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APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING

April 16, 2009

Convened 8:30 am
Adjourned 4:30 pm

Agenda Items

Bell Street Green Street Design

Artist Designed Bike Parking

New Bike Corrals

Seattle Trade Center Skybridge over Elliott

Pedestrian Master Plan

Grace Crunican, Director of SDOT

Children's Hospital Laurelon Street Vacation

Commissioners Present

Mary Johnston, Chair

Andrew Barash

Graham Black

Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Julie Parrett

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

Unconfirmed Commissioners Present

Julie Bassuk

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano

Valerie Kinast

Tom Iurino

Jeff Arango

Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008



April 16, 2009 **Project:** **Pedestrian Master Plan**
Phase: Briefing
Last Reviewed: February 7, 2008; June 6, 2007
Presenters: Barbara Gray, SDOT

Attendees: Jennifer Wieland, SDOT
Vaughn Bell, SDOT
Allison Phillips, SvR Design

Time: 1 hour

(169)

ACTION

The Commission appreciates the thoroughness and objectiveness in SDOT's methodology for improving walkability in Seattle. Commissioners are glad to see that a system of carefully pulled together data is guiding decisions on pedestrian improvements instead of the department just responding to the "squeaky wheels." They are also glad that corridors are being considered as opposed to just spot improvements. They find it regretful that only the 5% top tier projects have been identified for short-term implementation and not more. The Commission commends the department for looking at how to stretch the funds that are available by leveraging Matching Fund Grants and other street improvement work to help implement the goals of the plan. Please consider how the goals of the plan can also be considered in the review of street improvements for private projects.

Presentation

Seattle is a national leader in pedestrian policies and facilities, consistently ranked 6th in the Nation. 27% of our block faces don't have sidewalks, need more work on activating the street edge. New sidewalk café legislation is helping. We have high expectations:

- Innovative approach
- Moving beyond transportation
- Data driven
- Race and social justice
- Climate Action
- Healthy communities
- Building partnerships
- Tools for decision making

It will be a web-based plan. They are developing a hard copy plan summary to include the plan highlights. Large public advisory group and a great deal of time with City Council and the Mayor. The plan has reasonable tools for decision-making.

Four plan goals:

- safety

- reduce crashes
- equity
 - fair process
- vibrancy
- health

Plan Elements

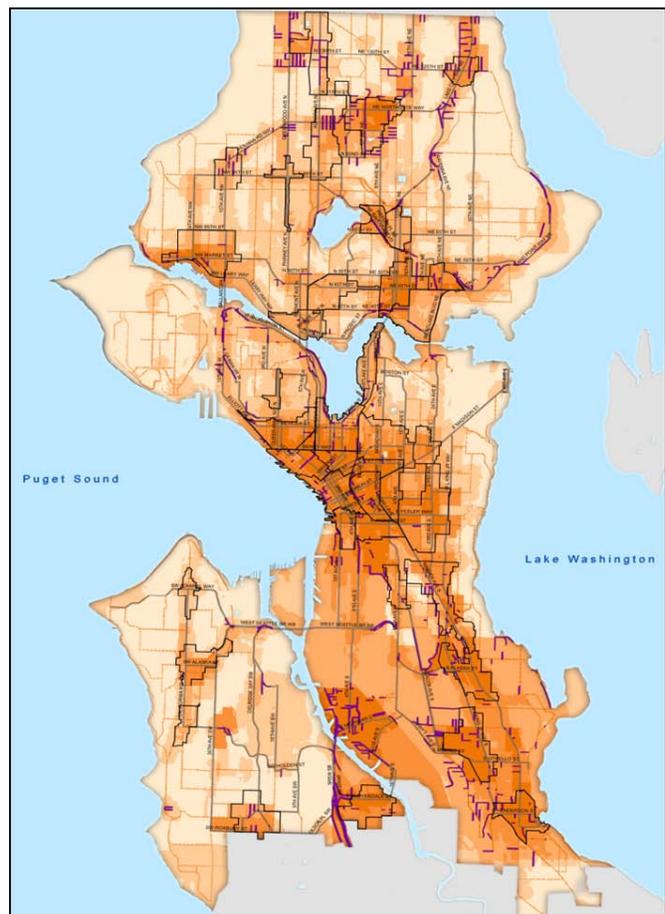
- First document is the state of the pedestrian environment.
- Toolbox – No standard best practices for pedestrian planning. Phenomenal online resource that will be available in May

Recommendations

- Improve walkability
- increase safety
- complete streets
- vibrant places
- completing the system.

