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August 12, 2014

Councilmember Tom Rasmussen
Chair, Seattle City Council Transportation Committee

Re: Bicycle Master Plan Implementation Plan

Dear Councilmember Rasmussen:

The Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board (SBAB) would like to thank the Seattle City Council for its ongoing and significant support for considering the needs of bicycle riders in all of Seattle's transportation decisions.

We are writing to follow up on the April 2014 adoption of the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan (BMP), and specifically, the implementation of the plan as identified in Council Resolution 31515. As you know, Section 8 of that resolution directed the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to develop a 3-5 year implementation plan and to present it to SBAB and Council for their review and comments within 90 days of the Mayor's concurrence on the resolution. This implementation plan is intended to include priorities for capital project planning, design, and construction, safety and education programs, maintenance activities, end-of-trip facilities, and funding mechanisms.

The BMP Implementation Plan from SDOT was due to Council and SBAB by July 18, yet to date we have not seen a draft nor received a presentation on its likely content. We have requested updates on its status or an updated time-frame for its completion several times, but have received no formal communication from the department. Recent correspondence from Kate Joncas of Mayor Edward Murray's office appears to address this issue, and we sincerely hope that the revised timeline established in that letter can be met. Importantly, this new proposed timeline establishes opportunities for SBAB to provide input and recommendations on a draft before the final plan is delivered to Council, and it appears the plan could be completed in time to inform Council's final 2015 budget decisions. Given the circumstances, we support this approach and schedule.

Seattle is on a promising trajectory in terms of expanding its bicycle facility network and transforming it into one that works for current and prospective bike riders of all ages and abilities. However completing this transformation will require considerable investment over many years, and in fact the BMP anticipates a 20-year time frame for full buildout. Consequently it is critical that we make the most strategic investments with each project and program along the way and progressively create a safer, better connected system. Without a clear strategy and approach to

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

- City Council
Resolution 25534

implementation, Seattle runs the risk of creating a series of well-intentioned but disconnected bicycle facility segments. Without an implementation plan to guide investments over the next several years, it will be difficult to gauge whether each project is one of the highest priorities and the most strategic to implement in the near term, as well as to track our overall progress towards meeting BMP goals.

Resolution 31515 states, "Successful implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan by 2035 will require increased prioritization for bicycle projects within SDOT's budget." This highlights the need for clear near-term priorities, as well as a strategy to fund them at a level commensurate with the 20-year time frame for BMP implementation. Specifically, the 3-5 year plan needs to be based on high enough funding levels to move assertively towards full BMP implementation. It also needs to include an approach to funding any key projects that are outside of SDOT's current financial capabilities.

Along with completion of this plan, we respectfully request that SDOT follow through on the other aspects of the adopting resolution as well. Two requirements of particular interest are (1) for SDOT to provide regular progress updates to SBAB and Council, and (2) for SDOT to complete an annual progress report to Council each spring on the prior year's activities after review and endorsement by SBAB. These requirements can best be met by formalizing SBAB's role as an oversight board for BMP implementation, with responsibilities and opportunities for monitoring SDOT's budget, work plan, progress towards goals, and overall plan implementation. We look forward to playing this role.

As a new SDOT Director nears confirmation, it is especially timely to finalize the BMP implementation plan and set a course for the next several years of building out Seattle's bicycle facility network and related programming. Thank you for your consideration of this, and for ensuring the requirements stated under Resolution 31515 of SDOT are fully met.

Sincerely,



Clint Loper
SBAB Co-Chair
2013-14



Jessica Szilag
SBAB Co-Chair
2013-14



Jeff Aken
Incoming SBAB Co-Chair
2014-15



Krist Rennebohm-Franz
Incoming SBAB Co-Chair
2014-15

cc: Members of Seattle City Council Transportation Committee
Mayor Edward Murray, City of Seattle
Scott Kubly, Acting Director, Seattle Department of Transportation