

**Written Questions for SDOT Director Nominee, Greg Spotts**

**1. GOALS: What goals and priorities do you have as Director of the Seattle Department of Transportation and what would you like to accomplish during your first year in the position?**

First and foremost, as SDOT Director, I would ensure that the department's goals align with existing policy goals adopted by the City of Seattle, and that the goals are pursued in the inclusive and unifying spirit of the Mayor's One Seattle vision.

My priorities for the first year would be as follows:

- Conduct an extensive listening tour to walk, bike, roll and ride transit with staff and constituents, inviting stakeholders to show me what's working well and what needs improvement. This outreach will also extend to goods movement and the Port.
- Conduct a rigorous review of the Vision Zero program to identify which interventions in which places are most likely to save lives. This review requires both extensive quantitative analysis and deep engagement with the communities who are most at risk.
- Ensure that SDOT has the people, the systems, and the technology needed to implement best practices in asset management for the inspection, maintenance and repair of Seattle's bridges.
- Bring to life the Transportation Equity Framework by embedding these concepts and techniques in the daily activities and functions of the department.
- Infuse the department with the values of responsiveness, innovation, transparency and accountability; these are the values that guide me as a public sector leader.

**2. EXPERIENCE: How will your experiences working on transportation issues in Los Angeles, California help you to lead and manage the Seattle Department of Transportation and improve transportation in our city?**

I will bring to Seattle a wide variety of experiences from my fourteen years of public service in Los Angeles. My focus as an executive at StreetsLA has been to help Los Angeles become more walkable, bikeable, transit-friendly, safer, greener and climate resilient. I've launched and led programs to improve the business climate for walkable retail corridors, provide safer pedestrian crossings, proactively inspect, clean and maintain the on-street bikeway network, mitigate the urban heat island effect in historically underserved neighborhoods, digitize and systematize the maintenance of 700,000 street trees, speed up the pothole turnaround time, enhance urban biodiversity, improve the streets along park edges, and introduce plug-in vehicles into StreetsLA's fleet.

**a. What modes do you intend to use to move through the city? What percentage of time do you expect to spend on each mode?**

I've arranged a furnished rental near downtown for September and October. I have decided not to bring my personal car to Seattle during this initial period. This autumn I will be relying on walking, biking, transit, taxis and rideshare to get around, occasionally riding in city fleet vehicles when necessary to fulfill my duties. My intent in focusing on these modes is to understand the user experience for active transportation in Seattle's many neighborhoods and to meet constituents along my travels.

I can't predict my mode share, but I am pleased to tell you that over the past twelve months I've averaged 10,000 steps per day as a pedestrian, and I have put approximately 150 miles on the e-bike I purchased in mid-May. Even on vacation, I am a transit user: in Banff, Canada, last week, my rental car was parked until the last day because I was walking and taking the bus. My partner and I even took the bus to our canoe outing.

**3. CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES: In your opinion, what are the biggest opportunities and challenges facing SDOT?**

One of the reasons I was attracted to the SDOT Director job announcement is that SDOT controls nearly every above-ground element of the streetscape. In my view, between SDOT's scope and the climate-forward policies adopted by the City, SDOT is uniquely positioned to lead the nation in holistic, multi-benefit street design that supports active transportation and placemaking. Without the benefit of having started the job, my initial opinion is that SDOT's greatest challenge is ensuring that the department attains and maintains the full confidence of elected officials and all stakeholders that it can manage a large portfolio of assets and programs in an effective, transparent, responsive and accountable manner.

**4. EQUITY: What does Transportation Equity look like to you?**

In my view, transportation equity means that everyone, regardless of location, income, race, background, identity, gender, age and health, has access to attractive and safe mobility options that enhance quality of life. I'm deeply inspired by the Transportation Equity Framework that was recently adopted by SDOT; I will make it my mission to actualize that framework, working closely with the Mayor's Executive General Manager Adiam Emery, the staff at SDOT who have already inspired me and the communities we serve.

