

July 20, 2021 Meeting - Seattle Freight Advisory Board

Topics covered included: POAG Outcomes, Truck Rodeo, Membership Applications Open

This meeting was held: July 20, 2021, 9:00-10:15 a.m., via Webex

Board Members: Jeanne Acutanza, Geri Poor, Mike Elliott, Warren Aakervik, Pat Cohn, John Persak

Public: Thomas Noyes, Mick Schultz, Ryan Packer, Christine Wolf, Eugene Wasserman

Staff: Christopher Eaves, Jonathan Lewis, Susan McLaughlin, Erin Harris, Cass Magnuski

Attending: 16 (All via Webex)

INTRODUCTIONS

Jeanne Acutanza: Let's go to public comment. Eugene, you said you have a comment, and then any other comments and updates from the board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Eugene Wasserman: Some of you have been involved in this issue with me. SDOT is planning to take 25 percent to 50 percent of the lanes of Leary Way and convert it to 24/7 bus routes for Route 40, which doesn't actually run that many buses. And the Route 40 is basically a bus route to the Amazon South Lake Union area. In spite of the fact that Leary Way is a freight route in the freight plan that all of us have worked on, and the many different policies, including the comprehensive plan about priorities of freight. SDOT has chosen -- and we raised all of these objections in a letter -- they decided that they get to decide who has priority and they decided that the Route 40 gets priority over freight, which we feel negates our planning and all of the documents we have done with SDOT. We just got the letter yesterday, otherwise I'd have a written response. But we're not happy with it, and it shows that SDOT is not very supportive of freight. We're considered an afterthought, something to be mitigated after they have already taken lanes away. We've also tried to look at some of the data they did, and so far, are waiting for them. It's been about eight weeks since we asked for it. They don't feel like delaying things. They want to go to 35 percent immediately, even though they can't even tell you how much delay time they are inducing. But anyhow, this is basically saying that other modes are far more important than freight. This goes through the heart of our industrial district. So, I just wanted you to know about it. We're not happy about it, and we'll be raising issues and would like to come to your board about it. Sam Zimbabwe did answer our letter, so I appreciate that. It's pretty clear where SDOT is. I

don't see any priority for freight in the work, and that includes the West Marginal Way project. All they did was delay it for three years. So, freight, I don't think, is a matter of not that much priority for them.

Jeanne Acutanza: Thanks, Eugene. I shared the response we got from West Marginal Way, which just stated that they're going to delay any addition of a bike lane or taking of a freight lane until a detour is done for West Marginal Way, which is expected to be next summer. So, you'll see the bike lanes implemented next summer. Any other public comments? Any other board updates? Do you guys have any announcements or updates? Okay. So, take it away, Chris. It's not Christine Alar. Is it Jonathan Lewis?

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April and May Minutes approved

PRESENTATION: POAG OUTCOMES

NOTE: Link provided for information only – this was not part of the presentation [Policy and Operations Advisory Group - Transportation | seattle.gov](https://www.seattle.gov/transportation/policy-and-operations-advisory-group)

Jonathan Lewis: An update on the Modal Integration Policy Framework and next steps

Our challenge comes when we have multiple modal functions in the same corridor. So, if the right-of-way can fit the priorities, it's about some of the trade-offs, how things should fit, but really the missing policy piece is when the right-of-way won't fit everything.

Complete Streets process, we adopted the ordinance in 2007. There is a checklist and a steering committee, and of course, Streets Illustrated, our right-of-way improvement manual. Susan McLaughlin has spearheaded much of that work helping to advance the way in which we develop and refine our Complete Streets process for the city.

Geri Poor and Warren Aakervik represented the freight group on the POAG board, and they underscored that Major Truck Streets were critical as well as delivery access, that final 50 feet question of where the vehicles can load, and how to get to those loading spots, especially in the urban villages where right-of-way is very precious.

So, urban villages first focus is on prioritizing the pedestrian space, and then the mix first prioritize the freight network and making sure that the freight network meets its standards. And then, in those in-between areas, prioritizes transit, and then what gets a lot of attention are the critical connections on the bike network, identifying a subset of the BMP network. And those areas would get prioritized.

We are developing policy guidance for transit and freight lanes, helping connect project developers with that analysis that we did, and helping connect our community conversations about projects to our policy framework.

Critical access needs include short term loading zones, and we are creating a more systematic process and finding design options to incorporate them where they make sense.

