

Discussion: Draft Seattle Transportation Plan Staff Draft Comment Letter Outline

Timeline

- 9/14 Full Commission: Staff draft comment letter outline, SDOT DEIS overview
- 9/19 Executive Committee: Initial SPC staff comments on STP DEIS
- 9/21 Land Use & Transportation Committee: Flesh out STP and DEIS letters outlines
- 9/28 Full Commission: Review and discuss staff draft STP and DEIS letters
- 10/5 Housing & Neighborhoods Committee: Final comments on STP/DEIS letters
- 10/12 Full Commission: Approve final STP and DEIS comment letters

STP Staff Draft Comment Letter Outline

- 1) Introduction
- 2) General Comments
- 3) Goals and Performance Measures
- 4) Integration of Modal Plans
- 5) Prioritization Framework
- 6) Implementation
- 7) Racial and Social Equity
- 8) Transportation Choices

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- 9) Multilane Arterials
- 10) Access to Daily Essential Needs
- 11) Safety/Vision Zero
- 12) Freight Mobility
- 13) Climate Change/Resilience
- 14) Repurposing the Right-of-Way
- 15) Anti-Displacement
- 16) Integration with the Comprehensive Plan
- 17) Regional Coordination

1) Introduction

- a) We commend SDOT for an unprecedented community engagement and outreach effort.
- b) Support the Plan's vision: ““The draft STP is a 20-year vision for the future of Seattle's streets, sidewalks, and public spaces informed by thousands of people who live, work, and play in Seattle.”
- c) The STP generally considers the priorities the Commission has identified as needed (equity, safety, climate, etc.).

2) General Comments

a) Readability and user experience

- i. Digesting the information in this Plan is very challenging.
- ii. The Plan should include a glossary for the overall document, not each individual plan. There are many new and vague terms introduced in the document.
- iii. Almost all the photos are of beautiful sunny dry days. The Plan should include more representative photography that highlights the problems of our transportation system and what needs to change on rainy, snowy, extreme heat, or smoky days.

3) Goals and Performance Measures

- a) The Plan includes ambiguous goals that hinder bold and ambitious policy.
- c) We are interested in seeing metrics and targets, including how to account for different outcomes and policies.
- d) Performance measures are poorly defined. What is the baseline that everything will be measured against?
- e) Performance targets are listed as TBD. When can we expect those targets to appear?

3) Goals and Performance Measures (cont'd)

- g) The plan does not provide readers with a simple way to look at the existing vs. proposed miles of infrastructure improvements by type.
- i) A useful graphic would show how SDOT proposes the multimodal network to be built out.

4) Integration of Modal Plans

- a) SPC is disappointed by the Plan's inability to fully integrate the modes.
- b) Inter-connections across modes are not easy to follow.
- c) It is not apparent how layering these elements results in a comprehensive "One Seattle Transportation Strategy".
- e) The draft STP's network integration guidance process graphic (Part II, page 16) is a useful first step.

5) Prioritization Framework

- a) The draft Plan does not include a prioritization framework.
- b) Need clearer definition of "Catalyst Projects" to understand how these projects will be prioritized.

6) Implementation

- a) SPC is concerned about pragmatic implementation of this Plan.
- b) We would like to understand how SDOT is intending to implement the STP vision in an incremental fashion over time for each element.
- c) Would like to see a clear framework for prioritizing input with equity.
- d) Want to see more clarity around results-based accountability in the decision-making process to ensure not just those with access to power are heard when tradeoffs are made.

7) Racial and Social Equity

- c) Discussion of vulnerable communities does not sufficiently include those with disabilities or limited mobility.
- d) Every citywide map or figure of transit networks should include the Racial and Social Equity composite index as the background and include clear symbology between existing and proposed connections so we can see clearly where exactly investments are proposed to be made relative to the RSE index.

7) Racial and Social Equity (cont'd)

- g) Disappointed to not see economic development as a goal.
 - i) Small businesses depend on convenient transportation and will thrive if mobility choices are based on both efficiency and convenience.
 - ii) Part 1 pdf p 68 mentions more than 80% of Black and Indigenous survey responders want to prioritize a transportation system that supports a strong economy.

9) Multilane Arterials

- a) The Plan should articulate and illustrate a comprehensive, integrated strategy for multilane arterials.
- c) The overall strategy for multilane arterials should:
 - i) Draw from each “element” to show how multilane arterials will be transformed.
 - ii) Show how modes will be “integrated” to increase transit speed and reliability; eliminate deaths and serious injuries; expand People Streets for high-population areas; ensure a complete and safe bike network; allow for safe passage of freight.
 - iii) How will parking policies change to allow these to occur?