**a. What experience do you have in advancing transportation equity for communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, LGBTQ people, women and girls, youth, and seniors?**

I'm very proud that during the pandemic I identified more than \$50 million in new resources for streetscape improvement projects and urban greening in historically underserved neighborhoods. Even during the period early in the pandemic when Los Angeles tax revenue

sharply declined, we were developing projects that could attract funding when the financial picture brightened. When federal Covid aid came through to state and local governments in early 2021, we were ready with innovative proposals for neighborhood cooling and greening. We obtained \$8 million in Los Angeles city funding for cool pavement coatings across 15 underserved neighborhoods, \$2 million for tree planting in these neighborhoods, and two \$1 million federal earmarks for additional cool neighborhood projects. When the State of California launched a quick turnaround Clean California grant program, we were ready with neighborhood greening/biodiversity projects and “streets along park edges” projects in underserved neighborhoods. Many city departments applied for this grant program, but only StreetsLA was awarded competitive funds: \$10 million for neighborhood greening and \$5 million for streets along park edges.

I am passionate about co-creating projects with each community according to the community’s unique history, needs and aspirations. For example, the largest grant I ever obtained was for the Canoga Cooling and Mobility Project, in which we used a small \$200,000 climate resilience planning grant for a year of deep bilingual community outreach and collaborative project development. The community’s compelling vision for shaded multimodal streets then attracted a \$30 million state implementation grant. I truly believe that in today’s environment, projects co-created with underserved communities are far more competitive in attracting funding than projects dictated from city office buildings (and are more likely to be embraced by the community when completed).

Two smaller projects brightened my outlook during the challenges of the pandemic; both pertained to Black Lives Matter. In August 2020, I led the installation of a decorative pavement treatment that was proposed as a collaboration between BLM-LA and the LGBTQIA+ community. We installed the message “All Black Lives Matter” in a design created by a trans artist of color on Hollywood Boulevard alongside Mann’s Chinese Theater. Several months later, another project emerged to spotlight a historic Black church building in Venice that was in danger of possible demolition. Using funding from the City Council member, we installed a Black Lives Matter decorative pavement treatment in front of the church, which assisted the community in demonstrating the value of the historic building and its central role in the Black community of Venice.

I’m also very proud of a variety of projects I’ve led to improve ADA access for mobility impaired persons and the elderly while preserving in place mature healthy trees that are an important part of neighborhood quality of life.

I look forward to meeting the diverse communities across Seattle and developing projects that can support each community’s needs. Rather than a bureaucratic “one size fits all” approach, I believe that public agencies in large cities should be flexible, adaptive and helpful.

**b. How should Seattle ensure equitable investments in transportation infrastructure and programs? Please give examples.**

In visiting Seattle in 2016, 2018 and 2019, I noticed some very sophisticated streetscape and urban design being constructed in places like South Lake Union, Belltown and the waterfront. Often these improvements were funded by real estate development or tourism. I’m excited to

take up the challenge of bringing holistic, thoughtful, culturally relevant urban design to underserved communities in Seattle where there may not be private investment available to fund such improvements. I know that there are examples of high quality, people-oriented streetscape in Seattle's underserved neighborhoods, but there are lengthy corridors like Rainier and Aurora that feel hostile to pedestrians and people on bicycles and can potentially be re-envisioned to meet community needs. The process of identifying priority places for investment should include analysis of quantitative data and the development of qualitative information through collaboration with community.

**c. Are there other opportunities you see for SDOT to lead with equity in its budget, policies, programs, and projects?**

I believe the Transportation Equity Framework (TEF) offers a variety of tools and techniques to guide investment, prioritize projects and lift up the voices of communities who previously may not have had a seat at the table. I've reviewed the framework's recommendations carefully; some are widely recognized best practices, and others are emerging techniques with great promise. Rather than bringing a whole new approach, I intend to empower SDOT staff to fully realize the potential of the framework and I have some ideas in mind on how to actualize those concepts in the daily work of the department. For example, I'm interested in piloting a process that whenever a project design goes to myself or one of the deputy directors for signature, there is a review of which specific TEF recommended tactics were utilized during the design process.

