

The City of Seattle

Ordinance _____

Council Bill _____

..title

An ordinance relating to traffic safety; applying traffic safety best practices such as the Safe System Approach and Vision Zero Action Plan guiding principles in exercising traffic administration authority; establishing study, reporting, and prioritization standards; and aligning rulemaking and project delivery with proven safety countermeasures; amending Sections 11.16.120, 11.16.180, 11.16.200, 11.16.220, and 11.16.340 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

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Recitals:

It is the intent of the Council to explore a new contract requirement applicable to all City of Seattle contractors to install and maintain truck side guards, also known as lateral protective devices.

Be it ordained by The City of Seattle as follows:

Section 1. The City finds and declares:

A. Vision Zero is a strategy, implemented at the city or community-level, for eliminating all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while increasing safe, healthy, and equitable mobility.

B. The Vision Zero strategy is proactive and preventative, emphasizing infrastructure, mechanical design, and policies that minimize the risk of severe injuries or fatalities.

C. The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) committed to Vision Zero in 2015 and set the goal of ending traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets by 2030.

D. As a framework for its implementation of Vision Zero, SDOT has adopted the Safe System Approach, adapted from the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy, centered on multiple, redundant layers of protection to help prevent collisions and to reduce the severity when collisions do occur.

E. SDOT's periodically updated Vision Zero Action Plan, which describes the ways in which the department is working towards the City's 2030 goal, incorporates both Vision Zero principles and the Safe System Approach.

F. In 2016, there were 433 serious and fatal collisions for pedestrians on Seattle city streets and 29 serious and fatal collisions for bicycles, including three fatalities. These numbers are a subset of the total 11,603 collisions on Seattle streets that were reported to the Seattle Police Department.

G. In 2024, the last year for which SDOT's Annual Traffic Report is available, there were 31 fatalities on Seattle city streets, including ten pedestrians and one bicyclist. In addition, there were 61 serious injury crashes involving pedestrians and 45 involving bicyclists. There were 5,252 crashes where police were dispatched to the scene.

H. Pedestrians, people using wheelchairs, bicyclists, and others using sidewalks or traditionally pedestrian or bike pathways are considered vulnerable populations when discussing the use and management of the right-of-way.

I. The City is not on pace to achieve its goal of ending traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets by 2030.

J. Each life lost or constrained due to crashes represents not only loss and grief for affected loved ones but an individual's unrealized potential.

K. It is appropriate that SDOT examine its current policies and practices and determine whether there are opportunities to take new preventive actions in line with the City's Vision Zero goal.

L. In addition to prevention, the provision of safe, healthy, and equitable mobility on all Seattle city streets requires both appropriate crash response and crash data analysis that supports mitigation of identified hazards.

M. It is appropriate that SDOT continue to periodically examine its current policies and practices and determine whether there are opportunities to take new actions, related to crash response and crash data analysis, in line with the City's Vision Zero goal.

N. SDOT seeks to improve the safety of the City's transportation network by learning from the best practices of other jurisdictions and research entities such as the National Association of City Transportation Officials, the Transportation Research Board, and others.

O. SDOT values its partnership with counterparts within King County and the State of Washington, which ensure the coordination of efforts to make shared roadways, bridges, highways, and their exits safe for all users.

P. The City Council values proactive relationships with county and state transportation partners to guide construction of new and ongoing projects.

Q. SDOT is required to seek design feedback from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) related to all onramps to and offramps from city streets that connect to roadways that WSDOT maintains.

R. When WSDOT does not provide design feedback in a timely manner, SDOT's ability to increase safe, healthy, and equitable mobility may be compromised.

S. The Seattle Municipal Code authorizes the Transportation Director and the Traffic Engineer to undertake studies, develop designs, and inform the construction of the City's transportation network, elements of which include signals, signs, crosswalk markings, traffic flow, and speeds.

Section 2. It is the intent of the City Council that the Seattle Department of Transportation's (SDOT's) Vision Zero Action Plan 2024 Update ("Vision Zero Action Plan"), or its successor document, is adopted as the City's guide to advance roadway safety goals. The Vision Zero Action Plan includes over 20 broad strategies and over 80 actions that support the City's goal of ending traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets by 2030.

Section 3. SDOT is required to obtain written feedback from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on its designs for onramps and offramps to roads that WSDOT maintains. The City Council requests that WSDOT return onramp

and offramp design feedback to SDOT within a reasonable amount of time, but in no case more than 180 days.

