

TAB March 2025 Meeting Minutes

- Introductions
- Public Comment, Approval of Previous Minutes
- Seattle Transportation Plan – Implementation Plan and 2025 Levy Deliverable Plan
 - Sarah Strand & Serena Lehman, SDOT
- Spring 2025 Service Change and Workforce Update
 - Ryan Miller, King County Metro
- Board Business
 - Presentations Follow-up / Action Items
 - Major Items Update

Members in Attendance:

Priyadharshini Balan
Ashwin Bhumbla
Zachary Burton
Shirley Chu
Dana Coppernoll-Houston
Katie Freeman
Dexter Jenkins
Art Kuniyuki
Sandro Pani
Kyler Parris
Carolyn Tillinger

Public Comment Time

No comments

Approval of Previous Minutes

Dana motions to approve, Art seconds. Motion passes unanimously. January meeting minutes approved.

Seattle Transportation Plan – Implementation Plan and 2025 Levy Deliverable Plan

Background:

Presenters: Sarah Strand and Serena Lehman from SDOT join TAB to discuss the Seattle Transportation Plan (STP) and 2025 Levy Delivery Plan.

Seattle Transportation Plan (STP)

- Adopted by City Council in 2024, this plan establishes a 20-year vision for Seattle’s transportation system guided by six primary goals:
 - Safety
 - Equity
 - Sustainability
 - Mobility & Economic Vitality
 - Livability
 - Maintenance & Modernization
- Each goal is broken down into multiple Key Moves, with specific Implementation Actions that SDOT is working towards. In total, there are 26 Key Moves and 173 Implementation Actions.
- TAB and other Seattle modal boards were able to review the STP draft and provide feedback. SDOT has taken this feedback and incorporated it into the final version of the plan. TAB’s priorities at the time included:
 - Climate Action
 - Mode shifting
 - Equity
 - Bus-only lanes
 - Safety and Maintenance
 - Faster implementation of projects
 - TAB Recommendations/robust feedback on draft stp, SDOT really tools this seriously and incorporated into final versions
- TAB’s feedback was primarily incorporated into the goal of Mobility & Economic Vitality under Key Move PG3: *Create world-class access to transit and support making service more frequent and reliable*

Plan to Implementation for STP

- The STP Implementation Plan identifies strategic priorities for the next three years. This will be supported by annual work plans, such as the Levy Delivery Plan, which will give a more granular guide to how these priorities will be implemented.
- The STP Implementation Plan will be submitted to the City Council in Summer 2025.
- TAB and other Seattle modal boards will receive a draft of the STP Implementation Plan in May 2025. SDOT will then hold a joint modal board meeting in June 2025 to present and explain the plan. The modal boards will have an opportunity to comment at that time

2025 Levy Delivery Plan

- Past transportation levies include:
 - Bridging the Gap: \$365M over 9 years (2006-2014)
 - Levy to Move Seattle: Seattle:\$930M over 9 years (2015-2024)

- 2024 Transportation Levy: Levy:\$1.55B over 8 years (2025-2032)
- There will be eight annual work plans over the lifespan of the 2024 Transportation Levy, directing the use and implementation of levy funds.
- 2025 Transportation Levy Delivery Plan Highlights:
 - Expanding Vision Zero work
 - Sidewalks and sidewalk alternatives
 - Establishing design contracts for bridges and structures
 - Designing maintenance and modernization corridor projects
 - Investment in downtown activation, in anticipation of FIFA 2026
 - Launching new levy programs, including EV charging
- Levy Proviso Life
 - The City Council enacted an 89 million proviso on levy funds during the 2025 budget
 - However, they have now lifted this proviso, freeing up these funds
- Projects are selected based on the following priorities:
 - Program goals
 - Equity
 - Number of people who benefit
 - Geographic distribution
 - Optimal investment timing and leveraging opportunities
 - Community co-creation opportunity

Questions from TAB Members:

Sarah and Serena request TAB members share their questions and initial priorities for the STP Implementation Plan.

Carolyn: Who in SDOT should we talk to to advocate for safer sidewalks? In particular, the sidewalks on Rainier Ave S near the Judkins Park station.

Serena: Will share concerns with SDOT and connect to sidewalk repair and urban forestry teams.

Art: Many of the implementation projects are contingent on other plans, such as the One Seattle Comprehensive Plan or the Vision Zero Action Plan. Do you feel like those plans are proceeding on pace?

Sarah: Vision Zero is the #1 priority for SDOT. They are coordinating directly with the Vision Zero team in order to align both plans. There are publicly available dashboards that allow for monitoring. Vision zero is #1 priority for department, safety priority for levy as well

Sandro: Highest priority plan is an increased focus on equity. He is concerned that there will be less federal funding for equity projects due to the current political climate. Local funding will need to step up and replace federal dollars.

Zach: Priorities include:

- Route 8 improvement
- Expanding Aurora Ave bus lane operations, including 24/7 bus-only lanes.
- Jackson St safety improvements
- Faster implementation of bus-only lanes and other projects. Reduce approval timelines.
- Downtown reactivation
- Capitol Hill Eco District. More low-pollution type neighborhoods as priorities for public space and public street projects

Ash: Highest priorities and feedback:

- Would like SDOT to be more aggressive and ambitious with mode shift goals. Establish the paradigm that cars don't have the right of way over every single road. Taking space away from cars and having fewer cars on the road are the key to sustainability and climate goals.
- Seattle voters have given clear mandate for these changes - we want more and we want it faster.
- Need for more multi-modal board meetings.