**d. How will SDOT use a race and social justice analysis to prioritize projects in areas with the least investments or in areas with highest concentration of traffic deaths or injuries?**

One example of race and social justice analysis from my own work in Los Angeles is that we collaborated on a study that showed how the communities with low tree canopy of today are the same places as the formerly redlined communities from the 1930s. It's intolerable that racist federal policies from before World War II left an ongoing mark on our cities today, increasing heat exposure and decreasing quality of life for many BIPOC communities. Our team has worked hard to inform our investments in urban cooling and tree planting with these findings, and we've used this analysis to obtain a variety of competitive grants to invest in greening underserved communities.

**e. How will SDOT consider mobility of people who are blind, deaf blind, low vision, or have another disability that prevents them from driving when designing and constructing projects?**

I believe it is essential to embed in our infrastructure features that welcome and support our most vulnerable constituents. I often tell staff that a mobility impaired person's daily life experience can be vastly improved if we provide a safe and attractive path to walk or roll to the bus stop, the library, the park, the mailbox, and the supermarket. Sometimes a seemingly small issue like a sidewalk uplift, a missing curb ramp, or a walk signal that isn't recognizable for a blind user can block someone from meeting their basic needs.

I find inspiration in the "8-80 Cities" concept that if you build infrastructure that works for young children and the elderly, you end up with safe and attractive infrastructure for everyone. My

practice of transportation leadership is informed by the idea that each of us will likely have phases of our life in which we are not able to drive, and we must avoid thinking of active transportation modes as simply an alternative for car owners who may want to avoid traffic.

I would like to ensure that SDOT hires and develops staff who have lived experience with mobility impairments, trains a wide range of staff in best practices and maintains deep and meaningful collaboration with representatives from members of these communities. I've been invited to participate in the 2022 Week Without Driving and I plan to take up that challenge.

**5. LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT: SDOT has roughly 1,000 employees. What is your approach to leadership and what is your approach to management? How will you evaluate current staff and assess whether new policies are needed to ensure a highly motivated and well-trained workforce?**

My approach to leadership is based on aspiration and inspiration. I like to bring stakeholders together around an exciting common vision and then invite folks to come along on the journey towards positive change. I believe that public servants are most engaged and fulfilled in their work when they feel they are contributing to a larger goal. I am not at all a micro-manager and I empower staff to make decisions, which in turn makes their jobs more meaningful and developmentally beneficial.

The staff of SDOT are widely respected on a national level for their expertise, and the organization is admired for delivering transformative projects. My goal as a leader is to focus the team on a clear set of priorities, unleash the creativity and initiative within the individuals and teams across SDOT, and ensure that the elected officials and the public feel confident in the agency's responsiveness, transparency and accountability. An important part of my role is to communicate concisely and consistently to all stakeholders where we are, where we want to go, and how we plan to get there.

As a result of my experience as a management consultant and as director of performance management under former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, I am a firm believer in metrics, deadlines and decisions informed by the insightful analysis of data. In the management of programs and projects, I believe a leader needs to set stretch goals and then create a framework of metrics and milestones to evaluate progress towards those goals. At this stage in my career, I can draw upon many experiences evaluating and strengthening projects and programs, and I bring a variety of analytic tools and techniques to raising the performance level of teams and organizations.

**6. MULTIMODAL/STP/MOVE SEATTLE/STBD/ST3: How do you intend to encourage multimodal transportation systems and community engagement / buy-in, including completion of the Seattle Transportation Plan and development of a replacement for the Move Seattle property tax expiring in 2024? In your answer, please address transit, biking, pedestrians, and freight.**

There are two large pieces of policy that SDOT must get right in the coming years: developing the next transportation funding package and realizing the full potential of Sound Transit 3 with thoughtful routing and station area design. Regarding the funding package, my incoming view is that we need to offer voters the opportunity to replace aging infrastructure with holistic, multi-benefit streetscapes that improve safety, mobility, placemaking and climate resilience. We must aspire to construct climate-informed infrastructure that provides safe and pleasant mobility, shade, urban nature, stormwater infiltration, and comfortable places for the community to gather. I've seen great examples of this kind of holistic multi-benefit streetscape in Seattle; it's one of the things that attracted me to move to the Emerald City.

