



Seattle Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Boards

May 1, 2023

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*

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board Members:

- Maria Sumner, Co-Chair
- Christ Grgich, Co-Chair
- Emily Davis
- Rohit Ammanamanchi
- Fallon Boyle
- Erin Fitzpatrick
- David Frantz
- Holt Hafer, Get Engaged
- Wes Mills
- Chelsea Morrison
- Natasha Riveron
- Emilie Szeto

The Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and officers 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 process insofar as they relate to bicycling.

*-City Council Resolution
25534*

Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board Members:

- Donna McBain Evans, Co-Chair
- Peter Bryan, Co-Chair
- Joseph Roberts, Secretary
- Yasir Alfarag
- Arya Blourchian
- Ty Bottorff
- Max Green
- Quinn Kelly
- Double Migned
- Jose Nino
- Christine Stawitz

To: Mayor Bruce Harrell, Seattle City Council, Gregg Spotts, Director SDOT, Francesca Stefan, Deputy Director SDOT, Venu Nemani, City Traffic Engineer, now SDOT chief Safety Officer

From: Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board and Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

Re: Comments on Vision Zero Top to Bottom Review

We applaud the effort of Director Spotts to initiate a top to bottom review of the city's Vision Zero plan to help us reverse the trend of increasing numbers of deaths and serious injuries on our streets. The Bicycle and Pedestrian modal boards have joined together to submit to you the following comments and feedback on your review and our assessment of key actions needed to make meaningful headway toward the goal of no traffic deaths.

We see 4 key issues that need to be addressed if we are to see measurable results: Arterial safety, Intersection safety, Safer street designs and Reduction in vehicular speeds.

Issue 1: Arterials: 93% of pedestrian fatalities occur on multilane arterials

- Prioritize bold safety redesigns on arterial routes in the city, particularly MLK Way, Aurora Ave, Lake City Way and Rainier Ave; while your "momentum building actions are welcome, they do not address the fundamental changes needed to create safer arterials. That is a redesign of arterials to prioritize safety and create pedestrian spaces (e.g. speed cushions, sidewalks, flashing beacons and protected bike lanes).
- We challenge you to build a model safe arterial on a significant stretch of dangerous road to the highest standards so the impacts of safety treatments can be evaluated; this project should be highlighted in the new STP and funded expediently.

- Your review has a grand vision but it kicks the can down the road for implementation. Inclusion of Safety elements should be in **ALL** SDOT projects and should start today: reevaluate projects in the construction pipeline, such as the Ballard Ave/15th repaving project, where safety has not been made a priority; if there is a funding shortfall, the project scope should be reduced to ensure that safety treatments are included.
- A safety overlay should be used to identify problem areas with all project plans; this overlay will show the history of serious injuries and deaths on a route by all modes of transit and should be used to provide appropriate prioritization for street treatments and slower speeds.
- In all projects, SDOT must track and evaluate that the intended safety improvements are being realized as evidenced by a reduction in crashes.

Issue 2: Intersections: 59% of all pedestrian fatalities occur at intersections

The SDOT review relies heavily on Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) to reduce incidents at intersections; while there is some evidence LPIs work, they are not a panacea and we believe you should go further:

- Raised crosswalks should be installed in all school zones, transit hubs and other areas with active pedestrian activity.
- Installation of curb bulbs and posts can improve visibility at crosswalks; flashing beacons and refuge islands improve safety for pedestrians at busy multi lane arterial crossings; these treatments can be added even in repaving projects.
- We commend your expansion of no-turn on red signalization; this should be combined with designated turn phases at signalized crossings—these protect people walking and people on bicycles in bike lanes.

Issue 3: Street design must be revamped to address safety concerns

- 80% of people killed while bicycling were on streets without bike lanes; installation of Protected Bike Lanes should be prioritized, using findings from SDOT's Bike and Pedestrian Safety analysis.
- Assure that the new STP creates a bold vision of interconnected bikeways for all ages and abilities; these projects should not be canceled or delayed by concerns such as loss of parking or increases in travel times for vehicles; all users should feel safe and be safe on our roads.
- Although the City's climate plan contains a goal of drastically reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled in single occupancy vehicles, this goal is not stated in the Vision Zero document; yet reduced VMT would greatly reduce traffic deaths and injuries; this should be included in the Vision Zero goals.
- There should be a simple system designed for people to report safety concerns, near-misses, and non-police related incidents and crashes, such as the Find It Fix It app.

Issue 4: Speeding

- Enforcement of speed limits is virtually nonexistent in our City; expanded automated enforcement cameras have had tangible impact on fatalities in other cities; SDOT must expand use of enforcement cameras and make them more equitable by setting ticket fines based on income and

issuing warnings instead of tickets for first time violations; distribute the cameras equitably around the city and direct new revenue from cameras towards safety programs.

- SDOT's own data confirms that reducing vehicles speeds lead to fewer crashes and safer streets; we urge you to embrace lower speeds and use street design to slow vehicles on dangerous roads as a core element of your programs.
- Make broader use of speed cushions to reduce travel speeds on busy arterials as these devices can reduce general vehicle speeds while still allowing emergency vehicles to move efficiently.

These four issues are fundamental to solving safety issues on our roads. However, funding and political will is what will determine if we have a plan with solutions or merely something to put on a shelf.

We commend the inclusion of critical safety improvements in the near term plan, but we cannot achieve vision zero until we radically change how cars move throughout the city. Dramatically rethinking street designs and vehicle speeds needs to be at the core of the near term Vision Zero plan and we cannot wait.