

Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date: August 2, 2023
 Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 Location: City Hall Room 370 and Virtual via Microsoft Teams
 Recorders: Sarah Udelhofen, SDOT

Bicycle Advisory Board Members Present:

Seat	Members	Present	Absent
		✓	X
1	Yasir Alfarag	✓	
2	Max Green	✓	
3	Jose Nino		X
4	Andrea Lai	✓	
5	Ty Bottorff	✓	
6	Doug Midgen		X
7	Donna McBain Evans, Co-Chair	✓	
8	Christine Stawitz	✓	
9	Vacant		
10	Peter Bryan, Co-Chair	✓	
11	Joseph Roberts, Secretary	✓	
12	Arya Blourchian, Get Engaged Member		X

Meeting Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by SBAB Co-chair Pete Bryan.

Public Comment:

- Bob Winship, West Seattle bike connections. Would like to call attention to construction on Terminal 5 just south of low bridge to Chelan 5-way intersection ([Terminal 5 Quiet Zone](#)). This project will make updates, supported by the port, surrounding communities, etc. West Seattle Bicycle Connections has raised questions about the designs and safety concerns about sidewalk proposed for east side of west marginal way, which is labeled as multi use trail. This will be interrupted by several large posts that bikes and peds will need to navigate. Not clear if the trail is meant as replacement for existing, or simply as an alternative. There was no discussion of wayfinding signage. WSBC has requested clarification from SDOT multiple times, without a reply. Received complicated drawings, have yet to interpret. SBAB might want to request more info on this project.
- Tyler Blackwell, Transportation Planner for SODO Business Improvement Area & on Levy to Move Seattle Oversight Committee: Today, speaking on behalf of SODO BIA. Serves as collective voice of its rate payers. Been working with SDOT and businesses on downtown to Georgetown. The current plans will put cyclists in danger. The current design does not address these concerns.
- Greg Felton: Excited to see bike facility maintenance, have always said that maintaining all roads in Seattle would go a long way to making cycling safer – whether in a bike lane or on the roads

themselves. Recognize there may be financial barriers. Look forward to seeing how these can be approved upon.

- Sam, District 7: [Cars In Bike Lanes Seattle](#) is a website and social media account. Last Saturday was one year since better bike lane program started. We have 1,037 reports of cars blocking painted bike lanes and more. Judging by number of problem locations, I would say the bike community is yearning for updates. Location in U District: has been updated. Others have not been updated. Disappointed by delays in implementation. Request to board: keep urging the city to add bike lanes.
- Otto Lucas, Capitol Hill: Would like to bring attention to a small improvement to a bike lane that could have significant impacts. The bike lane delineating line on west bound Roanoke has nearly faded away. Cars back up on west bound Roanoke and 10th waiting to get on I-5, they are continually blocking the bike lane. From Interlaken to 11th Street and connecting down to Harvard Ave. Improving this section adjacent to Roanoke Park would have a big impact for those who use that route.
- Ardy, Belltown: I live car-free, I wanted to echo what is heard about the better bike lane pilot program. On top of fixing existing bike lanes, I've seen new issues with bike lanes that have gone through design phase. Example: new Pike/Pine corridor improvements: on 4th Ave and Pike there are big cutouts on the concrete buffer, no direct reason why (no driveway, no alleyway). I would like to know why we're doing this with new bike lanes. If we're going to create designs that allow cars to park in bike lanes, we'll continue to see a problem. I urge SDOT to look at this further.

Presentations:

Bike Facility Maintenance Overview

Darren Morgan & Marc Spaulding, SDOT

Discussion:

- Joseph: There are many residents who utilize avenues like Find It Fix It to communicate issues they see. What category would you recommend putting an issue like road surface that is causing a safety issue? Or wet leaves (a serious skidding hazard)?
 - Darren: Valid question – Find It Fix It is organized in a way where issues are put into buckets. We don't have a perfect bucket for every issue. If it is not intuitive within the app, I'd suggest calling 684-Road to report it. If Find It Fix It is the method you're going to use to report issues, please be concise and specific in your comments (for example, note which side of the street the issue is on). We can take this question back to the customer service group, they deal with these all the time – would love to hear their recommendation.
 - Joseph: Simon, could you compile and provide us with a list of bike-related reporting items?
 - Hallie: We have started some conversations about adding different categories to the app.
 - Darren: It takes a surprisingly long time for the software of the program to be adapted to the needs of the business.

- Joseph: Many of the flex posts have been run over and are no longer present, which is a great indication that we don't want any more flex posts. How do you manage getting feedback to the staff members who replace those?
 - Darren: The damage of tuff posts translates into a larger conversation.
 - Hallie: There hasn't been capacity to dive into the asset management system data – for example “where are the places we continually replace flex posts?”. This could be a task for an intern to dive into. We will have more news soon about the better bike lanes pilot – we are trying new things that will help our bike lanes last longer.
- Donna: Let's gather questions to share offline.

