Seattle Department of Transportation

City of Seattle
Policy & Operations Advisory Group

POAG Meeting Summary — July 2020 (Meeting #2)

Thursday, July 23, 2020
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Electronic Meeting via WebEx Events

Pedestrian Signal Policy

- SDOT staff from Transportation Operations, Dusty Rasmussen and Laura Wojcicki, provided an overview of the key components of the Pedestrian Signal Policy: maximum cycle length, pedestrian crossing time, pedestrian actuation, and implementation.
- Comments and questions from POAG members are summarized below. Several questions were responded to during the discussion. SDOT will take the questions and comments into consideration as the signal policies are revised.
    - Maximum cycle length
        - Rather than use Manufacturing/Industrial Centers for signal timing considerations, use major truck streets. Focus on how grades and signal operations affect trucks needing to stop and start frequently, creating more pollution.
        - Reconsider the application of the policy to only urban centers and hub urban villages. Instead, implement citywide and apply exceptions where it makes sense.
        - How did you come up with the maximum cycle length figures when the guidelines from NACTO suggest 60-90 seconds is typically recommended?
        - Suggest setting short cycle lengths as the norm and make long cycle lengths the exceptions.
        - Is cycle length affected by proximity to transit stops?
        - Hearing the need for a modal hierarchy.
    - Pedestrian crossing time
        - Do you make adjustments for pedestrian timing based on seasonal changes (change in daylight and weather)?
        - Add more information to the policy, including a consideration for whether the walk signal can take up the maximum amount of time it can in the green cycle (before the flashing don't walk signal comes on).
        - Can a pedestrian initiate a walk signal after the cycle has started so they don't have to wait for another cycle?

        - To what degree are all-way crossings considered in maintaining balance between pedestrians and cars?
        - Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs):
            - For people who are blind, without an auditory cue, they won't know to cross during the leading interval.
            - Drivers treat LPIs as a free right turn. What steps does SDOT take to ensure the LPIs aren't taken over by vehicles who see it as an opportunity to move with no vehicle conflicts?
    - Pedestrian actuation
        - Why does it have to be assumed that corridors need to be coordinated? For instance, on Rainier, there aren't many opportunities to cross at a signal, and when you do, it takes a long time for the corridor to allow for that pedestrian crossing. Is there a way to speed up signal actuation along Rainier?
        - For people who are deaf-blind, the actuation needs to have some sort of vibrating component to indicating crossing time.
    - Implementation
        - After SDOT has created a design and finished construction in a neighborhood, do the designers then move through the intersection in the various modes? It would be great to get an official policy of having all designers of a project revisit their completed infrastructure as various personas: biking, wheeling, walking, running, driving (in buses, freight, and SOV).
        - How is data collected and used when trying to balance different modes? What does the data tell you versus the feedback you get from actual transit users? What is aligned between the two and what is not?
    - Other
        - This is about creating a policy for the hierarchical needs of the treatment of an intersection, grouped by the type of intersection (truck route, density of neighborhood, proximity to community asset). Can we start from sharing each of our priorities, then see how it applies in specific examples and what the possible trade-offs are?
        - Suggestions for the tables about tradeoffs:
            - It may make sense to look explicitly at impacts on blind and deaf-blind pedestrians, given that they are different from other pedestrians, or pedestrians with slower walking/rolling speeds (i.e., so crossing time is not the only factor for safety).
            - The table doesn't have enough contextual information, like if it is on a minor or major truck street or traffic volumes.
        - How do you account for climbing curbs on Major truck street intersections?
        - How do you take into account induced demand for all of these modes in the model? The longer people have to wait, the less likely they will be to use that mode.

Modal Integration

- SDOT staff from Policy & Planning, Jonathan Lewis and Susan McLaughlin, provided an overview of the body of work related to modal integration that will be the focus of future meetings.