**a. How do you intend to maximize the transit opportunities with the King County Metro, including deploying Seattle's supplemental sales tax that funds the Seattle Transportation Benefit District?**

SDOT's deep collaboration with King County Metro is commendable and something I would like to build upon. The challenge of the moment is understanding exactly what transit customers will want and need in 2023 and beyond.

The pandemic and remote work have turned transit ridership upside down, disrupting longstanding patterns and changing travel behaviors. For example, the daily number of cars entering and leaving downtown is now just 13 percent below pre-pandemic levels, even though downtown office headcount is down by approximately 60 percent. These figures suggest that a significant number of office workers are now commuting by car instead of transit on the days in which they are not working remotely. At the same time, we have observed hourly workers utilizing transit to get to work throughout the pandemic, and we are also seeing increasing use of transit in hours outside the peak commute times.

In reviewing SDOT's August 16 presentation to this committee on the Seattle Transit Measure, I was impressed with the data-driven approach SDOT has taken to purchasing additional transit service that is informed by pandemic-era ridership patterns. During the presentation, staff indicated that under the present arrangement, SDOT purchases additional frequency on existing bus routes. I'm interested in the possibility that City funds could potentially serve as seed funding to pilot new services to meet an unmet need, such as the mobility needs for residents of Seattle public housing.

**b. How do you intend to maximize transit opportunities with Sound Transit, especially with the implementation of Sound Transit 3's West Seattle-Ballard Link Extension?**

One of the most rewarding roles I've had was Director of Transportation Project Delivery for Mayor Villaraigosa, because I was able to quarterback the city's plan review for billion-dollar megaprojects including Westside Subway Extension, Regional Connector, Exposition Light Rail

and Crenshaw/LAX Light Rail. Across these projects, I've had the privilege to work on the design and siting of dozens of transit stations; some of my proudest moments have been improving pedestrian safety, strengthening bike and bus connections, and providing greenery and shade in these places which sometimes are initially designed in a bare-bones manner to reduce overall project costs. I'm confident that my leadership can help SDOT be a voice to fully realize the potential benefits of Sound Transit 3 while mitigating community concerns about negative impacts.

**c. Would you consider inclusion of protected bicycle lanes as a standard for all road resurfacing projects?**

Based on my early research and initial conversations with staff and stakeholders, the City's Bicycle Master Plan is an effective tool for determining where protected bicycle lanes should be built to complete a citywide all ages and abilities bike network. I fully intend to support projects and routes as called for in the Council-approved Bicycle Master Plan; and will be engaging with staff, subject matter experts, and community as these projects are developed and constructed. I also understand that Council Bill 119601 passed in 2019 requires the SDOT Director to submit a written report to Council if an identified protected bicycle lane in the City's Bicycle Master Plan cannot be implemented due to physical design limitations or financial constraints, and I would meet this requirement and deliver a thorough report to Council, if necessary.

I have also familiarized myself with the Complete Streets Ordinance (Ordinance 122386), adopted in 2007, which directs SDOT to design streets for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and persons of all abilities, while promoting safe operation for all users, including freight. From my work in Los Angeles, I know that considering all modes, as well as the local community context of any project, is a vital part of evolving our transportation systems, and is also one of the most challenging things we do as transportation professionals, especially in cities like Seattle with limited space and ambitious goals.

**d. Many residents who do not or cannot drive rely on sidewalks and streets to connect to transit or to walk, bike, or roll between destinations. People who walk, bike, and roll also represent an oversized portion of traffic injuries and deaths. How do you plan to make connected safe spaces for people to move throughout the city without getting inside of a car?**

Designing, constructing and maintaining attractive bike and pedestrian networks has been one of my top priorities throughout my fourteen year career with the City of Los Angeles. I'm proud of the progress we have made yet humbled by how much work remains to be done. There are many practical and financial challenges facing a city that wants to truly deliver on the promise of a safe and attractive network for active transportation - yet these challenges can be overcome. For example, oftentimes pressure to preserve just a few curbside parking spaces stands in the way of conveying cyclists safely across a busy intersection. Too many of our bike and pedestrian routes have discontinuities that render the route significantly less safe, useful and attractive than it could have been (examples include missing curb ramps, unmarked crosswalks and sidewalk gaps). In my early communications with Seattle community members, I am hearing a hunger for SDOT to decisively execute projects that fully realize the potential for safe and attractive pathways to popular destinations without discontinuities.