And then, these last two are the longer term, first is the city-wide transportation plan of looking at all four plans can come together to advance Complete Streets and also achieve some of our other City priorities. And then, as part of that, developing a people's streets and public spaces area for streets like Occidental, Bell, other special places in the community where pedestrians are prioritized

We also realized that if we wanted to look at the networks, we would need to have community engagement. How do we achieve an equitable transportation system/ How do we achieve Vision Zero, our planning goals? Livability goals? Some of this is in between a modal plan framework, so is there a way to pull those things together and build on this exceptionally excellent and substantive work?

A couple of other things that are coming up from a schedule perspective is the first is the comprehensive plan starts this winter. Also, our current transportation levy expires in 2024, so this process can tee up a conversation about our next our next transportation package

Susan McLaughlin: Right now, we often have to compromise facilities to cram them into limited rights-of-way. So, we're really thinking about how we make great streets function for all modes and not be so dogmatic about a singular mode but thinking about it more integrated and holistically.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Geri Poor: What is the Critical Bike Connections Map. As that is developed, each board needs to review and comment on it.

Jonathan Lewis: It's a map that tries to identify where there are not analogous alternatives for the bikes. These are the sections that we might study, three or four more streets that we might look at to identify where the final bike route should go

John Persak:

- How are bike lanes prioritized and constructed?
- How is equity evaluated?

There are differing levels of access to neighborhoods especially in the south end of Seattle. That is a years-long problem. I think that needs to be addressed in any

conversation about revising policy-related Complete Streets. Because even if construction stopped in the north entirely, it would take years for the south end to catch up. So, I think that's a huge issue that needs to be addressed.

There is a question of ability and disability with the bike master plan, as well. I believe that neighborhoods where there are children and elderly people and other folks who need access to City services need to be prioritized over building bike lanes on freight routes where there is no demand, and where the most able-bodied, experienced bike riders are only going to benefit. I think that's egregiously inequitable in terms of disability rights. I have raised this issue with Bradley Topol. The maritime trades raised this issue directly with SDOT in their letter. And I still don't see this issue being addressed at all. I think we need to be honest about the deficiencies and the implementation in the conversation leading up to this point around these issues.

Second is there a way to highlight the fact that a five-lane road, say, between the International District and Georgetown is a lot different than a five-lane road between a Port and an interstate? Even though they have the same physical constraints, there are obviously different demands for those places. So, I'm wondering if there is a way to really recognize and highlight those differences, because I think it's important.

Susan McLaughlin: Thanks, John, for your comments, first off. I want to let you know that as part of the first phase of this work, we did look through a racial equity lens, in which we did an assessment of our work. We did a robust engagement process to create those modal plans, but those conversations were based, typically, on one mode. So, really, I think the paradigm shift moving forward is talking to communities about their mobility needs generally. The challenge is network integrity, and I'm sure that as a freight board, you can appreciate that, as well. How do we create a network while still being responsive to community needs?

Second, in terms of land use context, John, you brought up a five-lane road through the CID versus a five-lane road through the MIC or the MID. You're absolutely right. This initial phase of policies really leaned on land use context. As you heard from Jonathan Lewis, a lot of our policies in terms of how to resolve modal conflicts with the structure we have now, based on our four independent modal plans and how to fit them within existing rights-of-way, is those decisions and policies are based on land use context.

Geri Poor: First of all, Jonathan and Susan, and also Warren, I wanted to say the POAG process that we went through over the last year was so important and so valuable as a great way for us to hear one another among the different groups, and it made it clear how hard your work is. So, I wanted to preface my comments with that.

One thing that you heard me raise that I will raise again here in front of the freight board is how to address those connecting routes for MICs, which might in fact go through an urban center or through areas that aren't mixed, like SR 99 and Boren, and some of the

major arterials in the City. I wanted to remind you that on those you talked about the need to balance and the need to use those as balancing opportunities. And I think that you said you will go with the Streets Illustrated in the end. That's my first question, about connecting corridors.

Also I've had a long-standing questions since SR99 was diverted from the viaduct to a tunnel. I'm wondering when the freight map and the Streets Illustrated will get updated to reflect the new freight routes, and specifically, that's a concern up at the north portal, where there's a lot of development going on. The streets in this redeveloped area need to be appropriately represented on the current city working documents.

My third question is a comment. I would like to show a range of trucks on the Freight Master Plan so people see there is a range of goods movement and it is not just about container trucks.

So, if you could give me feedback on the first and second questions, the connecting corridors, and then updates reflecting SR 99?

Susan McLaughlin: We are doing two updates to Streets Illustrated. In 2021 we're making sure the web site is functioning the way it should be. These kinds of updates don't require a new director's role, but we're documenting all of those edits.

