

Seattle Transportation Levy Oversight Committee (LOC) Meeting

Date/Time: Tuesday, April 7, 5-7pm

Location: In-person at Seattle City Hall Room 370 & Online

Members Present:

- Jack Brand
- Lynda Firey-Oldroyd
- Chase Kitchen
- Kaid Ni Ray-Tipton
- Jack Whisner
- Nafiso Samatar
- Geri Poor
- Zach Burton
- Tyler Vasquez
- Rafi Ronquillo
- Steve Pumphrey
- Harrison Jerome
- Lisa Bogardus
- Wes Mills
- Councilmember Rob Saka - delegate Brendan Kolding
- Saroja Reddy, City Budget Office Director, delegate
- **Members Absent:** Timothy Chang, Lucy Sloman

Guests:

- **SDOT:** Serena Lehman, Meghan Shepard, Katie Olsen, Alex King, Kalen Carney, Chris Godwin, Baker Council, Bill LaBorde
- **Members of the public:** Lawrence Guan, Joe Jackson, Sean Weeks, Trenton Blair

MEETING CALL TO ORDER: 5:00 PM

Welcome; Introductions

- Katie O.: Facilitated roll call for committee members.

Public Comment

- Katie O.: This is a time for any members of the public to give public comments if they wish.
 - No public comment.

Committee Business

- January to March meeting minutes approved.
- Modal Board Report-Outs
 - Tyler V. requested Wes, Rafi, and Zach provide 1 minute report-out on TAB and SBAB activities
 - Wes: Officer elections, meeting with SBAB. Looking into pedestrian elements of Delivery Plan, including sidewalks and access to transit.

- Rafi R.: Identifying priorities to report to SDOT. Compiling a list.
- Jack W.: Joint meeting is April 21.

2025 Annual Report Presentation

- Meghan S., Kalen C., and Serena L.: [Shared highlights of 2025 Levy delivery.](#)
- Meghan S.: Thank you to our Levy team and to the LOC for making this report possible and holding SDOT accountable to voter commitments.
- Serena L.: Introduced report basics and key performance milestones.
- Jack. W.: Isn't Beacon Ave S work complete?
 - Serena: A portion is; North Segment.
- Kalen C.: Explained financial data and context behind numbers. Provided context about how some program areas (such as new programs or programs with lots of capital projects) will have large, expected variance between spending and budget, whereas other already-established programs, like Safe Routes to School, spent in alignment with budget.
- Jack B.: If this underspend in certain areas is expected, what is the meaning of the 2025 budget number?
- Kalen C.: Levy collects roughly \$190M in each year. Budget reflect appropriation to programs.
- Jack W.: Several individual projects address several rows. Example in D2 we have S Henderson St and D5 is N and NE 130th St. You have lots of different programs addressing each project. How are those dollars allocated?
- Kalen C.: Each of the projects within the programs: we track which part of the project the program is working on. We know that the signal team paid for one signal, the curb ramps team paid for 5 curb ramps, for example. We code it based on what program is paying for it
- Jack W.: Improvements benefit different users.
- Serena L.: Most improvements benefit everyone in the space. Attachment A is broken into several different programs. We ask our programs to track very granularly.
- Jack W.: N 130th has money from several different rows.
- Serena: When we do a whole project we track all the different components.
- Tyler V.: Prior to 2025 Council presented a proviso to hold onto funds. You spent 43% of the \$177M dollars. Even if proviso didn't get lifted you still would have been safe to achieve goals. What story/aspect of the levy is SDOT moving forward? Why was proviso lifted if you didn't spend that money?
- Serena: Intent of proviso was intended to better understand what SDOT would be delivering, which we provided in 2026 Levy Delivery Plan. Goal to get it lifted to ensure we didn't have any limitations. Provisos and SLIs can have impacts in the future. Even if last year's didn't have impacts, we still had to prepare for hard decisions.
- Tyler V.: You spoke to variance between actual and budgeted. Is that in this document too?
- Meghan S.: Not explicitly, but there is detailed financial info and some broader explanations.
- Kalen C.: Described what happens when there is budget at the end of the year.
- Jack W.: You might have 3-4 colors of money treated in the same way. Project drawing from several pots of money to get things done.