Ash: The Levy Delivery Plan calls out Denny & Olive Way as a possible location for transit improvement. What general improvements is SDOT planning?

Sarah and Serena will follow up on this

- Need for more multi-modal board meetings, we don't need to be separate entities

Dana: Priorities include:

- Access and convenience is the most important thing to getting mode switches. If transit is more convenient/faster, people will choose transit over cars.
- People WANT aggressive changes
 - Think back to congestion pricing in NYC. This was an aggressive move, but huge benefits are showing up. Initial opposers have come on board after seeing results

Shirley: Priorities include:

- Additional convenience and accessibility of transit on Rainier Ave S
- Many people who support these changes can't attend council meetings during business hours, so their voices aren't being represented.

- Pay attention to sparsely serviced areas

March 2025 Service Change and Workforce Update

Background: Ryan Miller from King County Metro joins TAB to update us on the upcoming service changes and status of the workforce

Spring Service Change

- KC Metro adjusts service adjustments in March and September of every year.
 - Opportunity to change bus service on a routine basis
 - Union drivers pick their routes
 - Gives them time to update signs, brochures etc
 - Spring service changes go into effect this Saturday 3/29
- What's changing:
 - Federal Way
 - Transit center is closing
 - Bus service moving to new federal way downtown stations
 - Link 2 Line
 - Two new stations opening in Redmond\
 - Bus service changing to service the stations
 - STM Funding
 - Service investments in Routes 8, 36, 107, 124, RR G, RR H
 - Reallocations to RR C and Route 56

Workforce Updates

- Constraints due to operational capacity:
 - Need to add trips they can fully implement
 - Want to avoid increases in cancelled trips
 - Goal is to deliver 99.7% of scheduled trips
 - Currently seeing rates between 98-99%
 - Main reasons trips get cancelled is due to not having an operator or vehicle issues
- Available Operator Workforce
 - Currently only able to meet operator demand through overtime
 - 34% of trips are handled through OT
 - Target is 17%
 - Current rate is unsustainable and increases risk of trip cancellations
 - Currently hiring new operators, but training capacity is limited.
- Fleet Availability
 - Fleet numbers are growing after loss of fleet numbers due to vehicle defect

- 2025 Areas of Focus: What's next?
 - Increasing training and recruitment
 - Received 840 applicants last week for open call for operators
 - Training capacity is the bottleneck
 - Want to build training capacity
 - Operations & Growth
 - Reduce operator overtime
 - Maintain fleet availability
 - Accelerate service growth pace
 - Future Success
 - Focus on workforce retention

Questions:

Art: If you had 2500 operators working full time, all trained, and had 17% overtime, would that change the costs of 2300 working OT? Would these cost the same?

Ryan: Yes! Hourly OT adds a substantial cost. Paying 50% more for those service hours. Bringing in more operators will reduce the cost of overtime potentially saving millions.

Ash: How long does recruiting and training take for an individual operator?

Ryan: Will need to follow up on this. Every operator highered gets added to a class and will need to wait until that class starts, so the time frame varies. Some operators need additional time to get their commercial operator license.

Ash: What has helped in recruitment?

Ryan: One of main things is the union renegotiated their contract resulting in a substantial pay increase. The general economic picture is changing in the region, which may be encouraging people to apply to these jobs.

Sandro: Many bus operators eventually transfer to working on rail. How is that handled across agencies in the region? All agencies growing service - are you competing for the same operators? How is that negotiated?

Ryan: There is some competition between KC Mento and Link for operators. Link is implemented/scheduled by KCMetro, so their operators work within the same system. KC Metro works with Sound Transit routinely, figuring out operator needs on the bus and rail sides to have capacity to operate both services

Board Business

Plan to respond to STP Implementation Plan

TAB will receive draft of STP Implementation Plan in May. TAB is encouraged to give verbal feedback on the plan during the multimodal meeting in June, before the plan is transmitted to the council in July.

Multiple TAB members suggest submitting written feedback before the June multimodal meeting. A subcommittee will be formed during the April TAB meeting to write this official response. If possible, TAB would like to coordinate with other modal boards for this written response. TAB will discuss the draft during the May meeting.

STP implementation plan - draft coming out in May - we'll have more follow up
Art: sounds like they're interested in getting feedback. We may want to submit official comments, possibly through subcommittee

Major Items Updates and Announcements

- Seattle City Council has lifted the proviso on the 2024 Transportation Levy
- Meetings of the Regional Transit Fare Forum are open to the public. This is an interesting opportunity to learn about the priorities on the Orca Card system. More information can be found here: <https://info.myorca.com/regional-fare-forum/>
- King County Metro will restart fare enforcement starting March 31, 2025
<https://kingcountymetro.blog/2025/03/24/one-week-countdown-king-county-metro-restarts-fare-enforcement-march-31/>