**7. CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY The City of Seattle has set a goal to reduce carbon emissions by 82% of 2008 levels by 2030. Currently, 58% of all carbon emissions in Seattle are caused by vehicle traffic and we have decreased our vehicle emissions by just 1%, meaning that we are 81% short of our goal with just 8 years to make up that gap. What solutions will SDOT prioritize to make up that gap?**

Recently I gave a presentation on California's policy framework for Decarbonizing Transportation at the International Road Federation Conference. At the beginning of the presentation, I noted that while California had made enormous progress in reducing carbon emissions from electricity generation, the State has yet to achieve even a small reduction in vehicle miles traveled or vehicle-related carbon emissions. As I laid out the State's menu of policy interventions intended to meet aggressive 2035 and 2040 goals, I asked the audience to consider if these policies will be sufficient to achieve the targeted reductions.

To achieve significant emissions reductions, we will need to cause significant changes in the transportation choices of individuals, and to do that we are going to need to vastly increase the safety and attractiveness of active transportation modes and transit. Incrementalism cannot achieve the desired result.

In my view we are going to need to be creative and collaborative in our approach, co-creating innovations with other city offices and departments including the Office of Sustainability & Environment, City Light, Seattle Public Utilities, the Office of Planning & Community Development and the Office of Housing. One point of inspiration for a whole-city approach to sustainable innovation is the success of the CitiBike bikeshare system in New York, which now moves millions of locals and tourists. The system outperforms others due to a variety of factors including that it's pervasive, convenient and fun.

The Seattle Transportation Plan and the next funding measure offer SDOT the opportunity to articulate an exciting vision for low carbon transportation. I'm looking forward to helping lead the conversation towards a bold and effective plan.

- a. There is a lot of emphasis on using public land to provide for private companies to place EV charging stations, or even for City Light to provide charging infrastructure, for electric cars, trucks, and SUVs. Do you have ideas for how we can use public land for other transportation-related projects -- including providing space for street trees, greenery, pedestrian space, playgrounds, or other space to walk, bike, or roll through the city?**

I'm very proud that our team at StreetsLA has designed and implemented a variety of community enhancement projects including public plazas and biodiversity-supporting greenways. I'm a believer in holistic, multi-benefit streetscapes, such as Dolores Wong Plaza in Los Angeles, where we closed a vehicle slip lane on a hillside and replaced it with a plaza alongside a rain garden.

I do think there's a place on the public right-of-way and also on city properties for EV charging – but it must be creative, multi-benefit and integrated into other activities such as visiting the park



or library. The architecture firm Woods Bagot prepared a fascinating study for Los Angeles called “From Pump to Plug,” demonstrating that gas stations could, in the future, be replaced by green, multifunction community spaces that include electric vehicle charging facilities.

- b. There has been a lot of emphasis from the Federal to the municipal level supporting a move to electric vehicles, with the greatest emphasis on electric cars, trucks, and SUVs. Given the adverse health impacts and level of carbon emissions generated by lithium and cobalt mining – two materials used to produce electric vehicles, as SDOT Director, will you develop charging and/or storage infrastructure for smaller, more efficient EVs that use less rare earth materials such as electric bikes or electric cargo bikes as well?**

I believe we are only at the beginning of the micro-mobility revolution, which will produce all sorts of efficient small EVs if we can create travel lanes and parking places for them. I am a lifelong cyclist who recently purchased an e-bike; I’ve discovered that with the assist up hills I can now visit many more places than I had previously traveled to on a conventional bike. I’m intrigued with the idea of dual rolling lanes for medium speed and low speed – so that personal sized EVs can zip along at 18 miles per hour without disturbing young children cycling at 5-8 miles per hour.

