



January 3, 2024

To: Nathan Gregory, Director of Planning and Real Estate

From: Gordon Clowers, Seattle Dept. of Construction and Inspections (SDCI)  
Sarah Spicer, Seattle Dept. of Transportation  
Ellie Smith, Seattle Dept. of Transportation

Dear Nathan,

We appreciate that Seattle University has consistently updated and timely submitted an Annual Report over many years. We appreciate having a dialogue with you and look forward to continuing our relationship. The reports are a useful record of the institution's progress as it continues to grow and change.

We have reviewed your report for FY 2023 and find it to be thorough, but have the following comments and questions.

### **SDCI**

1. SDCI thanks you for your efforts in keeping this report updated with timely information on the variety of activities happening at the campus.
2. Gordon notes that most of the transportation-related strategies remained the same or nearly so, and that trends supporting telework and electronic attendance of classes continued. He appreciates that the observed drive-alone rate continued to meet the goals. Keep up the good work.
3. Gordon looked at the staff's commuting mode choice trends. He sees that trends of greater telework continued. He also observed that Monday and Friday commuting patterns had lower drive-alone rates than other weekdays, which should help limit traffic congestion on those days.
4. Gordon echoes SDOT's transportation related comments and interests in receiving requested information, as noted below.

### **SDOT**

Please see the following SDOT comments, for more discussion going forward.

5. Page 3. DAR for employees. SDOT appreciates your participation in the 2022 Commute Survey and for securing an adequate response rate for your employee population. Congratulations for meeting your drive-alone rate goal for your employee population (33% performance compared to 35% goal) for the first time in the life of this MIMP. SDOT



appreciates Seattle University's successful DAR reduction from 2019/2020's rate of 39% DAR; it appears much of the shift in commuting behavior can be accounted for by the increase in remote work.

6. Page 3. DAR for students. SDOT requested response to a letter dated April 26, 2023 about the student population's inclusion in the 2022 Commute Survey. This Annual Report indicates a separate survey was completed for students in March 2023. Thank you for documenting this in the Annual Report, but please provide more specifics. Would it be possible to include a breakdown by population group, similar to what is outlined on page 164 of the MIMP (image below)?

Percentage of Campus Population & SOV Commuting Percentages

Group	1995			2001			2007		
	Population	% SOV	SOV Population	Population	% SOV	SOV Population	Population	% SOV	SOV Population
Faculty	405	67%	271	580	59%	342	1,322	39%	516
Staff	505	48%	242	500	42%	210			
Commuter Students	4,375	63%	2,756	4,256	54%	2,298	5,800	50%	2,900
Resident Students	820	0%	0	1,467	0%	0	1,728	0%	0
Totals	6,105	53%	3,269	6,803	42%	2,850	8,850	39%	3,416

Please provide data to SDOT for our reference, and so we can understand how you reached the blended overall campus rate of 30.2%. Since each population has access to different transportation services, it is useful to see how that relates to different population's DAR performance.

7. Page 3. When did the flex work program begin? SDOT would be curious to understand if this formal policy change was in place during the 2022 Commute Survey (fall 2022), when 27% reported working remotely. The upcoming 2024 Commute Survey will allow us to compare commute patterns over time.
8. Page 13. IAC involvement. Does Seattle University provide the IAC with Commute Survey Results or access to the Annual Report?
9. Page 18. Campus-wide DAR. SDOT would be interested in understanding what drove the increase in campus-wide DAR from 21.8% in 2019/2020 to 30.2% in 2022, especially since the employee rate seemed to decrease from 39% to 33%. We look forward to seeing the student population report from Spring 2023 to better understand these trends and any relevant shifts in mode.
10. Page 19. Transit #1b. Parking costs. SDOT believes your choice to increase parking rates will support your overall goals for reducing drive-alone to campus. Does the average daily SOV parking rate discussed on Page 19 apply to both students and employees? Please provide more details or additional clarity on the parking rates for employees, which should also be considered in TMP element #4 from the MIMP (page 165).
11. Page 20. Transit #1d. Clarify role of carshare. Can you provide specifics in terms of how you support carshare? Are there designated spaces on campus for carshare vehicles? It could be valuable to provide dedicated carshare opportunities on campus to support students who are – or seek to be – car-free. The TMP calls for subsidies, so please describe the level of support provided.

