



Seattle
Department of
Transportation

TAB Members:

Priyadharshini Balan
Deborah Barnard
Ashwin Bhumbala
Zachary Burton
Shirley Chu
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Katie Freeman
Art Kuniyuki
Sidney Orr
Sandro Pani
Carolyn Tillingier

*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.*

*The Board shall be provided the opportunity to comment and make recommendations on City policies, plans, and projects as they may relate to **transit capital improvements, transit mobility, and transit operations** throughout the City...*

*The Board shall help facilitate City policies, plans, and projects that support local and region-wide transit mobility efforts, to help **ensure a functioning and coordinated transit system** throughout the City and region.*

*The Board shall function as the **public oversight committee of revenues collected under Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) Proposition 1**, as described in Resolution 12 of the STBD...*

The Board shall make an annual report to the City Council on the status of its work program and the achievement of its goals.

**City Council Resolution
31572**

City of Seattle
Seattle Transit Advisory Board

September 29, 2025

To: Interim Director Adiam Emery, Mayor Bruce Harrell, Deputy Mayor Jessyn Farrell, Seattle City Council

Re: Route 8 Feedback

Dear SDOT Staff, City Council Members, and Mayor Harrell's Office,

Route 8 serves thousands of riders per day, with the highest ridership per service hour out of all routes King County Metro operated in 2024. Route 8 was also the most delayed all-day bus route in the entire system in 2024. This is unacceptable and major improvements are needed now, not later. Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is well-aware of the issues with this route, which is why the Co-Chairs from the Seattle Transit Advisory Board (TAB) and representatives from the Fix the L8 campaign were invited to a virtual meeting on August 28th, 2025 to be briefed on SDOT's solutions for Route 8, with all of this information made public on that same day from an SDOT blog post.

The TAB appreciates some changes coming to Denny Way, which will be a bus lane going eastbound from Queen Anne Ave to 2nd Ave and restriction of right turns from Westlake Ave onto Denny Way. However, we are very disappointed that SDOT has recently ruled out bus lanes between Dexter Ave and Steward St, citing a large increase in traffic congestion on Denny Way, according to a recent analysis that did not include mode shift. Bus lanes have been proven time and time again to reduce congestion, improve transit frequency and reliability, and encourage mode shift away from single occupancy vehicles (SOVs). SDOT acknowledged that a bus lane may be the best solution, but referenced the recently completed Route 8 Speed and Reliability Study as the basis for the design decisions. This decision follows the status quo, and puts cars first instead of addressing the problem.

According to an SDOT blog from August 28th, "Analysis shows that extending a bus-only lane east of 9th Ave (near Denny Park) to Fairview Ave could help with bus reliability and would cause severe traffic congestion in the area". However, SDOT staff confirmed with the TAB Co-Chairs that this analysis did not factor in mode shift. In order to solve a problem that requires fewer cars on the road—and

thus depends on inducing a mode shift—SDOT refuses to pursue mode shift based on an analysis that doesn't even account for it. It is a complete abdication of responsibility and when faced with an opportunity to deliver an enormous increase to transit reliability and frequency for a relatively low cost, SDOT has refused without even trying. It is frustrating that SDOT spent two years of time and taxpayer money studying a bus lane with the assumption that there would be no mode shift and that Seattle residents wouldn't use it. City Council Member Alexis Mercedes Rinck has shown similar frustration, and called for a formal inquiry during the September 16th, 2025 Transportation Committee meeting into how the decision was made to not include mode shift in the analysis. SDOT knows how to account for mode shift in their analysis, especially since their 2015 Madison Bus Rapid Transit Study did so. It showed that bus lanes on Madison St could improve bus travel times and see an increase in transit ridership by the thousands all while only having negligible impacts on travel times for drivers.

The decision to not add continuous bus lanes to Denny Way is contradictory to SDOT's own goals set in the Climate Change Response Framework (CCRF) and the Seattle Transportation Plan (STP). The CCRF has a target goal of 24% transit mode share by 2030, which is only 5 years away. There, the third highest strategy was to "Make it more convenient, reliable, and affordable to ride transit" and the number one way to do that, the report says, is to "Accelerate Bus-Only Lane Installations and Other Travel Time + Reliability Improvements". In the Transit Element of the STP, the target goal for mode shift would be to see 28% of trips be taken using transit by 2044, with the 2019 number recorded to only being 11%. If SDOT is serious about meeting the goals set in the CCRF and the STP, then they need to implement the bold changes necessary on Denny Way to speed up the reliability of Route 8, even if that means taking a general purpose lane away from cars. ***If transit reliability and frequency improved for Route 8, there would be mode shift and the only way to meaningfully improve Route 8 performance is to have dedicated bus lanes down the entire length of Denny Way.***

Thank you for listening to us. During the September Seattle Transit Advisory Board (TAB) meeting, we were briefed by two SDOT staff representatives during Board Business to share a few remarks and provide context about Route 8. The TAB appreciated the dialogue and would like to collaborate more to address the problems with Route 8. The Seattle Transit Advisory Board would like to receive a response by the end of October and we would be happy to provide further clarification and discussion.

Sincerely,

The Seattle Transit Advisory Board (TAB)

Co-signed by the Fix the L8 Campaign