In 2022 we'll perform a five-year update and anticipate engaging the boards and commissions, as we did with the last Streets Illustrated update, and to pull a group together similar to POAG. What I mean is an interdisciplinary group that can advocate for modal facilities independently, and think how they can come together. Chris Eaves and I will connect with you on updates to the major truck streets and think about what needs to change. Because we use that as a base layer. When we were making our Streets Illustrated street type assignments, factoring into that assumption and then see if we need to change the street typologies on any particular street segments will be critical. And it will be critical for not only Streets Illustrated, but critical also for this work, the City-wide transportation plan moving forward.

Understanding whether this is a clean-up under. Under our existing director, we were allowed to do tweaks that don't affect policy. Let's have an offline conversation to see if that fits with the 2021 update, minor update, or in 2022. It sounds pretty minor, so we can talk about that. (follow up for off-line conversation?)

Jonathan Lewis: Regarding connectivity, I think the Complete Streets show the standard freight routes, right. The goal is always there would still be a standard freight lane and turning radii on these connecting routes. I don't know if anything is sacrosanct on these design standards, but that is in the realm where we really try to get that done. As we advance the transit and freight lane policies, we will be looking at opportunities in those in-between areas to build our transit lane network and find opportunities for freight

to share, perhaps by time of day and the BAT option where we get freight and delivery access off peak when transit doesn't need it.

Susan McLaughlin: This first phase of work was really around dimensions and right-of-way width. The operational angle on these issues is big. So, when we're talking about delay to freight, or delay to transit, based on right-of-way allocation, that still doesn't have the policy guidance that we may want at this stage. It is necessary, but it's not something that we tackled in the first phase of work. This really is thinking about right-of-way allocation as it relates to dimensional standards.

Warren Aakervik: My main question is about Streets Illustrated in Section 3.1.1 freight. It states that all streets in this design manual are for a standard designed vehicle SU30 42-foot turning radius. And then further on -- and I think everybody doesn't read further on -- it says: "Arterials on the freight network are designed for the common large trucks." And I think you need to define that as WB67s. I'm really happy to hear that we're going to review and look over Streets Illustrated, because the dimensional size to get on the major freight streets, and to get into the industrial areas used to only look at big trucks, not little trucks which can be 5 to 1 to get the same goods delivered. So, Streets Illustrated has never really had to go back and look at it. I'm glad we're looking at it now, because I think it's really important. So, I'm happy to hear that. Thank you.

Eugene Wasserman: No, what they're trying to work on is the problem. The set-up now is that people at SDOT get to decide the priorities when they do a project, not in advance. And that creates problems for all of us, too. They have been in the BINMIC area for a long time, and they make plans based on existing freight routes. And then SDOT gets to decide to change all of that without consulting anyone, and without any input from the Council or Labor. We would like to see this move ahead. We've advocated for 10 or 15 years, and we haven't seen anything done. So, I'm glad to see they're moving on it.

Jeanne Acutanza: Thanks, Eugene. I think there are a couple of comments from me. With the Streets Illustrated comments that I've heard in the past, we are concerned that there is a design process which does not start with that modal overlay. When they started on, for example, West Marginal Way, which is a major truck street there should have been a checklist that said this is a freight street. Start by looking at the freight needs. So, that's just one. The other question I have is when you look at equity, I think there are things like county census maps (like EJ Screen). You can pull that up and it says the poor people live here. It's a great tool and includes all of the census data, but it doesn't talk about where people work. And one of the equity questions that I think is really important is these industrial areas, major industrial centers, employ people without a college education, but with a family wage.

TRUCK RODEO

Geri Poor: So, we have talking among ourselves here, about the importance of good coordination with bicyclists and freight, and I'm hearing that conversation in other places also. I have had conversations with Warren and Jeanne and Chris, and they also are hearing this. So, I took it upon myself just to capture some notes in one place and wanted to hear a discussion among us. What I have prepared here is the idea of a Truck Rodeo with a Bike Rodeo, so a place where trucks and bikes can learn to work together. This is brainstorming for this project. This is why Mick Schultz is here.

Ideas:

Proposing Georgetown Campus of SSC

Previously a truck driver offered rides so others could get a moving perspective. The Campus size may preclude this.

Consider a weekend day to draw more family/casual riders – September/October

Possible participation from WSDOT – Thomas Noyes

Chalk out Rear wheel turning radii and stopping sight distance – make stopping sight distance interactive

Videos and a web page to archive them

 Narrate a video from a truck driver's perspective

Take contemporaneous video of the event

There is a 2013 video of the truck rodeo

Port can revamp the 2013 safety brochure

Use a truck to allow people to experience the blind zones – set bicycles in the zones

AUGUST AGENDA

ADJOURNMENT