



# SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

February 25, 2019

Sam Zimbabwe  
Seattle Department of Transportation  
PO Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124

Dear Mr. Zimbabwe,

Congratulations on your appointment by Mayor Durkan to serve as Director of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) for a term through January 1, 2023. To be successful, a director needs to work constructively with both the Executive branch and the City Council. A positive working relationship requires a director to be responsive to Council needs and priorities.

This letter serves to express the City Council's performance expectations of the SDOT Director. These expectations provide a basis for the Council's evaluation of you, if and when you are brought forward for reconfirmation. Council expectations are intended to add to the Mayor's expectations and the director's responsibilities established in the City Charter and Seattle Municipal Code. This letter has been placed in Appointment File 01250.

### **Relationship with Council:**

The director is expected to maintain a constructive working relationship with the Council, as demonstrated by:

- Prompt and complete responses to Council information inquiries.
- Pro-active updates on policy development, major capital projects, operational concerns and financial matters of significance, so that the Council is informed of significant changes or controversies before the information reaches the media and/or the Executive submits a request for Council action.
- Pro-active updates to Councilmembers representing Seattle's 7 council districts about SDOT work in those districts
- Dependable implementation of formal policy direction provided by the Council.
- Assistance in the research and development of Council policy initiatives.

### **Equity**

- Advance the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative, including developing and implementing equity outcomes for all SDOT programs and services
- Implement the SDOT-related elements of the City's Age Friendly Action Plan, prioritizing action items that support optimal aging for people of color, immigrants/refugees, English language learners, LGBTQ community members, and women.
- Equitably manage SDOT public assets, programs, and services to maximize mobility, safety, and accessibility for people of all ages, languages, ethnicities, genders, race, and abilities.



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- Develop progressive programs, policies, and investments that advance equity and close historical gaps in accessibility and structural inequalities caused by past transportation planning and policies.

## **Public Communications and Constituent Responsiveness**

- Develop a standard of practice of high-quality customer service and courtesy to the public provided by department staff, consultants, and contractors.
- Provide timely information and assistance to the general public, small businesses, and other stakeholders who may be affected by projects or changes in policies.
- Review the content of SDOT's public notices to ensure the public has a clear understanding of the nature and scope of the project. (For example, if road paving also includes other work, such as the addition of curb bulbs.)
- Conduct inclusive and culturally responsive outreach to relevant stakeholders with a focus on achieving equity outcomes.
- Prioritize communicating to our constituencies in the language they speak and increase diversification of languages in SDOT materials and social media.

## **Personnel Management Approach**

The director is expected to demonstrate strong management skills, including:

- Develop and maintain strong morale among employees.
- Provide and maintain an inclusive work environment that offers equitable opportunities for all in hiring, promotions, and work assignments
- Work collaboratively with SDOT employees to establish goals and improve performance while also hearing their ideas and concerns.
- Become familiar with the recommendations from the Mayor's Anti-Harassment Interdepartmental Team (IDT), and develop an IDT implementation plan that will create more accountability, transparency, and equity in the workplace.

## **Capital Projects Delivery and Transparency**

- Complete the Center City Bike Network, as described in Resolution 31826, allowing individuals and families alike to navigate the city in low-stress environments and within protected infrastructure.
- Contribute to the implementation of enhanced reporting requirements for SDOT capital projects, as described in Council Resolution [31853](#)
- Achieve the targets set in the Move Seattle Levy "reset" to guide our delivery of programs and projects through the remaining years of the Levy.
- Work with the Levy Oversight Committee on more thorough, streamlined, and consistent reporting.
- Share more information about project costs and trade-offs to the Pedestrian, Bike, Transit and Freight Advisory boards as we work to prioritize, develop and implement projects more realistically within the parameters of Levy funding available for each modal program.



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- Brief the Sustainability & Transportation Committee on Levy performance each quarter, with a commitment to transparency on cost estimates and resource constraints to the best of your knowledge.

## Right of Way Allocation

- Ensure that the department prioritizes the implementation of Vision Zero strategies while working towards moving goods and people more efficiently through this city.
- Adopt principles to guide the prioritization of different modes of transportation, when modal plans or projects conflict, that prioritize the movement of goods and people as opposed to vehicles.
- Ensure that deployment of emerging technologies in the transportation system are designed to serve pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders.
- Develop and implement a strategy to integrate new mobility options into the transportation network in a safe and sustainable manner.

## Inter-Department and Regional Collaboration

- Foster cooperative partnerships with other local governments, local transit agencies, and the State and Federal government to develop good public transportation policy and deliver local and regional transportation projects.

## Vision for the Future

- Plan for a system that adapts to changing transportation habits and trends and provides for and prioritizes high-quality options for getting around without a car.
- Develop long-range policies for Seattle's public realm and transportation system that support the City's affordability, livability, climate, and environmental stewardship goals.

The Seattle City Council looks forward to working cooperatively with you to address the transportation challenges facing our city. Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Mike O'Brien  
Chair, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

Bruce Harrell  
Council President

cc: Jenny A. Durkan, Mayor, City of Seattle  
Seattle City Council Members  
Kirstan Arestad, Central Staff Director