

# Long-term Recommendations for Safe Start Permitting

Updates to Outdoor Dining, Vending, Merchandise Display, and Street & Sidewalk Activities Programs

*Alyse Nelson, Joel Miller*

# Our Vision, Mission, Values, & Goals

**Vision:** Seattle is a thriving equitable community powered by dependable transportation

**Mission:** to deliver a transportation system that provides safe and affordable access to places and opportunities

Committed to **6 core values:**

- Equity
- Safety
- Mobility
- Sustainability
- Livability
- Excellence

# Presentation outline

- Background
- Outreach summary
- Timeline
- Proposed changes



# Introduction



Outdoor dining



Merchandise display



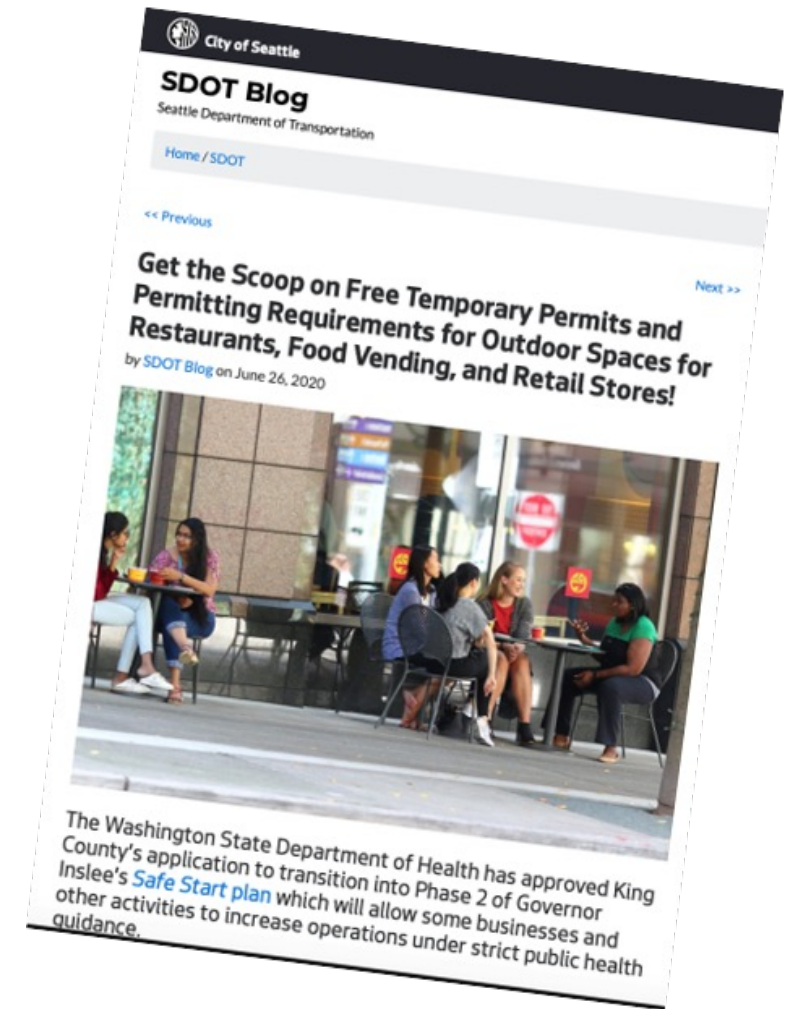
Vending




Street activation

# Safe Start program background

- Began in Summer 2020
- Expanded our outdoor dining, vending, merchandise display, and street closure permitting options to support businesses during the pandemic
- Streamlined & free permits
- Received \$300k in federal recovery funding to support the program
- Issued 300+ Safe Start permits to-date
- Program ends in 2023



# Policy support



**SEATTLE'S TRANSPORTATION EQUITY FRAMEWORK**


**A community workgroup leads the way in building a more just and equitable transportation future**

Our transportation system is the direct result of institutional racism, and we take our role in ending it seriously. Elevating community voices not traditionally heard in transportation policy and operations is a critical need. Since 2019, we committed resources and collaborated with 11 community members and now have a framework with over 200 tactics focused on equity. Members represent Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and vulnerable communities. They are connected to local organizations in the Seattle-King County region and apply their experiences and professional knowledge to identify actions toward resolving transportation-related challenges. The resulting framework will guide the actions of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) employees for years to come. We are honored by the workgroup's dedication and contributions to centering race and social justice in the city of Seattle.