Section 4. Section 11.16.120 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 126756, is amended as follows:

11.16.120 Director of Transportation – Authority

The Director of Transportation is authorized:

A. ~~((To increase the maximum speed allowed upon arterial streets))~~ To set posted maximum speed limits on arterial streets consistent with current consensus best practices and informed by Vision Zero goals and the Safe System Approach and as allowable under state law;

B. To declare a minimum speed limit, which shall be effective when appropriate signs giving notice thereof are erected and when it is determined that slow speeds on any part of an arterial street unreasonably impede the normal movement of traffic, with the goal that the safety of all road users is not compromised;

* * *

G. To promulgate rules and regulations for the RPZ program; ~~((and))~~

H. To use the Vision Zero Action Plan to advance roadway safety goals and to use the Safe System approach when planning, deploying, and maintaining transportation infrastructure and when making and enforcing transportation policies, ensuring capital projects reviews are informed by the Vision Zero Plan when changing the configuration or operations of an intersection when geography and budget make that possible;

I. To consider, as appropriate, the prioritization of capital and programmatic investment in locations on the City's High Injury Network that the City's Racial and Social Equity Index identifies for high equity priority;

J. To incorporate, as appropriate, traffic safety best practices consistent with Vision Zero and the Safe System Approach in the Seattle Department of Transportation's rules, manuals, standards, and expectations; and

~~((H.))~~ K. To prepare and recommend for adoption by the City Council a schedule of fees applicable to the reviewing and administering permits and issuing violations for vehicle and curb space uses.

Section 5. Section 11.16.180 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 118409, is amended as follows:

11.16.180 Traffic Engineer—Authority—Studies

It shall be the function of the Traffic Engineer under the supervision of the Director of Transportation to:

A. Identify and study safety countermeasures, as informed by Vision Zero goals and as are consistent with current consensus best practices, and implement them as appropriate to enhance the safety of all users of Seattle's transportation network;

~~((A.))~~ B. Conduct studies of traffic and transportation impacts including but not limited to noise pollution, air pollution, and community disruption;

~~((B.))~~ C. Conduct studies of traffic~~((,))~~ and traffic collisions that take into account the needs of vulnerable users of the public right-of-way and aspects of traffic collisions such as their severity level, citations issued by the Seattle Police Department,

congestion, and other conditions affecting the safe and convenient use of the
transportation network ((street and alleys));

((C.)) D. Collect facts regarding the effect and operation of regulations controlling
the City's transportation network, including pathways for vulnerable users, street, or
alley traffic, taking into account the needs of vulnerable users of the public right-of-way;

((D.)) E. Study means for the facilitation of ((traffic along existing routes))
individuals' use of the City's transportation network while prioritizing safe, healthy, and
equitable mobility and the needs of vulnerable users of the public right-of-way;

((E.)) F. Make traffic surveys;

((F.)) G. Prepare traffic-flow maps;

((G.)) H. Conduct studies of the utilization of street or alley curb space; and

((H.)) I. Conduct such other similar studies relating to traffic safety, traffic and
transportation as may be requested by the Director of Transportation.

Section 6. Section 11.16.200 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by
Ordinance 118409, is amended as follows:

11.16.200 Traffic Engineer — Authority — Records

It is the function of the Traffic Engineer under the supervision of the Director of
Transportation to:

A. Keep records of:

((A.)) 1. Traffic collisions;

((B.)) 2. Traffic volume;

((C.)) 3. Traffic-control devices;

((D.)) 4. Street curb space utilization(()) ; and

5. Location and date of installation of safety countermeasures including leading pedestrian intervals, no-turn-on-red restrictions, enhanced crossings, speed management devices, protected bicycle facilities, and daylighting treatments; and

B. Make public, via reports, charts, maps, and public-facing digital dashboards, the records kept pursuant to subsection 11.16.200.A, subject to rules, processes, and procedures developed by the Director of Transportation.

Section 7. Section 11.16.220 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 118409, is amended as follows:

11.16.220 Traffic Engineer—Authority—Annual report

The Traffic Engineer shall prepare an annual traffic and transportation report containing information on traffic conditions with particular reference to the progress made towards the City's Vision Zero goal, the number of traffic collisions, the number of persons killed and injured, and other traffic collision data and traffic trends throughout the City. This report may include additional data within the purview of the Traffic Engineer. This report shall be submitted to the Director of Transportation who shall file copies with the Mayor, the City Council, and the Chief of Police.

