fix the L8 for bigger impact

Ashwin: Is there something specific that Fix the L8 wants from the TAB?

Jason Li, Fix the L8 representative: They are planning an action letter campaign and would like to solicit voices/letters from other places and organizations. They want to include as many people as possible to get the city to recognize the problems. They are planning on sending letters to businesses around the route to get them involved.

Art: Suggests letter campaign not going to be helpful and recommends face-to-face meetings with legislators

Ashwin: Jason please keep us in the loop on concerted efforts for multi-group letters and other ways to collaborate

Sandro: We need to communicate with SDOT and find out what their plan is for the Denny Corridor. TAB could start a dialogue, figure out what's worked?what hasn't worked, and what are the roadblocks? Can we use that information to put pressure on the council/mayor? The information gives us more power/backing to letter writing

Jason Li: SDOT is doing spot improvements. Traffic analysis was supposed to be completed in 2024 and construction started this spring

The letter is tabled and will be discussed at a future date.