

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION 32145

..title

A RESOLUTION relating to transportation infrastructure improvement and maintenance; responding to Resolution 32137, regarding the establishment and recommendations of a Transportation Funding Task Force to develop policy and funding recommendations for long term transportation infrastructure needs, with specific focus on building out Seattle’s sidewalk network, improving existing sidewalks, improving pavement condition, and replacing or rehabilitating aging bridges.

..body

WHEREAS, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is responsible for the maintenance and operations of approximately \$40 billion worth of assets including streets, sidewalks, bridges, traffic signals, the Seattle Streetcar, retaining walls, areaways, trees and other significant publicly-owned infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, SDOT has developed an asset management approach based on lifecycle cost analyses of the department's most valuable assets, including existing sidewalks and the City’s bridges and paving; and

WHEREAS, SDOT estimates that the average Pavement Condition Index score in 2024 for arterial streets is 61 (on a 100-point scale); and SDOT’s 2020 Asset Status & Condition Report identified an Asset Sustainability Ratio of 0.4 for arterial streets, which is below the target ratio of 1.0 to maintain existing pavement quality; and

WHEREAS, a 2020 City of Seattle Audit of Seattle’s Vehicle Bridge Maintenance found that the City needed to spend more on bridge maintenance to preserve and extend the life of the structures and that, as of 2019, 29 percent of bridges were in good condition, 65 percent were in fair condition, and six percent were in poor condition and that, over the previous year, the percentage of bridges in fair and poor condition had increased more than the percentage in good condition; and

1 WHEREAS, approximately 27 percent of Seattle’s streets are missing sidewalks, and in April
2 2024, the City Council adopted a 20-year Seattle Transportation Plan (STP) that includes
3 a goal of constructing traditional sidewalks or alternative pedestrian pathways to
4 eliminate these gaps in the sidewalk network; and

5 WHEREAS, the City’s 2021 sidewalk audit identified opportunities for increasing sidewalk
6 maintenance and providing increased community access; and

7 WHEREAS, the resources needed to achieve the STP’s new sidewalk goals and catching up with
8 sidewalk repair needs, pavement preservation and bridge replacement and rehabilitation
9 over the next 20-30 years add up to several billion dollars; and

10 WHEREAS, the Levy Oversight Committee’s letter to the City Council recommended additional
11 funding sources to meet citywide transportation needs; and

12 WHEREAS, the City Council has passed, and the Mayor has signed, Council Bill 120788,
13 submitting a 2024 Transportation Levy proposal to Seattle voters that, if approved, will
14 allow SDOT to accelerate the rate at which it delivers new sidewalks and sidewalk
15 repairs while establishing a proactive bridge preventative maintenance program; and

16 WHEREAS, achieving the Durable Infrastructure Solution goals established in the 2024
17 Transportation Levy, as well as the STP’s 20- and 30-year goals are beyond the scale of
18 what can be funded through the 2024 levy proposal, or any single levy lid lift measure;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, in Resolution 32137, the Council provided direction on the composition, scope, and
21 schedule of the Transportation Funding Task Force; and

1 WHEREAS, the Council and Mayor would like to engage Seattle residents and transportation
2 stakeholders in developing a plan to meet these long-term infrastructure goals through a
3 combination of policy changes and funding strategies; NOW, THEREFORE,

4 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE**
5 **MAYOR CONCURRING, THAT:**

6 Section 1. The Council and Mayor propose that, upon voter approval of the 2024
7 Transportation Levy, a Transportation Funding Task Force be convened by the Seattle
8 Department of Transportation (SDOT) to evaluate and recommend potential policy changes and
9 funding strategies that will improve and maintain the City’s transportation infrastructure, with a
10 particular focus on bridges, pavement condition, and sidewalks. The Council and Mayor will
11 work together to appoint a Task Force made up of interested public stakeholders that represent
12 the diverse perspectives of neighborhoods, businesses, accessibility and mobility advocates,
13 labor, the development community, and subject matter experts in the area of transportation
14 project delivery and funding. The Council will confirm Task Force appointments through a
15 future resolution.

16 In support of the Task Force, SDOT will lead a technical working group to support these
17 efforts that will include staff from the City Attorney’s Office, City Finance, Seattle Department
18 of Construction and Inspections, Seattle Public Utilities, and other relevant departments.

19 Section 2. At a minimum, the Transportation Funding Task Force will:

20 1. Review contextual and background materials to inform recommendations including
21 SDOT’s approach to asset management, related lifecycle cost analyses, City audits for sidewalk
22 repair and bridge maintenance, current sidewalk management and repair policies; the current

1 condition of pavement, sidewalk, and bridge assets, project and program delivery methods, and
2 strategies to sustain maintenance and preservation of these assets;

3 2. Develop an understanding of current revenue streams, funding constraints, and risks to
4 those funding streams sustainably resourcing the Department’s work;

5 3. Explore and recommend funding and delivery strategies for maintaining or improving
6 the condition of Seattle’s transportation assets, including by:

7 a. Assessing strategies to improve the existing sidewalk network, including
8 changes in state and local policies, point of sale requirements and development of City programs
9 to assist or supplement low-income households with sidewalk repairs;

10 b. Exploring and recommending new strategies for accelerating the delivery of
11 new sidewalks or alternative pathways where no pathways exist today. The Task Force should
12 review and consider all implications of potential tools, including development requirements,
13 changes in State and local policies that may allow the City to deliver more sidewalks at lower
14 cost, and approaches that may better align City resources with the Seattle Transportation Plan
15 (STP) sidewalk delivery priorities and goals;

16 c. Reviewing and recommending potential external funding and finance
17 opportunities to sustain and maintain the City’s bridges in a state of good repair, including
18 rehabilitating or replacing bridges nearing the end of their useful life, such as federal and state
19 grant opportunities, low-cost financing options, bonding and tolling; and

20 d. Recommending policies and funding strategies to accelerate the pace of
21 delivery of projects that will improve and sustain arterial pavement condition in a state of good
22 repair; and

1 4. Explore currently legal or feasible funding strategies that could allow the City to better
2 meet long-term infrastructure goals as established in the STP or indicated through the Task
3 Force’s review of SDOT’s asset management approach.

4 Section 3. Upon voter approval of the 2024 Transportation Levy, the Council and Mayor
5 will work together to appoint members representing the public stakeholders cited in Section 1 of
6 this resolution and initiate the work of the Transportation Funding Task Force by June 1, 2025.
7 The Task Force shall deliver its final report of findings and recommendations to the Council and
8 Mayor by December 31, 2027.

9 The Task Force’s final report should include a list of recommended actions to achieve the
10 objectives cited in Section 2 of this resolution, along with rationales for those recommendations
11 and analysis of alternative recommendations considered by the Task Force; and a recommended
12 schedule for implementation.

13 Section 4. Nothing in this resolution is meant to preclude the Council or Mayor from
14 proposing or adopting policies sooner than the completion of the Task Force’s work in order to
15 preserve and increase options to maintain and improve the City’s transportation operations and
16 infrastructure.

1 Adopted by the City Council the 24th day of September, 2024,
2 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this 24th day of
3 September, 2024.

4 

5 President _____ of the City Council

6 The Mayor concurred the 3rd day of October, 2024.

7 

8 Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

9 Filed by me this 3rd day of October, 2024.

10 

11 Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

12 (Seal)