- c. According to the Federal Highway Administration, 60% trips in the US are 5 miles or less, and according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 72% of trips in the US are for running errands or recreation. Only 15% are commute trips. Given that context, in your opinion, how should we prioritize road space to accommodate for the majority of trips, which are short and mostly unrelated to work?**

This is a great question and one that is not given enough consideration in most transportation departments. For example, today’s generation of K-12 students are much more likely to be driven to school than their parents were, increasing congestion and carbon emissions and increasing child obesity due to reduced activity. We need to reverse this trend and doing so could have a wide variety of benefits to students, their families and the broader community. This question is all the more relevant in the emerging world of remote work, which could mean that office workers commute fewer than five days a week and travel at times other than the traditional morning and afternoon peaks. Concurrently, lifestyle changes after the COVID pandemic are spreading trips more evenly across hours of the day.

In my view, bike routes to neighborhood-serving retail and our parks and libraries have great potential to reduce car usage for shorter, non-commute trips. Improving neighborhood connections can also support our Vision Zero goals. On some streets, road space to accommodate walking, biking and rolling trips would mean setting aside and protecting separate space on the road. On other streets, it would mean prioritizing safety and comfort for people walking, biking and rolling in a space shared with vehicles by slowing and calming vehicle traffic. I know Seattle has done good work on both types of streets, and I will be focused on expanding those networks and addressing discontinuities as I described above.

- 8. VISION ZERO: Following a national trend, Seattle has seen an unacceptably high number of traffic collisions this year.**
- a. How will you advance Seattle's Vision Zero goal of zero traffic fatalities by the year 2030?**

I have already heard loud and clear that the number one priority of Seattleites is safety, no matter what mode a person chooses to use. That is why I am committed, between now and the New Year, to conducting a top-to-bottom review of the City's Vision Zero program. Seattle continues to see an increase in deaths and serious injuries in our streets. While this trend is being seen across our country, it doesn't lessen the tragedy that each and every one of these incidents represent.

I'm eager to start working with the SDOT team to conduct this review of Seattle's Vision Zero efforts. This review will include rigorous analysis of collision data to learn more about where crashes are occurring, the factors that are contributing to these incidents, and the effectiveness of safety-related interventions that have been installed on Seattle's streetscape. I intend to work with the team to review our Vision Zero engineering strategies and push the team to consider new, innovative approaches to safety-focused street design. I am committed to publishing a new Vision Zero Action Plan within the first six months of my tenure to set our course toward safer streets.

I also want to see where there are opportunities in the first few months to take swift action to make our right-of-way safer for our most vulnerable users; I will be working with staff to implement those early actions. I'm excited to hear directly from you about what Vision Zero interventions are important to your constituents, and I want to hear from residents and businesses in all corners of the city about what is important to them and how Vision Zero improvements can help. I also know that we can't solve this problem on our own and look forward to forging strong partnerships with the Washington State Department of Transportation, Sound Transit, the Port of Seattle, and King County Metro, as well as with community safety advocates.

I'm confident that we can make progress toward Vision Zero and excited to lead SDOT as we chart the future for this priority program. I am certain of one thing: the path to reducing traffic related injuries and deaths begins with every one of SDOT's more than 1,000 staff making safety a central focus of their daily work; we require a One Seattle approach to make the progress that Seattle needs.

**b. Approximately 25% of Seattleites live on a street without sidewalks. How do you intend on addressing this infrastructure gap so that neighbors, including children and elders, can get around their communities safely?**

We also have sidewalk gaps in Los Angeles, which can be a challenging problem to solve at scale due to resource constraints and limited right-of-way. I'm very proud that StreetsLA has designed and built many projects to create new sidewalks, often funded by competitive grants such as Safe Routes to School and the California Active Transportation Program. Typically, these projects improve access to schools or transit nodes. I've worked on several such projects that required complex designs to make room for sidewalks, such as the creation of a retaining wall to make new horizontal space on a hillside. Along residential streets, it might sometimes be necessary to think creatively about the allocation of space and the design of the pedestrian walkway. In July I was impressed with the roadway-grade pedestrian path creating pedestrian access to Virgil Flaim Park, which included the planting of new trees as well.

