



City of Seattle

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Seattle
Freight
Advisory
Board

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Re: Streets Illustrated, Right of Way Improvements Manual Updated Comments

This letter reflects the comments of the Seattle Freight Advisory Board (SFAB) related to the July 28, 2017 draft final version of Streets Illustrated, the 10-year Update of the Right of Way Improvements Manual (ROWIM). Thank you for the information and insight your staff has provided on this topic, and for incorporating and addressing many of SFAB’s previously submitted comments. This letter provides our comments on this final document and conveys the SFAB’s continuing interest in preserving a transportation system that supports freight and the region’s economy. Recognizing that the City is close to adopting the final version of the manual, we offer the following comments:

Guidance and Standards

The document does provide discussion of guidance and standards. Our goal is to promote safety for all transportation modes while maintaining and improving a transportation system that will safely coexist with trucks - most importantly, on the designated freight network. That said, we recommend defining this preferential design hierarchy as:

- First, adhering to street classification (state and City),
- Second, to modal system plans,
- Third to the street types as defined in Streets Illustrated.

Establishing this hierarchy for design is critical when considering all the different roadway designations. To emphasize this, on page 63 under design vehicle it would be appropriate to define a larger vehicle. We suggest after stating “a larger vehicle using a site” there be a parenthetical statement such as a (WB-67 on Major Truck Streets/Industrial Access) and a link to those design standards.

Minor Industrial Access Streets

Table 1 indicates that arterials on the freight network (Major and Minor Freight Access and First and Last Mile connectors) in the Industrial Centers cannot be designated as Minor Industrial Access Streets. The Board agrees with this approach. Please correct both the interactive map (which appears coded to show all First and Last Mile Connectors as Minor

The Seattle Freight Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City in development of a functional and efficient freight system and on all matters related to freight and the impact that actions by the City may have upon the freight environment.

City Council Resolution 31243

Industrial Access Streets,) and the description of the Minor Industrial Access Streets street type accordingly. In the street type description, Klickitat Avenue SW, which is a First and Last Mile Connector, appears to be noted as a Minor Industrial Access. First and Last mile connectors carry large volumes of trucks.

We are also concerned that the language describing Minor Industrial Streets (page 49) prescribes a *maximum* travelway width of 22'. This is not appropriate for streets in industrial areas that serve freight-dependent businesses. Since this street type serves as an industrial access street, the travelway width requirement should be restated as a *minimum* of 22'. Also, this description appears to have a broken link under number 1 Freight (it goes to drainage).

Project Focus

We continue to be concerned that the draft final maintains its focus on individual projects, without defined consideration of the project's impact on critical freight routes with many different street types. Please consider adding a requirement for analysis for projects on the Freight Network that address this issue. We recommend that analysis include classification counts, and an evaluation of the role of the street (or alley) on which the project is located to provide a viable freight corridor serving critical freight origins and destinations. Due to the geometric requirements of large trucks (and busses,) this is critical for these modes.

Downtown Exclusion Zone

The downtown exclusion zone allows truck loading and unloading in off hours but it should be noted that small trucks are permitted in downtown and load from available loading zones. The section under Downtown suggests that Curb Lane/Flex Zone not be used for loading and that alleys are available for loading. The City may wish to consider the Final 50' Research, which was a collaboration with the City and University of Washington, that notes the difficulties with using alleys for serving downtown buildings. With the explosive growth in e-commerce, we recommend preserving on-street load zones, specifically for smaller trucks that are not excluded from downtown during the day. Notably in the city response to Freight Board comments with Figure 5, the example of the SU 30 turn radius using a 20' curb return radius also requires set back stop bars. Set back stop bars do not exist throughout the downtown nor in other urban villages in this way.

Outside of downtown alleys often serve a primary function for deliveries and freight access. As alleys are considered, there should be discussion within streets illustrated under the section or Commercial Alleys to consider needs with larger vehicles such as WB 67 where use would warrant consideration.

Paving Programs

We understand that Streets Illustrated will serve as a resource to developers and capital project staff in SDOT, SPU, SCL and others. Specifically, for paving projects, we are concerned that the map may not clearly convey intent to designers/developers as to following modal classification such as Major Truck Street, when developing striping plans, even within the industrial areas.

Deviation Process

We are very interested in seeing how the deviation process is implemented, especially on streets with multiple modal designations overlapping. We would encourage some monitoring and review as the new manual is implemented and will be providing feedback from the freight perspective.

Freight Advisory Board Consultation

Finally, in the 7/28/17 response letter to the freight community, your staff is recommending to the Freight Advisory Board that it reach out to project managers whenever a project requests a deviation from the standard. We remain concerned that even projects that do meet standards, but have an impact on the functionality of the designated Freight Network (for example restriping projects, or intersection treatments favoring other modes), may be implemented without the Board's comment and advice, to the detriment of freight mobility. A recent example is a repaving project on Holman Road that also rechanneled the road, planted trees, and moved crosswalks. These changes not only had an impact on freight mobility, they also had potential impacts on the safety of pedestrians. Proactively informing the Board about all projects affecting the Freight Network, should be standard practice for City capital and development projects and programs so that it can decide whether its input is needed.

Thank you for addressing our many comments. We welcome and opportunity for a demonstration and look forward to seeing Streets Illustrated in action.

Sincerely,



Johan Hellman
Co-Chair, Seattle Freight Advisory Board



Hal B.H. Cooper Jr.,
Co-Chair, Seattle Freight Advisory Board