



Casey Gifford, Co-Chair
Emily Paine, Co-Chair
Amanda Barnett, Vice-Chair
Sarah Margeson, Secretary
Rich Brown
Alexander Lew
Claudia Lewis
Don Brubeck
Steve Kennedy
Adam Bartz
Puja Shaw

August 24, 2018

To: Peter Rogoff, CEO, Sound Transit
Genesee Adkins, Interim Director SDOT
Don Billen, ED Planning, Environment, & Project Development, Sound Transit

Re: **SODO Trail Preservation – Route Alignment SODO to West Seattle**

As the route selection and planning proceed, **we advise Sound Transit and the City of Seattle to preserve the SODO E-3 Busway Trail.**

The Level 1 route option currently proposed poses a significant impact upon existing and planned Citywide bicycle and freight routes through SODO. This multi-use trail, along with the planned improvements to East Marginal Way S on the other side of the railroad tracks, is essential to a providing local access to the SODO station that safety separates pedestrian and bike traffic from truck and train traffic.

Station access is a key to successful utilization of Link light rail. Safe, convenient access by bicycle will help make the SODO station useful for the more than 50,000 people commuting to work in the Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center. As a 2012 multi-modal stakeholder commission on transportation in the Duwamish MIC noted, “If you are willing to carpool, vanpool, or ride a bike, it is possible to far extend the range of available bus and light-rail service.”¹ The Duwamish MIC is one of Seattle’s biggest employment centers. It includes industrial and freight-related industries, and major employers close to the SODO station like the Seattle School District headquarters and the Starbucks corporate headquarters. The area is not served well by bus transit. Most sidewalks are in poor condition or do not exist. Walking distances from the station exceed what most people will tolerate. Many people work swing shift and night shift. Use of bicycles, including bike share bikes, can extend the SODO station walkshed considerably, with minimal public investment compared to local bus transit, and far less environmental impact than the current conditions that force many to drive to work alone.

The Duwamish MIC is by design an area that gives priority to freight movement. It is the intermodal freight transfer point for our deep-water seaport. Its transportation

¹ Duwamish Transportation Management Association. StreetSmart - Alternative to Drive-Alone Commuting in the Duwamish (c. 2012)

The Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the city on matters related to bicycling, and the impact which actions by the city may have upon bicycling; and shall have the opportunity to contribute to all aspects of the city's planning processes insofar as they relate to bicycling.

- City Council
Resolution 25534



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efficiency is essential to the region's economic vitality. However, the priority for movement of ships, large trucks, and trains presents safety risks, especially for people on bikes. Separated off-street paths or solid-barrier-protected bike lanes are vital to separate bike traffic from heavy truck traffic for the major routes through SODO and to the SODO station.

The SODO Busway trail currently meets the safety and mobility goals of the Bicycle Master Plan and the Freight Master Plan. Completing the trail from South Forest to South Spokane Street was the second recommendation for SODO of the Street Smart Report in 2012. Incorporated into the Bicycle Master Plan in 2014 and reflected in the current Implementation Plan. An equivalent replacement would be exceedingly difficult, even if funding could be secured. The nearby avenues are designated Major Truck Streets with heavy volumes of vehicle traffic, including heavy trucks; and function as alternate routes from I-5; or, they are unpaved, severely potholed, and discontinuous. They serve industrial uses with many driveway railroad tracks, and intersection and rail crossing conflicts between freight movement and bike traffic.

People commuting to and through SODO rely on the SODO Busway Trail. Preserving it benefits pedestrians, cyclists, light rail riders, freight mobility, and Seattle's progress in meeting goals for congestion relief, climate action, public health, and equitable access to transportation and healthy air quality.

Sincerely,

Casey Gifford
Co-Chair

Emily Paine
Co-Chair

Amanda Barnett
Vice Chair

Sarah Margeson
Secretary

Cc: Ahmed Darrat, Transportation Policy Advisor, Office of Mayor
Bruce Harrell, President, Seattle City Council
Lisa Herbold, Chair Civil Rights, Utilities, Econ Dev, Seattle City Council
Mike O'Brien, Chair Sustainability & Transportation, Seattle City Council
Rob Johnson, Chair Planning, Land Use, & Zoning, Seattle City Council
Serena Lehman, Sr. Transportation Manager, SDOT

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