**c. Much of Seattle's safe protected bicycle infrastructure is concentrated in the areas in or near downtown and the University of Washington and does not connect to areas south of I-90. How do you plan to expand and connect areas outside of the central core via separated protected bicycle infrastructure?**

Please refer to my bike-related answers to questions 6 and 7. Generally speaking, SDOT should be working closely with communities to install bike lanes according to the adopted Bicycle Master Plan, utilizing established and emerging best practices in holistic, multi-benefit street design. As I get to know the SDOT staff, I am discovering there are many very talented and forward-thinking designers ready to collaborate with communities to create best-in-class bike infrastructure, and staff are also passionately committed to implementing the Transportation Equity Framework, infusing equity considerations into all project decisions, and listening to the communities we serve, especially those who have been underserved in the past, to address their needs and desires.

**d. Under your leadership, how will SDOT prioritize safety of all people moving through public spaces over expediency of private vehicle travel?**

I believe that a department-wide Safety First culture requires using updated data and analysis to question prior assumptions and decisions, and to make new decisions. In most US cities, it is common to find signal timing that doesn't provide enough time for a child or senior to cross a busy arterial; or signal timing that asks a pedestrian or cyclist to wait several minutes in order to cross the street. I know that Seattle has made progress in providing additional crossing time for pedestrians and has seen positive results by providing a head start for pedestrians at signalized intersections (leading pedestrian intervals). I want to support the shift underway from the older philosophy of maximizing vehicle throughput to one that prioritizes safety and the activation of a vibrant public right-of-way. These changes also reflect the importance of safety for people in vehicles too – making our streets and intersections more predictable and providing designated spaces for different modes improves safety for all. These are systemic challenges at large scale that can't be

implemented overnight; but I am committed to bringing the safety, mobility and equity lenses to decisions large and small, and to continual progress and improvement.

- 9. BRIDGES: Seattle is a city connected by bridges and the city has suffered from the closure of the West Seattle Bridge during the past two years. How will you apply in Seattle your experience upgrading or building bridges in LA?**
- a. Before voters consider a renewal of the multi-year property tax levy called “Move Seattle” in 2024, how do you plan to expedite repairs to many of Seattle’s bridges, especially those ranking ‘poor’ by the audit conducted in 2020 and those originally promised for seismic upgrades from the 2015 levy?**

As I said in my remarks to the Transportation and Seattle Public Utilities Committee, one of my first areas of focus will be on bridges. I want to make sure that we are using best practices in asset management to maintain, repair, retrofit, and, when necessary, replace our bridge assets. I appreciated the opportunity to tour the University Bridge with Councilmember Pedersen on the day I was announced as Mayor Harrell’s nominee. I’ve already begun familiarizing myself with the work being done to improve Seattle’s bridges and I’ve been researching best practices across west coast cities.

I think it is essential that we accelerate SDOT’s work on bridge repair, seismic reinforcement and maintenance of structural and mechanical systems. We need to build confidence among the residents of Seattle that SDOT is embarked on a strategic and sequenced plan that takes care of our bridge assets in a proactive manner, ensuring the safety of the traveling public and the resiliency of our transportation network for people and goods. I have seen the beginnings of that good work and am committed to analyze, systematize, and accelerate these efforts, including the completion of the bridge audit recommendations. I plan to communicate frequently to you and the public on this topic. On a case-by-case basis, I am willing to involve outside subject matter experts if I determine that such input is needed to further strengthen our people, systems and technology across the full spectrum of bridge activities.

Regarding outside funding, I will be working with SDOT staff to strategically and aggressively pursue grant opportunities for bridges. I will also be ensuring that we are fully expending available budget for bridge maintenance, supporting the acceleration of work on grant funds recently received, and assessing the Move Seattle Levy bridge commitments to finish strong on the Levy.

- 10. FEDERAL/STATE DOLLARS: How will you ensure that Seattle pursues only relevant federal and state grants in a timely manner for Seattle’s priority needs without overcommitting Seattle’s resources toward unnecessary projects that require City subsidies for either capital or operating costs?**

With passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), we have an unprecedented opportunity to partner with the Federal government on critical city priorities including reducing vehicular

carbon emissions, Vision Zero, bridge repair and replacement, and urban greening. The structure of the BIL allows us to pursue a strategic multi-year approach to our grant-seeking, working with community to identify priorities that align with Federal funding opportunities. In Los Angeles I've been an advocate for thoughtfully and effectively pursuing competitive grants to realize city priorities, with a clear-eyed understanding about the local match and the operations and maintenance costs presented by such projects. Consistently I've used innovation, sustainability and equity as frameworks for developing competitive project proposals and I am confident SDOT can apply similar strategies to great success. The Mayor has asked me to bring a climate lens, a safety lens and an equity lens to each important decision, and I intend to apply these lenses to the development of grant proposals.