- Geri P.: Having done some project management, wondering if you might program money so it's more realistic about how it will be spent. Are all the funds programmed equally year over year?
- Meghan S.: At this stage of the levy we do see a lot of carryforward.
- Tyler V.: Is all the money just sitting there not collecting interest?
- Kalen C.: It is collecting interest.
- Serena L.: Walked through program area by program area overviews.
- Street Maintenance and Modernization:
 - Jack W.: Are there unspent paving projects from last Levy, i.e. NW Market St.?
 - Serena L.: Several materials published during levy development and delivery. NW Market did appear on the paving list at one point, but we ended up not moving it forward and focus on transit specific streets. There are projects that were not done either due to reprioritization. Some reappear like Fauntleroy repaving, dependent on ST plans. We do have Market St as a potential paving project for evaluation.
 - Jack W.: Lots of streets are not in good shape but not on the list. But I was hoping they would show up on the list of shorter projects.
 - Serena L.: Transportation Funding Task Force (TFTF) will look at high value assets like pavement to identify potential funding solutions and make more progress.
 - Meghan S.: selection process behind paving corridors included consideration of where full reconstruction is needed, and where we can do maintenance to avoid full reconstruction in the future, and where we can also make improvements for other modes at the same time as we repave.
 - Jack W.: Other potential paving projects are shorter.
 - Serena L.: Paving spot can't do full repaving, but we're doing spot paving all over the city.
 - Tyler V.: Define spot improvement vs. Full repaving?
 - Meghan S.: Paving spot is 1-3 blocks of area – not a rebuild. We will bring paving team here as well.
 - Steve P.: Noticed a project on California where they repaved some pieces, but left one area untouched. Why?
 - Meghan S.: Tremendous need; we cannot do everything; could be utilities underneath, or could be other reasons why that couldn't be repaved.
- Bridges and Structures
- Transit Corridors and Connections
 - Jack W.: How are the 8 Transit Safety Officers being deployed?
 - Katie O.: 4 on buses, 4 in transit zones.
 - Jack W.: What's the project on 4th Ave S?
 - Meghan: Preparing for move of busway route.
 - Zach B.: Aurora Ave N installed to help relieve congestion. Are there updates on plans to make this a permanent design choice?
 - Katie O.: We will have Aurora Ave N team come to our next meeting.
 - Jack: Recommend we not use the term "bus lane". Use "BAT lane," as right turns are allowed.

- Tyler V.: With Attachment A and moving target of ST3, was this bucket formed with the agility to be flexible depending on ST3 plans, etc? What if there is carryforward on 4th Ave S, if this is no longer needed?
- Serena L.: If something outside of SDOT's purview gets changed that we are dependent on, we will daylight that to you and explain what is occurring. We know that depending on other partners can make us vulnerable. We built in language that helped us support connections to light rail but doesn't build the station.
- Jack W: There are plenty of places to spend the money on existing stations that need work too.
- Signals and Operations
 - Steve P.: Do RRFBs fall under pedestrian safety or signals and operations?
 - Serena L.: Crossing improvements, emerging out of pedestrian projects
 - Jack W: ITS work looks like it relates to Revive I-5.
 - Tyler V.: Update to MUTCD as a statewide initiative; when we have to redo signals, is that work operations or levy funded. I.e. if we have to update tons of intersections, what bucket will that be funded by?
 - Serena L.: MUCTD might make updates to WA laws. If we have to make unexpected updates to the signals, it will depend on the urgency, timeliness, volume of the work. Not knowing details, this could affect the levy, but it depends on specifics.
- Bicycle Safety
 - Steve P.: Do bike parking spots include the rectangles where the rideshare bikes are supposed to park?
 - Meghan S.: We have micromobility team. For those companies to be able to operate, they have to have permits and permit fees go towards those parking spots. Is levy paying for painted bike parking squares.
 - Kaid N. R.-T.: Last month there was a PBL on Airport Way that got moved in by a foot. For that work that has occur for the team to go back in and fix it - does this funding come out of this new levy budget?
 - Serena L.: That is a previous levy project. Current levy did not pay for that.
 - Rafi R.: Thanks for asking that question!
 - Serena L.: If that project had been delivered by this levy, this levy would have paid.
 - Jack W.: SDOT did not communicate with Metro, who moved a bus route to Airport Way S.
- People Streets and Public Spaces
 - Tyler V.: How is it working with SCL?
 - Serena L.: They are a key partner and we benefit from open communication.
- Climate and Resiliency
- Freight and Goods Movement
 - Jack W.: Funding for overpasses of crossings? Are we studying an interim solution to improve sidewalks?
 - Serena L.: Will get back to you on details. Lots of information will come from the Holgate study. Pedestrian access is a good thing to think about.
 - Tyler V.: Are there funds for research and development? I.e. lawsuit for bicyclist who put their tire in a streetcar track.