Georgetown to Downtown Safety Project 60% Design

Ryan Moore & Jonathan Frazier, SDOT

Discussion:

- Max: It's great to see you're thinking about this important connection. I appreciate the high-level thinking about navigating downtown to Georgetown. I am very supportive of that off road option you were talking about, understanding there's complexity with the railroad itself. As someone who bikes here all the time, that's a far superior option. How will this connect into the Mountains to Sound greenway and Swift Ave bike lane?
 - Jonathan: At this point, we're focused on delivering the project and thinking about the extension North & South. Right now, we are not looking at connections on Lucille St. This is also an area that is in the Seattle Transportation Plan - it's an important connection up to Beacon Hill. Unfortunately, we are not exploring Swift as part of this project or Georgetown to South Park.
 - Max: I would highly encourage you to look at Albro – it's very unused by car traffic. There are usually two lanes car free + a wide sidewalk.
- Max: When you're looking at going north along the proposed route – I am noticing a lot of left turns that would need to be made. I am wondering if Airport Way was considered? Why couldn't you do Airport Way S all the way north?
 - Jonathan: We looked at that early in the project – we were comparing Airport or 6th. One of the reasons we didn't pursue Airport was the impacts to freight and transit farther north – it would bog down freight and bus route 124. In addition, going on Airport would require at least 1 more mile of project improvements and would bring in a lot more signalized intersections – that would be an enormous cost. Currently, the project is funded but we're seeing a lot of inflation and cost escalation.
 - As for transitions and turns, this part is 2 miles long. The turn from Airport to Alaska is going to be a free turn for bikes, so that would be fully protected without a stop.
- Max: As you're building this out, we typically hear a lot of public comment about gaps in the network. I'd suggest being cognizant of the various bike lanes that are within a block or two of this (Swift, Mountain to Sound) - how you can connect the city in a very meaningful way east-west if you were to just extend some of these just a few blocks? It could be a meaningful change from a safety perspective.
 - Jonathan: Thank you for that – I know the STP is looking at proposals for the connection to Beacon Hill.
- Ryan: I appreciate the chat comment about the camouflage gray barrier. Noted on 8th Ave PBL – wish we would've talked about this before it got too far away from us. Fairview Ave bridge has same problem – we will consider this.

- Pete: Thank you, looking forward to the delivery phase.

Climate Justice Actions to Reduce Emissions

Radcliffe Dacanay, SDOT

No slides, notes provided here:

- Regarding the Seattle Transportation Plan: there is ongoing internal review occurring, it's taken a bit longer than anticipated. Hoping to release the STP draft for public review in middle or late August. That will also include the draft environmental impact statement. Note: the Comprehensive Plan that's happening through OPCD will be released in later September. Working closely to make sure the policies (especially from transportation perspective) are addressed at a high level in the comprehensive plan.
- SBAB was sent a letter about the upcoming release of the STP and what we hope to receive from all of you as comments on the STP.
- The strategies that spotlight reductions in emissions are going to be part of the climate reduction framework. Essentially, the document is seeking to amplify the things we do well – such as more bike lanes, more dedicated transit, community reductions in emissions, etc. We are dancing around this topic of reducing car travel by pricing (congestion pricing), which is a touchy subject right now, so this will be an ongoing conversation. We're tying the conversation into a regional approach to managing car travel (working with PSRC, WSDOT).
- One of the interesting topics that's kicking off is low pollution neighborhoods. This was in the Mayor's Office December 2022 executive order.
 - A Raise Grant (Rebuilding Americas Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) was received – \$1.2 mil. Setting the state up to do planning and seek funding to implement 3 of these areas in the city by 2028. An internal conversation has begun about how to have these discussions with communities. Though these are referred to as Low Pollution Neighborhoods, they could be Eco districts, super-block-like neighborhoods, expansion of home zones, tying to healthy streets program, school zones, and more. We want to co-create (with the community) an area that is low emission or low traffic.
 - By Q2 next year, we will be setting the stage for how we might begin to select locations within the city.
- Next, I want to mention the work we're doing with the STP and Comprehensive Plan. House Bill 1181 requires us to respond to how we're going to reduce VMT per capita. The Comprehensive Plan will have some policy language to address how we will do that. Although we already have efforts underway, our VMT isn't always trending downward. We will be working with the state to determine our methodology for measuring VMT for the next 20 years. We recognize that as people transition to EVs, we still need a reduction in VMT.
 - We mostly have "carrots", but as climate continues to change, we expect there to be more "sticks" at the federal, state, and local level.