9) Multilane Arterials (cont'd)

- iv) Use maps to:
 - (1) Show, prioritize the “collision-prone locations” (according to equity framework and safety ranking).
 - (2) Identify speed reduction strategies for corridors.
- v) In high-population areas with limited green space, identify and prioritize opportunities for people streets, green stormwater infrastructure and increased vegetation (critical for safety, equity, climate action, livability).
- vi) Show the modal integration moves for each corridor.
- vii) Accommodate electric vehicle charging if there is also parking.
- viii) Address health considerations such as emissions from single-occupant vehicles.

11) Safety/Vision Zero

- c) Vision Zero should be a separate element with a comprehensive strategy for getting to zero deaths by 2030 (or an updated target with express moves to get there).
 - i) Should include a strategy to implement speed-reduction measures and track progress on speed humps, curb bulbs, speed limits, effectiveness of enforcement, elimination of slip lanes and high-speed turns, leading pedestrian intervals, no right on red, other tactics.
 - ii) The Plan should include priority projects to meet the urgency of the City's Vision Zero goals.

11) Safety/Vision Zero (cont'd)

- f) The Maintenance and Modernization Goal feels like it is missing explicitness around the nuance of past transportation planning decisions resulting in ongoing harm.
 - i) The Plan refers to the Transportation Equity Framework, but SDOT should explicitly acknowledge that the part of the framework should be considering when to maintain vs. when to remove or reroute networks to repair harmful past decisions.

13) Climate Change/Resilience

- a) The Plan must include strategies aimed at addressing air quality, emissions, heat island, tree canopy, stormwater flows, flooding, etc.
 - ii) The Climate section does not sufficiently address extreme heat.
 - iii) Climate Action Key Moves #2 could be reworded to strengthen and be explicit by changing it to "...to better handle extreme heat and increased storm event intensity in a changing climate."
 - iv) The STP should include other ways to increase environmental sustainability and climate resilience in communities beyond just increasing tree canopy.
 - v) Include green infrastructure in parts of the city where development is not already planned.

13) Climate Change/Resilience (cont'd)

- b) The concept of electrification of the citywide transportation network is intriguing but should not be prioritized.
 - i) De-emphasize Climate Action Key Move #4 about electrification and instead move up Climate Action #5 about mode shift.
 - ii) Strategies for electrification of the transportation network should prioritize charging for underserved, low income, and BIPOC communities.
- c) SPC wants to learn more about the development of a low-emissions neighborhoods pilot program to improve air quality, mobility, and community health.

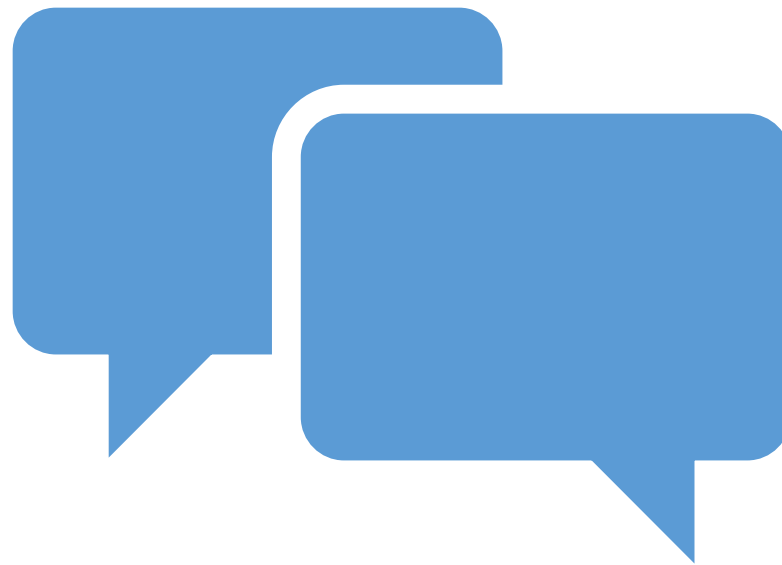
14) Repurposing the Right-of-Way

- c) The People Streets section does not reflect the shift that we experienced during the pandemic.
 - i) We need a map of “streets that should be closed to cars.”
- d) While there is a lot of verbiage in the “curbside management” section about techniques for regulating parking, there does not appear to be policy guidance vis a vis parking in relation to all the other “elements”.
 - i) For example, parking is not addressed in the transit element, although it has been the primary obstacle to expanding transit lanes.

16) Integration with the Comprehensive Plan

- d) The STP implementation plan will need to align with the anticipated travel demand generated by the selected growth strategy and associated land use patterns.
 - i) Population and job density targets will be necessary to determine if the STP implementation strategy matches the growth strategy.
- e) STP should recognize that the pandemic fundamentally shifted our commuting patterns.
- f) It will be necessary to answer the question “Is our transportation network complete enough to support the future number of people in each neighborhood as we grow?”

Comments/Discussion



Next Steps

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