



Transportation Equity Workgroup
Seattle Department of Transportation

June 2, 2023

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

From: SDOT Transportation Equity Workgroup

RE: Recommendations on Vision Zero Top to Bottom Review

We, the SDOT Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW), have thoroughly reviewed the SDOT Vision Zero Top to Bottom Review report and have had meaningful, continued engagement to consider its contents. Specifically, we opted to focus on the important issue of Auto Enforcement and its well-established equity impacts.

We would like to see enforcement be less punitive and more equitable. Currently, 65% of cameras are in neighborhoods with more people of color and immigrants. Due to historic disinvestment, these are also the areas where Seattle's most dangerous roads tend to be and thus communities who are disproportionately impacted. We have concerns related to non-equitable impact that will result from an increase of auto enforcement measures to be done without a robust communication strategy that deeply engages our communities most impacted and takes into account non-punitive measures.

We want to firmly highlight that we too are concerned about recent fatalities and are aware that auto enforcement has been known to significantly increase safety. That said, we do have grave concerns related to lack of information, language access, and financial consequences that disproportionately impact our Black, Indigenous and communities of color (BIPOC) including our low income, vulnerable and immigrant and refugee communities.

Seattle Department of Transportation Equity Workgroup (TEW).
Email: transportationequity@seattle.gov Call: 206-684-5142.
Website:

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To address all such issues we offer our feedback and recommendations that center on the following four topic areas:

1. **Education & Communication**
2. **Non-punitive Measures**
3. **Equitable Distribution of Cameras**
4. **Equitable distribution of revenue generated**

Education & Communication

First, we strongly recommend that community engagement take place in advance of the roll out of more auto enforcement cameras. Our communities need to be fully informed that auto enforcement will be increased and need to have an understanding of the reasons for this safety measure strategy. Additionally, the community should be allowed to provide feedback as to signage recommendations that would be more helpful in informing the public at large.

We suggest that the educational outreach take place at various community gathering spaces. These gatherings should be aimed for a multigenerational audience, and there needs to be intention to make the engagement opportunities fully accessible to our vulnerable communities while also accounting for language access needs across communities.

Non-punitive Measures

Given the data showing that most people change their driving behavior after getting a warning, the TEW also recommends that there needs to be a process in which a first time offense results in a warning.

Additionally, other non-punitive alternative solutions need to be made available so that the fines do not impose undue economic hardship for low-income households. Some examples include community service and/or educational opportunities.

The TEW also would like to see fine amounts be reduced for low-income households if tickets are subsequently issued, as the impact on low-income households can potentially impact their housing stability and the ability to meet their basic needs.

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Equitable Distribution of Cameras

We'd also like to see a more equitable distribution of cameras in all neighborhoods. The data currently shows that only 18% of cameras are placed in neighborhoods with fewer people of color and immigrants. With safety as the ultimate goal, that needs to change.

Revenue Allocation that prioritizes Safety Measures

Lastly we strongly recommend a measure in which the revenue that is generated from automated enforcement gets invested in the neighborhoods from which that revenue is generated. With the ultimate goal being safety, the priority needs to be an allocation of those funds generated to directly support such efforts in the specified neighborhoods. We strongly discourage the City from perpetuating further processes in which the City puts itself in the position in which it creates a greater dependency of revenue generated from punitive measures, in the guise of advancing safety measures, that are well known to disproportionately impact our BIPOC, low-income, vulnerable, immigrant and refugee communities.

In short, we would like to see a thorough and careful consideration of the Transportation Justice implications of any changes in the auto enforcement measures, as outlined in the aforementioned recommendations as you work towards further implementation of the Vision Zero policy.

Sincerely,

Yordanos Teferi

Mr. Rizwan Rizwi

Co-Chairwoman

Co-Chairman

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