Discussion:

- Donna: If you are able to, implement standards to reduce VMT and more outside of just the comprehensive plan. VMT reduction occurs when we do things like plan new structures, build new parking areas, close streets down to traffic, and more. Unless people start to feel a little pinched, I don't think we'll move that needle. The VMT discussion occurs in climate conversations, but not in all the other departments where it needs to be raised.
 - Radcliffe: One of the challenges brought to us recently by groups that support our efforts for emissions is "How do we talk about climate without talking about climate?"

It's a tough sell, especially when people say, 'I need to get to work, pick up my kids, etc'. How do we enable the conversation around 15-minute neighborhoods and help people see the choices that they have? It's a big economic shift for the way we do things.

- Pete: There's a disconnect between overall goals and specific project implementation. Often, items that would reduce VMT get sidelined because we don't want to inconvenience the driver experience. Have you looked at other places in the world and what works best? Think of many cities that have seen significant reduction in VMT. Typically driven by things like congestion pricing. Have there been studies of what's been looked at elsewhere, is there balance?
 - Radcliffe: Essentially, driving in the US is very cheap comparatively. Gas is going up, but we're still using more and more fuel to get around. Perhaps price goes up in the future, and the market begins to shift. The question is: how fast can we make that shift economically? It's hard at the local level to add more taxes to gasoline. As our gas tax declines (because more and more people are buying EVs), how do we continue to encourage that shift away from fossil fuel internal combustion engines? Research has shown that some form of pricing does help, what we're trying to do is throw everything at the wall and see what resonates. It will be a nuanced approach.
- Pete: Parking is always incredibly cheap and abundant. If I think about other cities I've lived in, a big part of me not driving is that it's expensive or there isn't any parking. How does parking fit into the VMT approach?
 - Radcliffe: that's the part pricing would address, it must be part of whole package. As we're improving these options, we're also discouraging driving, especially for short distances. We know that half the driving in the city is less than 5 miles. With the urbanism + transportation we have, can we encourage people to take those other options.
 - Equity perspective and regional housing issue – a lot of people have moved out of city and do not have access to transportation like transit.

Board Business:

- Approval of July meeting minutes:
 - Max: Motion to approve.
 - Donna: Second.
 - All: Approve.
- Appointment updates
 - Simon: We are on track to have 3 new members start this fall. The paperwork is with the Mayor's office and Council for review and we're hoping to get the new members through the process in the next month or so. New members might not be here yet for the September meeting, but they will be here for the October meeting. We will also get a new Get Engaged member.
 - Simon: Today is technically the last meeting for Andrea & Jose – I wanted to recognize all your work and contributions over the years – thank you so much!
- LOC update
 - Pete: I know we don't have a permanent member on the LOC currently, but I'd be interested.
- Project Tracking
 - Donna: We gathered items in our [2023 Work Plan Discussion](#) to focus on this year.
 - Pete: We've recognized the need as a board to better track projects over an extended period rather than a one-off during monthly meetings. I think it would be useful to have

members take ownership of key projects. We've asked this for a few specific projects in the past (like Aurora, Ballard).

- Joseph: How would it be more than just reading the website and getting public emails? I'm wondering whether there's a way to have slightly more extended conversations with the project teams.
- Simon: There are two parallel things that could happen: 1) there's opportunity for board members to do research or process information outside of meetings, including researching ahead of time for upcoming projects. 2) in the past, we haven't connected members with project teams in between meetings – I think project teams would be open to that, I'm happy to be a connection to start those conversations.
- Christine: I don't want to overlook Clara's comment about the LOC meeting Tues Sept 5th 5-8pm. I can attend.
- Christine: In terms of project priorities, wanted to highlight the one we got about the Ballard Missing Link – I am wondering if that could dovetail with the Burke Gilman in general. That's something I'm interested in – I don't know where to start, other than Googling around.
- Pete: It's a good idea to connect with the other advocacy groups like Cascade and SNG.
- Donna: I echo the importance of connecting with local groups – it's helped me inform myself about projects in my neighborhood plus there are great people to learn from.
- Donna: I'd like to have a working meeting in the fall to include the 4 new members and get them up to speed.
- Future agenda items:
 - Pete: A few items called out in public comment today – Terminal 5 work and the update on the better bike lanes pilot.
- Announcements
 - None

Public Comments:

- Tyler Blackwell: Thank you all for allowing us to have this space today. Regarding the Georgetown to Downtown safety project, I have been tracking this for 7-8 months. I will follow up with you all about safety concerns beyond what was presented today.

Meeting Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by SBAB Co-chair Pete Bryan.