



Re: NE 45th Street Bridge Over I-5 – Protected Bike Lane Needed

To: Seattle City Council

Patrick Taylor, Co-Chair  
Sarah Udelhofen, Co-Chair  
Kashina Groves, Co Vice-Chair  
Andrea Lai, Secretary  
Yasir Alfarag  
Andrew Dannenberg  
Meredith Hall  
Jose Nino  
Maimoona Rahim

The Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board (SBAB) is deeply disappointed to learn that this critical connection has been removed from the Route 44 Transit-Plus Multimodal Corridor Project. As it stands now, to access the U District from the Wallingford area via bike you must take a long detour or risk a terrifying ride in busy, aggressive vehicular traffic across the NE 45th Street bridge. This is not an all ages and abilities biking network. Our communities need the planned protected bike lane and jersey barrier for people biking and walking across the NE 45th Street bridge.

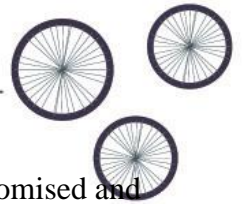
This segment is listed in the [May 2021 update](#) of the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan 2021-2024 Implementation Plan as a planned project, as it is a critical connection for people biking and walking between these two areas for work, school, medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other daily needs or to access the new link station and its regional connections.

Seattle has been trending in the wrong direction on Vision Zero goals, with increasing fatalities – 26 in 2019 and 24 in 2020 ([The Urbanist](#)). As of September 2021, Seattle had already seen 21 fatalities. According to [the Urbanist](#), “based on the trends identified in the [9/7/21 Vision Zero] presentation, Seattle could see 35 people lose their lives by December 31st”). This is utterly unacceptable. SBAB urges SDOT to approach the needs of people biking and walking with equal priority as they approach the needs of people driving cars. NE 45<sup>th</sup> Street has [two of the most dangerous intersections](#) in Seattle for bicyclists and pedestrians and must be prioritized for improvements.

In addition, Seattle is far from reaching its Climate Action Plan goals, which identify that the city needs an [83% reduction](#) in road transportation to reach our 2030 climate goals. As this design stands, it is prioritizing people driving single occupancy vehicles. The opening of the U District light rail station presents an incredible opportunity for connecting more people walking and rolling to high-capacity transit – this opportunity should not be missed.

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



SBAB calls on the Seattle City Council to intervene to press for the promised and much needed safe bike connection on NE 45th Street in the final design for this corridor. SBAB also calls on SDOT to install the planned protected bike lane (PBL) across the bridge. In particular, we call on SDOT to design a NE 45th Street that:

- Adds a PBL for the uphill climb across the NE 45th I-5 bridge up into Wallingford, connecting to bike lanes on Latona and Thackeray;
- Adds an interchange and wayfinding at NE 8th so cyclists can enter and exit the roadway therefor accessing light rail and UW;
- Adds protection for pedestrians over the I-5 bridge.

SBAB is excited about the potential for the Route 44 Transit-Plus Multimodal Corridor Project and hopes SDOT will be able to place equal priority on the needs of people biking and walking as they do people driving cars. We hope to see Seattle provide our communities with critical active transportation connections and be a leader for both Vision Zero and Climate Action goals.

Sincerely,  
The Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board

Sarah Udelhofen, Co-Chair

Patrick Taylor, Co-Chair

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