- Serena L.: We fund some programmatic work through our levy, like understanding what best improvement is. Levy doesn't fund explicitly, but staff go to conferences, webinars, etc. And always look to do better work.
- Jack W.: Because we have had two deaths on streetcar tracks, someone should have already googled this. Should have had rubber blocks.
- Meghan S.: VZ team in next meeting can share more!
- Good Governance and Equitable Implementation

Q&A/Discussion:

- Steve P.: SDOT produces good work, nice facilities like Delridge paving, center median, N Admiral, and Harbor Ave SW median. They were planted with nice trees and now I see weeds and overgrowth. I just see people with weed eaters. Who is planting plantings in first place, and who is doing maintenance work. How does the maintenance get planned in? Is it 2% cost, 10% cost, how often does it get done?
- Serena L.: For our projects, if we are doing work, there is a percentage of project set aside for the first year or two of maintenance.
- Jack W: Urban Forestry deals with this?
- Serena L.: Yes.
- Meghan S.: Number of landscaped areas have increased in a way that funding sources cannot keep up with.
- Steve P.: If you can't do it, take a different tack. On Harbor Ave SW you can't see the oncoming traffic due to high weeds.
- Tyler V.: Online folks?
- Harrison J.: With portion of levy designated for PSPS, does that include repaving, raising to at grade streets, or is that just putting stuff out to keep cars from coming in?
- Meghan S.: Nature of this work can take many forms. Looking in Attachment A, what you see are several named capital projects like Occidental that we'll be investing in. It will be a lot of improvements that make the street a destination, but not really repaving or new materials on the street.
- Tyler V.: Community outputs to levy delivery. In future renditions of this report, will there be an analysis of how this investment is reaching the higher level goals like VZ, low pollution, etc.
- Serena L.: STP performance report later this year will show where we are making progress on those outcomes, with the levy being a big part of that.
- Meghan S.: Some programs like VZ who do robust data analysis about how intervention is working. For other things like GHG reductions, those are measured at citywide level. It's hard to say any one particular project resulted in a certain impact. We are looking at work SDOT does as a whole vs. Just the levy. 20 year targets are big.
- Geri P.: Three comments – being as involved as I am, I want to click on something and find out what progress means and what is happening. Clickable links on pages. Why is spending only 1/3 of budget set? That is another question that jumps off.

- Jack W: Will SDOT publish a report of areaway inspections?
- Serena L.: We can follow up on that!
- Serena L.: Council set budget this year, in the future, we anticipate it to be less like that. It is not representative of what we necessarily will spend.
- Kaid N. R.-T.: Related to risks, it sounds like we will talk about Aurora Ave Safety. One past LOC recommendation was to pay attention to costs escalating after planning/design phase. Specifically for Aurora, looking at Transit element of STP, there is potential light rail going up Aurora. Is choosing a design that would build towards light rail potential in the future so we don't have to go back to spend more in our plan? Can the design be chosen to take into account the future work that could potentially be on Aurora?
- Meghan S.: Aurora is a high risk project. Involves partner collaboration, is not an SDOT facility, levy is making a contribution. We will have to put together a significant funding package once a design is chosen.
- Jack B.: Latest status on the Rainier corridor work (7 converting to RR R) from Metro?
- Serena: We do not know, but when transit program comes, we will be sharing more info.
- Jack B.: What seems different after year 1 of this levy vs. Year 1 of last levy?
- Serena L.: SO many lessons learned about communicating about risks and bringing LOC along, being transparent.
- Meghan S.: Last levy commitments were not clearly defined, so we've pulled this lesson into this levy to ensure there is clarity to voters and everyone as to what is committed to. We also spent more than we did in the first year of this levy than we did in the last levy.
- Jack W.: Repeat of Kaid's question on Aurora. This is a big risk that I am worried about for this levy. Concerns about sidewalk location; and it's possible light rail was not a consideration on Aurora as part of the STP.

Adjourn: 7:00 PM

Action items

Action items below capture tasks from previous meetings and status.

| Action | Responsibility | Status |
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