**The Need**  
A history of racist policies and disinvestment has created inequities in our transportation system. The long-term impacts of racism limit access to opportunities and wealth. Results include longer commutes for communities of color than their white counterparts due to displacement and often less access to high-quality transit service. While communities of color contribute less to pollution, they disproportionately experience the impacts. Incorporating this new framework into department policies and operations is a step toward addressing these issues.

Equity is a measure of fair treatment, opportunities and outcomes across race, gender, class and other dynamics.

Contact Information: (206) 684-5142 | [transportationequity@seattle.gov](mailto:transportationequity@seattle.gov)



Seattle Department of Transportation

**CITY OF SEATTLE  
PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN**



June 2017

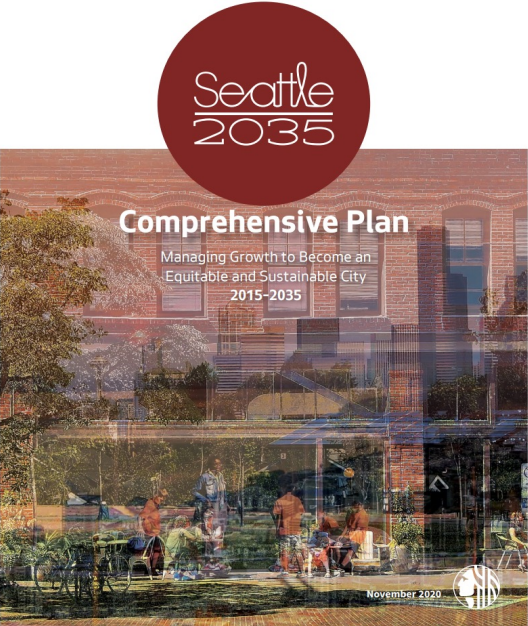


Seattle Climate Action

April 2018




**City of Seattle**  
Mayor Jenny A. Durkan



**Seattle  
2035**

**Comprehensive Plan**  
Managing Growth to Become an  
Equitable and Sustainable City  
2015-2035

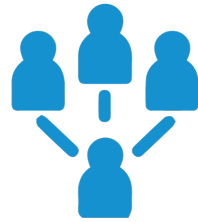
November 2020

# Safe Start outreach 2020 - present



## Surveys

- General survey with over 10,000 responses
- Surveys to participating and non-participating businesses
- Surveys and interviews with vendors



## Community Meetings

- Disability rights groups
- Business advocacy groups
- Internal stakeholders
- Transportation advocates



## BIPOC-focused Outreach

- 2020 RET on Title 15
- Our Transportation Equity Workgroup
- 1x1 interviews with BIPOC stakeholders, businesses, and community groups



## Evaluations

- Safe Start 1.0
- Seattle Together Streets
- Market Streets



## Public Awareness

- Blog posts
- Web updates
- SEPA
- Stakeholder engagement

# Safe Start outreach to-date

## Support for Safe Start Permits:



**90%**

Cafés in the  
curb space



**90%**

Sidewalk cafés



**90%**

Street closures  
for dining and  
shopping



**89%**

Food trucks or  
carts in curb  
spaces



**83%**

Food carts on  
sidewalks



**65%**

Sidewalk retail  
displays



**59%**

Retail displays  
in curb spaces

Source: Summer 2021 public and business community survey regarding the Safe Start street use permitting program.