System Plan

- Funding and Implementation
- Focus recommendations on walking demand. Huge amount of work to do in order to improve walkability. Interim strategy is to keep areas free of obstructions. Create a 6'x7' clear zone. Balance trees with sidewalk width, large trees obstruct movement.
- Safety – Manage vehicle speeds (450 ped accidents a year), maintain visibility at intersections, enhance crossing conditions. Add pedestrian countdown signals.
- Create vibrant spaces – integrate public spaces with adjacent businesses, create guidelines for car-free and shared space streets, develop an open space network.
- Pedestrian potential – pedestrian demand, equity, corridor function
- Demand – use GIS to generate high, medium and low generators. Counting pedestrians city wide was not a good idea. They looked at land use, and if it supports walking, then demand will only grow in the area.
- Equity – Uses census data, will redo with new census data, includes low income,



Pedestrian Plan Opportunities

low auto ownerships, disabilities, over 65 under 18, obesity chronic disease and asthma. Coastlines are overrepresented by young and old people that have good income. They took out age and asthma and added low physical activity.

- Corridor Function – prioritized improvements in auto oriented areas, 40% based on demand, 35 % on equity and 25% on transportation of land use. They added in the parks in the city because you lose them in the analysis since they are in SF neighborhoods, yet people walk there and connections to parks are very important.
- Sidewalk and curb ramp data – where are the locations where the investments will yield the most. Prioritize areas that include demand, equity and corridor function.
- Complete and maintain the system – identify a long term strategy and sustained strategy, leverage investments across programs, explore innovative funding tools, ensure accountability and stewardship, monitor performance.
- Special assessments are possible, pedestrian funding areas.
- Performance measures, not a lot of info on them.

\$60-70 million dollars is available between now and 2014, the 60 end is just Bridging the Gap money for signals, walkways, crossing improvements, maintenance.

\$17-23 million for maintenance. \$43-49 million for new infrastructure. 4.7% of new sidewalk projects in Tier 1, 21.2% of new intersection projects in Tier 1.

Early Implementation – Enforcement (crosswalk stings, speed vans), education (school based surveys, KAB survey), encouragement (NH wayfinding, construction zone workgroup), evaluation (crossing flats program), engineering.

Public engagement including walking preferences survey, 1400 responses, community roundtables, district and community council meetings, station area planning and other events including mayoral walk, Mark Fenton)

August 26th – Go to Council for approval.

Commissioners' Comments and Questions

When you consider the 5% of tier 1 that you can tackle given the budget, have you consider creating a critical mass in one area as opposed to spreading it out?

In 07' and 08' we bumped up areas in urban villages that were lacking. Resulted in sidewalks in Broadview and SE Seattle. Balancing factors are included such as tying into existing projects such as road reconstruction and paving. Identifying 5 or 10 corridors that collect many of these factors.

How was topography considered?

It was folded into the long roadway analysis. Vehicle speed was considered as well.

Once the plan is adopted, do you anticipate it being changed based on noisy demand. Can noise trump the plan?

I would say no, but if the neighborhood groups have prioritized it and it has funding, it could. We don't want to necessarily be overly rigid on the priorities. In the past we've listened so much to the squeaky wheel we haven't been equitable in the distribution of pedestrian investments.

Are there design criteria that vary from priority to priority?

Minimum of 6' sidewalks except where there is transit, where it is between 18' and 24'. More work is needed on that model and it might lead to requiring more sidewalk width.

How does it deal with crosswalks and where they should go?

We had a lot of lively discussion about pulling crosswalks back from the intersection, some feel it extends your trip across the walk. Our way of addressing this issue was to add a stop bar.

Another issue is the misalignment of crosswalk and curb cut?

We are definitely trying to correct this issue wherever we can.

I hope that you can provide clear but standards for sidewalk widths.

The sidewalk design handbook does provide this guidance and it is another goal of the plan.

Do you have an inventory of improvements of private improvements that can be added to the database?

Yes, we are working on this.

You talked about vibrancy and vitality as major goals and making connections. Do you have any recommendations for your dept. or other departments to coordinate on the vibrancy side?

It doesn't get into a lot of detail on the benefits of public improvements in the ROW, we discuss it. Natural infrastructure and green attributes are a major of focus of the plan. Some recommendations are about shared space streets where cars move slow and pedestrians are accommodated.