Section 8. Section 11.16.340 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 119510, is amended as follows:

11.16.340 Traffic Engineer—Authority—Traffic control devices((-))

The Traffic Engineer is authorized under the supervision of the Director of Transportation to:

A. Design and prepare the specifications for the operation of all traffic-control devices specifically mentioned in this ((~~subtitle~~)) Subtitle I;

B. Determine and designate the points of stop, and shall order the placement of a stop sign on each and every street intersecting the arterial street system unless traffic at any such intersection is controlled at all times by traffic signals, or unless the intersecting street is a ~~((one-(1)))~~ one-way street designated for travel away from the arterial street, provided, that when the findings of a traffic engineering study show that the condition of an intersection is such that vehicles may safely enter the arterial street without stopping, the Traffic Engineer may order the placement of a ~~((“))~~yield~~((“))~~ sign;

C. Determine intersections ~~((which))~~ that require control by ~~((“))~~stop~~((“))~~ or ~~((“))~~yield~~((“))~~ signs and order placement of same;

D. Determine and order the marking of crosswalks at intersections or at such other places where the Traffic Engineer deems it appropriate for the identification of the crossing location, with the purpose of enhancing the visibility of vulnerable users in those crosswalks;

E. Determine and order the daylighting of intersections by prohibiting parking within an appropriate distance from crosswalks and curb returns;

~~((E-))~~ E. Determine and order the closure of certain crosswalks to pedestrians;

~~((F-))~~ G. Determine and order the marking of traffic lanes upon the roadway of any street or alley;

~~((G-))~~ H. Determine and order the designation of a ~~((two-(2)))~~ two-way left-turn lane on a roadway (RCW 46.61.290(3)(a));

~~((H-))~~ I. Determine and order the placement of curbs, buttons, paint lines, or other devices to form islands or barriers upon the roadway to channel and control traffic;

~~((I-))~~ J. Order the placement of signs at all arterial street entrances to the City indicating that the speed limit on arterial streets is ~~((thirty-))~~30(~~(())~~) miles per hour and the placement of signs along all arterial streets upon which the maximum speed limit has been increased above ~~((thirty-))~~30(~~(())~~) miles per hour (RCW 46.61.415(3));

~~((J-))~~ K. Determine and order the designation of no-passing zones;

L. Determine and order the placement and implementation of traffic-safety countermeasures such as leading pedestrian intervals, no-turn-on-red restrictions, enhanced crossings, and speed management devices;

~~((K-))~~ M. Determine and order the placement of traffic-control devices indicating the course to be traveled by turning vehicles, which course to be traveled may conform to or be other than as prescribed by this subtitle (RCW 46.61.290(4));

~~((L-))~~ N. Test new or proposed traffic-control devices under actual conditions of traffic ~~((SB 3211, Section 47(23)))~~;

~~((M-))~~ O. Order the placement at the ends of designated streets, alleys, bridges or elevated structures, signs setting forth specified maximum load limits allowed on such streets, alleys, bridges or elevated structures, or notice of closure as conditions warrant;

~~((N-))~~ P. Determine and order the placement of official traffic-control devices when and as required under this ~~((subtitle))~~ Subtitle I to make effective the provisions of this ~~((subtitle))~~ Subtitle I, and order the placement of such additional official traffic-control devices as may be deemed appropriate to regulate, warn, or guide traffic under this ~~((subtitle (SB 3211, Section 47(1))))~~ Subtitle I;

~~((Q-))~~ Q. Determine the placement of official traffic-control devices as may be deemed necessary to regulate, warn, or guide traffic for construction, detours, emergencies, and special conditions ~~((SB 3211, Section 47(2)))~~; ~~((and))~~

R. Incorporate, as appropriate, traffic safety best practices consistent with Vision Zero and the Safe System Approach in the placement and configuration of traffic-control devices;

S. Consider the installation of appropriate facilities and traffic-calming measures consistent with Vision Zero and the Safe System Approach;

T. Consider, as appropriate, the prioritization of traffic-control devices and traffic-safety countermeasures investment in locations on the City's High Injury Network that the City's Racial and Social Equity Index identifies for high equity priority; and

~~((P-))~~ U. Determine the streets where the use of compression brakes shall be prohibited, devise signs prohibiting their use, and place the signs at the appropriate locations. To be eligible for designation, a street shall have a grade five ~~((5))~~ percent or less for a distance of ~~((one thousand (1,000)))~~ feet.

Section 9. Within 180 days of the effective date of this ordinance, the Director of Transportation shall update: (i) the Traffic Control Manual for In-street Work; and (ii) Director's Rules governing parking/daylighting and curb-space designations to implement this ordinance.

Section 10. The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or portion of this ordinance, or the invalidity of its application to any person or

circumstance, does not affect the validity of the remainder of this ordinance or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances.

DRAFT

This ordinance shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Sections
1.04.020 and 1.04.070.

Passed by the City Council and signed in open session in authentication of its
passage on _____.

President _____ of the City Council

_____ on _____.

Katie B. Wilson, Mayor

Attested on _____.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

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