Also worth noting this section should be about car share (services such as GIG, Zipcar, Getaround, etc.), as opposed to ride share, which seems to be discussed here.

12. Page 20. Transit #2a. Bus-It program. Do you have numbers on participation in the Bus-It Program before it was discontinued, and participation in the \$99 ORCA card option? Do you believe this alternative program is serving a similar purpose to the Bus-It Program, based on who is using it and the amount of uptake?
13. Page 21. Transit #2d. Costs of transit pass programs. Has the passage of Move Ahead Washington and its inclusion of people up to 19 years old in free transit pass programs impacted the financials of transit pass subsidies among your student population?
14. Page 25. HOV #1c. What is the rationale for providing 5 complimentary SOV parking days per month to employees who take the ORCA deduction? And why is not consistent with the originally implemented 2 complimentary SOV parking days for bike commuters (page 33)?
15. Page 27. HOV #2b. Working with other institutions for van-share ride-matching. Do you have an anticipated date for when this may be undertaken as a strategy in the future?
16. Page 33: Bicycling #2b. Is there any discussion on reinstating the SOV parking passes for bike commuters following the 2020 discontinuation?
17. Page 33: Bicycling #2d. Is there any discussion on providing additional incentives to bike commuters, in the form of bike shop discounts or periodic drawings for prizes, as suggested in the TMP?
18. Page 36: Pedestrian #2b. Is there any discussion on reinstating the SOV parking passes for walking commuters following the 2020 discontinuation?
19. Page 40. Marketing #6. Since you have not executed a monthly marketing campaign as outlined by your TMP, how do you know that students and employees are fully aware of transportation options available to them? Do you ask this question in any survey?
20. Page 42. Marketing #8. What about promoting other options besides bikes? Have you explored partnerships with Metro, Commute Seattle, etc.? I would imagine the future Rapid Ride opening would be a great opportunity to expand awareness about transit options to/from the campus.
21. Page 45. Policies #3. Similar to previous comment on carshare, having dedicated carshare spaces on campus may allow residential students to go car-free, and can support employees who commute via alternative modes but may need to take meetings off-site during the day.
22. Page 48. Parking #1b. This would be a good opportunity to speak to carshare approach to influence car use behavior among resident students. Is this something that can be subsidized (per your TMP) to encourage the reduction of car ownership on campus?
23. Page 51. Parking #3b. Is this information something that is centrally developed and shared out with individual Departments?

24. SDOT commends SU for exceeding their drive-alone requirement of 35% by over 10%, including a reduction of 8% since 2018.
25. Page 23: SDOT requests information on current on-campus parking utilization, especially considering the below market-rate monthly fee for a parking space of only \$89.
26. Pages 23 and 38: Capitol Hill Link light rail and the First Hill Streetcar should not be labeled as ride-share options, as they are public transportation options.
27. Page 35: SDOT commends SU for providing more bike parking spaces than demand requires. To capitalize on the increase in bike parking and bike commuting, does SU plan on pursuing additional incentives or programming to further growth of bicycling mode share?
28. We realize that the timing of the Annual Report did not align well with the receipt of results from the 2022 Commute Trip Reduction Survey. We appreciate your efforts in administering the survey successfully, and look forward to future conversations on the results. SDOT expects that next year's annual report will comment on insights from the 2022 survey to identify opportunities, challenges, and future pathways for improved performance.
29. In the event that Seattle University undertakes a Master Plan update, SDOT would be interested in exploring alternatives to subsidizing RPZ permit fees.

For coordination with SDOT, please e-mail Sarah Spicer and Ellie Smith (@seattle.gov).

Sincerely,

<signed>

Gordon Clowers

<signed>

Sarah Spicer

cc: Ellie Smith, SDOT  
Nelson Pesigan, DON  
Dipti Garg, DON