

**Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee**  
**Meeting held Primarily in Person.**  
**March 15, 2024**

**SSTSC Members** (X = present)

- X Mary Ellen Russell, (volunteer)
- X Margaret McCauley (volunteer, pedestrian safety advocate and secretary)
- X Marilyn Firman (volunteer)  
Robbie Frankel (Metro Representative)
- X Noa Guter (Chair, volunteer)  
Gary Davenport, SPD Liaison
- X Yvonne Carpenter, SPS field staff supervisor, crossing guard supervisor.  
Diane Walsh, SDOT Representative
- X Brooke Nelson, SPS, Safe Routes to School Coordinator
- X Ryan Baum, (volunteer)
- X Kelsey Rote, (volunteer)

**Other attendees**

Sara Colling: SDOT (former SPS Safe Routes to School Coordinator)  
Steven Richard: SPS Director of Transportation  
Marni Campbell: SPS Executive Director of Operations  
Lee Bruch: Former SSTSC member, Aurora Reimagined Coalition member  
Rachel DeCordova: King County Metro Transit, Mobility Program Co-manager.  
Dani Hurula: King County Metro Transit, Youth Mobility Program Manager  
Tom Lang: Aurora Reimagined Coalition Member  
Elizabeth Wooten: SDOT Senior Transportation Planner  
Brian Dougherty: Deputy Director, Project Development

**Public Comment:**

**Lee Bruch:** The Aurora upgrade will take many years to complete, and the design content is fluid.

- There were major changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act in late 2023. There will be a process to write rules before enforcement. There will be a significant impact of these legal requirements when implemented.
- Many decision makers will come and go during the completion process.
- There is a significant danger to nearby school students right now.
- The crossing guard at 92<sup>nd</sup> Ave. is even concerned about their own safety.
- There is an immediate need for enforcement cameras.
- The Zoo is currently doing a master plan and yet there is no SDOT plan for the segment thru Woodland Park. SDOT should synchronize with the park.

The question was asked what should we do?

1. Push for 4 more school zone enforcement cameras in the interim.
2. Push for more planning on the Woodland Park and Bridge segments.

**King County Metro Transit Youth Programming Update:** Dani Hurula, and Rachel DeCordoba

Children, 18 and under can now ride free on metro services statewide.

The Goal now is to educate the public about metro services and recruit youth leadership to help in this task.

- With the free youth transit Passes statewide most do not use the orca card. This makes getting statistics on youth riders difficult.
- <https://kingcounty.gov/metro/transiteducation/> King Co Metro has developed an education plan for classrooms.
- They are developing internship and leadership opportunities. There will be summer internships. Also, there is a Youth Mobility Program e-Newsletter for which we are encouraged to sign up. <https://kingcountymetro.blog/>

Answering Questions by SSTSC members, presenters said:

- Currently, there is no fare enforcement on buses for youth to see if they have ORCA cards
- Safe Ambassadors Program for youth operates with a different organization.
- Most help asked of transit personnel by young people is about wayfinding.

**Last Month Minutes and Action update items:**

1. Margaret contacted her city council member and will follow up with an appointment with a staff person.
2. Mary Ellen: reported there is another appeal delaying Alki School Construction. Discussion followed. Perhaps the locals just do not want a larger school there. **Action: Mary Ellen** will get the cost details of the departures at Alki and get them to **Marilyn** so she can contact her council member.
3. Brian Dougherty requested a letter of support for the departures. Subcommittee from last month: **Action: Noa** will write, **Margaret and Mary Ellen** will support.
4. Mary Ellen had contacted Matisa Hollingsworth re the landscaping issues but left the option open to follow up if needed.
5. Question about the Roxhill Elementary issue on future topics. SDOT has resolved the issue, and it can be removed from Future Topics.

Ryan moved to approve, and Mary Ellen seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**SDOT Update:** Sara Colling for Diane Walsh

1. There is a Play Street demonstration at Emerson Elementary. Play Streets can be set up without permits. Magnolia Elementary closed a street for a block party fundraiser. Many schools may be doing this for field days in June.
2. Brooke wanted to know how to get this information out to all the PTA's. Discussion followed. There is a coalition of South Side PTA's. **Action: Brooke** talked of trying to contact PTA leadership/ find out how to generally contact parent organizations.
3. Fairmont Elementary School: Ryan stated that cars are not stopping for traffic calming project. There is a serious problem with red light violations on 35<sup>th</sup> and SW Finley. We miss being able to ask police to make a short-term target of violators. **Action: ask Gary** if this would be possible.

**SPS Update:** Brooke Nelson, Yvonne Carpenter, Steven Richard

- May is Bike Month. Already 8 schools have gotten packets. May 8<sup>th</sup> is **Bike to School Day** and May 17<sup>th</sup> is **Bike Everywhere Day**.
- Yvonne said via Steven Richard that there is a parent at Magnolia who is being trained.
- Mary Ellen said the Walk Boundary Subcommittee is finding some currently empty patrol spots are no longer needed due to changes in traffic or school boundaries. Our unfilled crossing guard post statistics may not be as bad as we thought.

**Legislation Session Update:** Mary Ellen

From Ryan Packer's report in The Urbanist, the law passed that any trained staff may write tickets from information on automated ticket cameras. It is not limited to fully trained police. This is step one. It is now legal to have non-police staff write camera tickets. The next step is to get the police union's ok. Secondly, for the first three years of camera enforcement, ticket monies can go to physical safety improvements. After that a portion of the money goes to the state. It is an incentive to move cameras after three years.

The funding for the cost/sq. foot of construction was increased. This will help Seattle but still is not as high as Seattle Construction costs.

**SDOT Presentation of Aurora Plan:** Elizabeth Wooten and Brian Doughty

<https://www.seattle.gov/transportation/projects-and-programs/current-projects/aurora-ave-project>

19% of citywide fatalities occur on Aurora Avenue. There are missing sidewalks. It is the busiest bus route in the city. There are missing bike connections to cross Aurora. North of Greenlake there is no drainage. There are many schools where walking along and crossing Aurora is necessary.

- The above site has the current plan and a survey as to what people like and dislike about the plans. Brian requested we please comment.
- Vision Zero is planning short-term safety improvements.
- Brian discussed the financial situation. The biggest pot of money so far comes from the Climate Commitment Act which may be repealed this coming election.

A lengthy discussion followed. Questions included Mary Ellen pointing out that only one of the plans had bike lanes. Marilyn asked the questions that Lee had asked at the beginning. The Aurora bridge is not in the plan because there is probably no money to work with it. What about Red Light Enforcement cameras? Brian asked for a letter of support if we think this is important. **Action: Margaret** will write, and **Kelsey** will support as a subcommittee. B F Day Elementary and Lincoln High School were mentioned as of particular concern. A suggestion was made to have a speed zone camera at 41<sup>st</sup> and Aurora. All the volunteers were present and agreed to have Margaret and Kelsey sign the letter for them.

A suggestion was made to contact Shoreline and Edmonds businesspeople to encourage the business owners in Seattle that the final outcome of the project will be positive for their businesses.

**SPS Update:** Marni.

She had no information about school closures.

She said Chanda Emery at City Hall is 110% sure that a new code about departures will happen. We should hold back on pushing our councilmembers until we see what she does.

### **FUTURE TOPICS**

- Vision Zero Presentation
- June Retreat

Next Meeting: April 19, 2024, online or at City Hall