# Timeline moving forward



# Overall Goals

- Continue the vibrancy, livability and resilience benefits from the Safe Start COVID response
- Lower barriers to participation throughout Seattle for communities and BIPOC-owned businesses, including vendors
- Provide new tools and options for activating Seattle's public space
- Make the program financially sustainable
- Build flexibility into our approach



# Programmatic Goals

## Outdoor Dining

- Plan for longer lasting, sturdy structures
- Encourage year-round vibrancy
- Ensure adequate curb space for passenger and freight loading

## Merchandise Display

- Simplify process for simple storefront displays

## Vending

- Help BIPOC-owned small-business
- Allow more partnership opportunities for food trucks and other businesses, including breweries
- Allow food truck “pods” where appropriate
- Add more opportunities for new vending businesses in Seattle

## Street Activation

- Encourage more community and business use of Seattle’s streets, including seasonal and year-round activations

# Proposed changes: outdoor dining

- Ordinance

- No substantive modifications to SMC Ch. 15.16

- Fee Schedule

- Long-term permit issuance: \$1,220 + \$200/additional area
- Renewal: \$588
- Seasonal issuance: \$500
- No occupation fees
- Additional hourly review may be required

- Director's Rule

- Adding seasonal permit (April – Oct)
- Enhanced standards on structure designs
- Maximum length of 40 feet
- Emergency access gaps
- Platforms allowed in more cases for sidewalk cafes, allowed but not required for curbspace cafes
- Permittee responsibilities for maintenance and operation

# Proposed changes: vending

- Ordinance

- Removes:

- 50-foot brick and mortar setback rule
    - Two trucks & two carts per block face limit moved to Director's Rule
    - Restriction to allow for vending of more types of goods
    - Prohibition against vending in areas zoned neighborhood residential and near schools

- Fee Schedule

- Issuance fee

- \$950 for year-long permit
    - \$533 renewal
    - \$200 for 4-month trial permit
    - \$75 for temporary event permit

- Occupation fee unchanged

- Director's Rule

- Establishes:

- Setbacks, review guidelines, and program rules to manage new siting standards
    - Two trucks & two carts per block face limit remains, with exceptions allowed
    - New 4-month "trial" vending permit
    - Vendors or adjacent owners may apply
    - Permittee responsibilities for maintenance and operation



# Proposed changes: merchandise display

- Ordinance

- New chapter 15.15 is added to SMC to clarify display regulations

- Fee Schedule

*Furniture zone only*

- First issuance: \$1,200
- Renewal: \$588
- Seasonal issuance: \$500
- No occupation fees
- Additional hourly review may be required

- Director's Rule

- New Director's Rule is added
- Adding seasonal permit (April – Oct)
- Remove permit requirements for merchandise display in the frontage zone
- Disallowed in the curbspace except as part of a street activation permit
- Include diverters for cane detectability
- Permittee responsibilities for maintenance and operation



# Proposed changes: street activation

- Ordinance

- No modifications to SMC

- Fee Schedule

- Year-round (24/7, public)
  - \$200 issuance fee
- Seasonal (public)
  - \$75 issuance
- Temporary/recurring (public)
  - \$75 issuance
- Temporary/recurring (private)
  - \$910 issuance
  - \$150 recurrence
- Additional hourly review fee may be required

- Program requirements

- Allow ongoing street closures to support business, with both full-year and seasonal options
- Single-business closures will only be allowed if public seating or community programming are provided
- Full-year or seasonal permits will be issued for public uses
- Private street and sidewalk closures will be allowed for shorter duration events only

# Proposed changes: general

- Ordinance

- Allow some uses of right-of-way without a permit if user adheres to standards in applicable SDOT Director's Rules.
- Allow exceptions to insurance requirements when permitting specified minor uses of right-of-way by Director's Rule.
- Allow variations and exceptions to indemnity agreement requirements by Director's Rule.
- Establish ability to close old applications and permits when no activity has occurred.



# Questions?

## Stay in touch:



Alyse Nelson: [alyse.nelson@seattle.gov](mailto:alyse.nelson@seattle.gov)

Joel Miller: [joel.miller@seattle.gov](mailto:joel.miller@seattle.gov)



[www.seattle.gov/transportation](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation)