

# Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

**Date:** March 6, 2024  
**Time:** 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5th Ave, Room 4050/4060  
**Recorders:** Hallie O’Brien & Quinn Kelly, SDOT

## Bicycle Advisory Board Members Present

Seat	Members	Present	Absent
		✓	X
1	Yasir Alfarag	✓	
2	Max Green		X
3	Nia Ransom	✓	
4	Amy Conroy		X
5	Vacant	-	-
6	Doug Midgen	✓	
7	Donna McBain Evans, LOC Rep	✓	
8	Christine Stawitz		X
9	Vacant	-	-
10	Peter Bryan, Co-Chair	✓	
11	Joseph Roberts, Secretary	✓	
12	Eli Davis, Get Engaged Member	✓	

## Discussion: New SBAB Meeting Day

*Peter Bryan, Co-Chair*

First choice based on survey shared with the board was third Tuesday

Will allow us to move to a publicly accessible room in City Hall

Motion to select third Tuesday of the month as new meeting day unanimously approved

April 16<sup>th</sup> will be next meeting in L280, the Boards and Commissions room

## Presentations

## Vision Zero Action Plan

*David Burgesser. SDOT*

See Presentation Attached

Opening: we have completed a top to bottom review and are beginning to work on our vision zero action plan. We are going to go over what our safety trends are moving and explain how we are going to advance the VZ plan.

The vision zero program: since this program began in 2015, 1643 people have been seriously injured and 224 people killed in traffic crashes.

We are seeing a continued upward trend in both serious injuries and fatalities in Seattle. We have seen positive results from our vision zero projects, but we need to scale up these safe systems. Outsized impact on those walking, biking, and rolling on our streets. We are focusing on how to make our streets safer for vulnerable users. 20% of these crashes occur in D2, and 22% in D2. Looking at police report data, the primary causes of vehicle crashes are distracted driving, high speed, and DUI.

In late 2022 we launched a Top-to-Bottom review of Vision Zero in Seattle. This action plan builds on this review and implements this plan's recommendations. This plan included 5 momentum building actions.

- No turn on red restrictions
- Leading Pedestrian Intervals
- Safety improvements on MLK Jr Way S, partnered with Sound Transit
- Partnered with BIPOC focused orgs around automated enforcement, and how to expand school zone automated enforcement
- Elevated the City Traffic Engineer to a new Chief Transportation Safety Officer role. This is Venu Nemani!

The VZ action plan establishes an aggressive 3-year strategy. With 22 strategies and over 80 actions which will be rolled out over the next three years. These will be prioritized through a data-informed approach. VZ action plan will be published in April, and then we will launch the vision zero program dashboard.

### Discussion:

Doug M: Cameras, is there a person who is in charge of Automatic enforcement in SDOT?

David: VZ team is designated to lead the automated enforcement expansion program.

Doug M: can you email us the contact so I can email them questions? As one person on SBAB, I feel like this program will have a really big impact for safety, and deserves a deep dive.

Joseph: we represent the vulnerable users and want VZ to be a success. Does this mean the blue line will go to zero by 2030?

David: yes, that is the vision zero goal

Joseph: where do you think we need to be by the end of the 3 years to be on the path of success?

David: it is difficult to predict what that intermediary data point will be, but that year will be the mid-point from now till 2030, and we can readjust our plans.

Joseph: how confident are we in the 2030 target goal?

David: We acknowledge that it will take time to get to zero traffic fatalities. Funding and staffing play a role along with many factors that address this problem.

Joseph: I recommend a slide that commits to an interim tangible goal.

Pete: I second Joseph. My biggest concern is the things that are outside of an engineering control, such as distracted driving. What are we doing about enforcement? Are we learning from other places that have higher levels of enforcement?

David: A lot of these things are outside SDOT control, so we will be partnering with the fire department and the police department. We are looking to how we roll out more enforcement cameras through an equity lens. We routinely work with the Seattle police department to improve data, improve collision report writing, and how to incorporate scooters and bikeshare.

Donna: I concur with the interim goal posts. 2.7 miles of protected bike lanes are identified, this seems like a smaller number, would it be more effective to improve street design where crashes happen? What do you mean by protected bike facility upgrades?

David: These are upgrades to the protected of our bike lanes with concrete barriers. Our program analyzes crash data to look for intersections and streets that need upgrades around the City. Every year we create a high collision map to see where these are occurring around the city and how we can work to make these spot improvements safer.

Nia: How much of this plan will include increasing lighting?

David: Lighting is a big one for us, we are updating our roadway lighting standards, we are working with City Light to make upgrades and see where they are planning improvements. 23<sup>rd</sup> and Jackson is on our High Collision Location list, and this will be a key component of our program.

## **Aurora Ave N**

*Elisabeth Wooten & Jules Posadas & Marilyn Yim, SDOT*

See presentation attached. Please visit our webpage to provide feedback there as well!  
<https://www.seattle.gov/transportation/projects-and-programs/current-projects/aurora-ave-project/aurora-community-ideas-hub>

Aurora Ave N is one of Seattle's busiest arterials, 19% of all traffic fatalities occur on Aurora Ave. We are currently developing concepts at the segment level before we look at a corridor wide alternatives analysis. WSDOT move ahead Washington (50M) programmed for beyond 2029. Currently have an online survey, which closes on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Discussion:**

Pete: Looked at survey and public information that came out earlier today. Seems like the way options are framed is pitching different modes against one another. Really what we need is something that provides those things all together. Is there a middle ground option for people to support?

Elisabeth: This phase is about understanding the tradeoffs and where people see importance for different types of treatments in different segments. Next phase will be about finding hybrid options and combine concepts.

Pete: Hard to exclude bridge / Woodland park. Without a PBL on those segments, it doesn't make sense to provide PBLs on other segments.

Elisabeth: There is a box where people can leave comments relevant to those segments. If we end up with a bike facility on one of these segments we'll have to think about transitions.

Pete: Center bus lanes make sense from a transit speed and reliability perspective, but they are terrifying from the perspective of getting people to the bus stops. Were there any options considered with elevated bus lanes or similar ideas.

Elisabeth: Not as part of this project.

Pete: Bike access along the whole corridor is important, but unless there is a lot of physical safety separation between bikes and traffic, and some safe routes to cross the road, then it's not viable to have bikes on Aurora. I live near 85<sup>th</sup> and Aurora and it's not safe. People ignore No Turn on Red.

Joseph: Hard to imagine riding bikes on Aurora, road is thoroughly unpleasant. Tolerable in a bus or car, but not for walking or biking. If we don't calm Aurora it's pointless to be talking about bike lanes. If you assume that speed and turning movement are the biggest safety hazards, how would you rank options in terms of impact in reducing speed/improving safety?

Elisabeth: Lanes will be as narrow as possible. Lane reductions could also calm traffic, but we have to think about where that traffic gets diverted to. If there are any shifts in the lanes that could also calm traffic through horizontal shifts.

Pete: 85<sup>th</sup> south to Woodland, not an obvious parallel option for bikes. We do need safe space for biking, but that requires more than just adding bike lanes. Vision is not transformational enough—just tinkering at the edges.

Elisabeth: What does transformation look like for you?

Pete: Traffic calming, single travel lane, pedestrian and bicyclist bridges across the road.

Doug: Does the issue of e-bikes requiring larger bike lanes factor into the design of this project?

Elisabeth: In general we are moving toward a wider standard: 6' rather than 5' to provide passing opportunities. We could narrow buffer to make a wider bike lane. When bike lanes look too wide, cars might try and drive in it. We provided 6' lanes in our concepts.

Doug: Not sure if SDOT is incorporating this into projects moving forward. NYT article found that E-bikes were responsible for the increase in bike fatalities. Considering the issues that Pete pointed out, this could be a real big problem if not done right. Need to invest sufficient resources. Are there options for using parallel streets in big sections?

Elisabeth: Yes, we have to sort this out. A safe bike facility on Aurora is about more than just providing bike lanes.

Joseph: WSDOT constraints... how much of this is a State Highway and what are those constraints?

Elisabeth: The whole corridor is a state highway. We're working closely with WSDOT and bringing them along, but when we get to permitting we'll have to see what they accept. We hope that we can come to an agreement. WSDOT has their own Compete Streets standards/policies.

Joseph: So WSDOT is amenable to making Aurora less of a speedway?

Elisabeth: They are open to make Aurora Ave safer but will require a lot of analysis to understand what is possible.

Marilyn Yim: WSDOT has been a strong partner throughout the process. We're making sure that they are hearing the public engagement and that we provide anything that they need to make a good decision. There is strong interest all the way through the organization in a safer Aurora Ave. Everyone agrees that we need changes.

Joseph: Do comments get added to the minutes?

Quinn: Yes

### **Levy Oversight Committee meeting update**

*Donna McBain Evans, LOC Rep*

Donna: We've had 2 LOC meetings since my last update. Two main things to let board know about:

1. Maintenance: Two reports on roads, one report of bridges. 31-35% of roads are not in good condition. Will cost \$2B to address maintenance backlog. LOC recommending not only a new Levy for the standard transportation projects but also a separate Levy to focus on maintenance and seismic upgrades.
2. Poll of Seattle citizens: Testing public support for a new Levy. Tested 2 levy amounts, one for \$1.2B and one for \$1.7B. SDOT is leaning toward the lower amount that received 64% support. Also tested voter priorities. 3 driving issues:
  - a. People Streets and Public Spaces: activation of public right of way for social interaction and other activities to make neighborhoods feel more like neighborhoods
  - b. Maintenance and modernization
  - c. Safety and sustainability: Safe routes, traffic calming

Donna will share poll in chat. Said 87% of people felt that traffic congestion during rush hour was a huge problem, 76% said bus service was bad. Only 33% of people felt it was important to make it easier to get to stations and less than a third of people felt it was important to improve transit speed and reliability. Seems like a disconnect for people who want less congestion but don't understand what it takes to make roads work for everyone (e.g. better bus service).

## **Public Comment**

### **Aurora Ave**

Lee Bruch: 143rd would be an important added crossing; Other at-grade crossings that would be important at roughly 42th, Motor Place, 49th, 57th, 65th/West Green Lake Way N

Tom Lang: People ride bikes on Aurora every day. I see them in the bus lanes nearly every hour of the day. We need bike lanes on Aurora.

Mark Ostrow: If Seattle can't build a multimodal street with 90+ feet of ROW, Seattle can't build a multimodal street.

Max Severeid: For Aurora, transformative change in traffic calming, speed reduction, and vulnerable road user crossing options are needed.

## **Emailed public comments**

Bob Smith: I filed a Find It Fix It request regarding the dangerous curb on the recently worked-on area of the Burke Gilman and received the quoted response advising to contact you:

- My concern is regarding the prominently raised and dangerously visually obscured curb that is present on the southern boundary of the trail where it intersects with Latona Ave NE and NE Pacific St. In my view it presents an undue hazard to the thousands of riders that pass it each day. It is very common for westbound riders to be passing pedestrians or other obstacles on the left on this section of trail as well as eastbound riders to be all the way over to the right. In both cases, but especially westbound, the curb is often very difficult to see and from multiple angles and appears to be a continuation of otherwise smooth, safe pavement. Hitting this curb would almost guarantee a serious accident.
- To resolve this, I would think a simple flex post, cone, or similar marker in the ground at the corner of the curb would be a simple solution that would greatly reduce the hazard and risk of someone having a serious accident. What do you think? I would like to ask the Pedestrian Advisory Board to consider recommending the use of raised crosswalks on neighborhood streets next to arterials across Seattle. In alignment with Vision Zero, these incursion points should be designed to force all car traffic to slow when entering a neighborhood. Pedestrians should not have to descend to car level via a curb cut but rather cars should have to briefly come to pedestrian level to remind them of the appropriate speed to drive in neighborhoods.

## **Board Business**

### **New Co-chair Selection**

Pete: Nia put her name forward. We need to vote on that. Does anyone else want to put their hat in the ring? If not, I would like to make motion to nominate Nia as co-chair.

- Joseph seconds the motion
- All agree

### **Approval of minutes from February**

- Donna motions to approve, Pete seconds.
- All agree

### **Opening slide comment about the chat**

- Pete: Fine to use the chat, but it's hard to capture comments in context
- Joseph: Chat is good because people have thoughts in the moment
- Hallie: Good for people to raise hands, show faces, and have dialogue in person
- Joseph: Will think more about how to rephrase

## **Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.