



School Traffic Safety Committee

March 15, 2024

To: Mayor Harrell

City Council

We are writing to express support for a transportation levy package that makes it safe for students and families to walk and roll to school. This is fundamental to building strong communities and a city that is vibrant and desirable.

Transportation funding in Seattle has historically been focused on the movement of cars. There is an extensive backlog of missing sidewalks, missing arterial and highway crossings, and missing traffic controls that would create the physical environment that makes it safe and pleasant for not just students, but all residents and voters to move around our neighborhoods. A strong, multi-model levy would be a worthy legacy. Every barrier to Safe Routes to School that falls is a worthy ribbon-cutting celebration.

The death tolls of Seattle arterials* show the need for large budget investment in redesigning our physical infrastructure. Elementary school students cross Aurora Ave N and Rainier Ave S; we can and need to make this a non-event in a kindergartener's day, as opposed to a parent's nightmare that requires the whole family to restructure their lives to walk or roll these 200 feet.

The mobility for middle and high school students that the free youth transit provides has been a great benefit for traffic movement and safety in school zones. But we need sidewalk space and bus infrastructure at schools. Similarly, we need to keep investing in and building bike routes that work for all ages and abilities. School students are still developing their risk assessment skills and paint isn't enough.

The Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee was created in 1975 to connect the pieces of the mosaic of entities involved in creating and providing safe routes to school. The Committee includes representatives of public agencies and volunteer community members. This letter is on behalf of the volunteer members. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve.

*Over the last 5 years:

Aurora Ave N – 22 people killed

MLK Jr Way S – 13 people killed

4th Ave S – 11 people killed

Rainier Ave S – 10 people killed

Lake City Way – 5 people killed

Sincerely,

Ryan Baum

Noa Guter, chair

Marylin Friman

Margaret McCauley

Kelsy Rote

Mary Ellen Russel