#### **11. PARKING ENFORCEMENT:**

- a. The City has moved the Parking Enforcement Division into SDOT. In your view, are any steps still needed to integrate that team into SDOT?**

This is a great question that I intend to ask Parking Enforcement Officers, their supervisors and their union representatives when I officially start in this role in September. Transferring functions and staff across departments can be complex, and I anticipate that there are still some steps needed to fully integrate the officers into the department. I want to cultivate a strong and motivated team with opportunities for advancement – no matter which division or how long an employee has been working at SDOT.

- b. Seattle is seeing an increase of illegally parked Recreational Vehicles (RVs) throughout the City. How do you plan to work with the Mayor's Office, other City government departments, and the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) to address this in a compassionate and effective manner?**

First and foremost, I understand the need to begin from a place of compassion while we work together to resolve these multi-faceted issues. I intend to work closely with the Mayor's Office, City Council, City departments, regional partners like the KCRHA and residents living in vehicles as we address the need to resolve the illegally parked vehicles. I will lean on our subject matter experts in the Human Services Department, Office of Housing and our social service providers to guide our strategies related to vehicle resident outreach, engagement, and long-term housing strategies. I plan to complement their work with SDOT staff and resource coordination that can help ensure our streets remain safe and accessible for everyone.

- c. Seattle is seeing an increase in placement of illegal eco blocks being placed in public parking by nearby property owners in order to control who does or does not use public space in front of their properties. Would you have SDOT enforce removal of these illegal eco blocks?**

I see it as our responsibility to ensure the streets are safe and accessible for all. In instances where there is an immediate safety concern for any object placed in the right-of-way, I would recommend a swift and efficient response to address the issue. In locations where there is not an immediate safety hazard to the traveling public, my recommended approach would be to work towards achieving compliance by property owners and any other persons placing such objects.

**12. RELATIONS WITH COUNCIL: What is your vision of an ideal relationship between the SDOT Director and City Council? How do you intend to keep the City Council informed of important SDOT issues in a timely manner? How would you handle conflicting priorities between the Council and Mayor? How would you ensure district Councilmembers are kept informed in a timely manner regarding transportation issues in their district?**

I'm looking forward to the opportunity to get to know each of you, not just through regular formal briefings, but through exploring your districts with you in person. I'm interested in every aspect of the neighborhoods you represent- not just the streets but also the parks, the small businesses, the housing types, the history and the aspirations of each community. In Los Angeles I've had the privilege of collaborating continuously with fifteen City Council members and their staff- it's wired into the way I approach daily business. I would like to engage early and often regarding issues, opportunities, and projects of interest to you. Three early themes we could work on together could be safety, sustainability and equity –I would love to collaborate with each of you on how SDOT's Transportation Equity Framework can be actualized in the communities you represent. I haven't worked in a hybrid system with district and at-large Council Members before, so I'm very interested to learn from Councilmembers Mosqueda and Nelson how I can support them in their important citywide work.

In addition to touring your districts with you, I would like to offer regular one-on-one check-ins at a cadence that works for each of you, whether quarterly, bi-monthly or monthly. Finally, I know some department directors provide reports to their committees at regular intervals; I would be happy to do the same for the Transportation & SPU Committee.

**13. What is one thing you are looking forward to most about moving to Seattle?**

When I met with SDOT's senior leadership team, I asked everyone to introduce themselves by mentioning one of their "happy places" in Seattle, preferably a public space. Nearly every person spoke passionately about a place of urban nature within city limits. I could feel a deep personal connection to urban nature across the staff, and I wondered if that is part of Seattleites' identity. On that same trip I visited Ravenna Park and Green Lake- two of the happy places that were mentioned. Both were soulful and memorable. I've made a list of the places that came up, and I plan to visit every one of them.