



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

Transportation Committee

Agenda

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

9:30 AM

Council Chamber, City Hall
600 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Rob Saka, Chair
Joy Hollingsworth, Vice-Chair
Robert Kettle, Member
Alexis Mercedes Rinck, Member
Dan Strauss, Member

Chair Info: 206-684-8801; Rob.Saka@seattle.gov

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Meeting Location:

Council Chamber, City Hall, 600 Fourth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104

Committee Website:

<https://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/transportation-x154110>

This meeting also constitutes a meeting of the City Council, provided that the meeting shall be conducted as a committee meeting under the Council Rules and Procedures, and Council action shall be limited to committee business.

Members of the public may register for remote or in-person Public Comment to address the Council. Details on how to provide Public Comment are listed below:

Remote Public Comment - Register online to speak during the Public Comment period at the meeting at

<https://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment>

Online registration to speak will begin one hour before the meeting start time, and registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting. Speakers must be registered in order to be recognized by the Chair.

In-Person Public Comment - Register to speak on the Public Comment sign-up sheet located inside Council Chambers at least 15 minutes prior to the meeting start time. Registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting. Speakers must be registered in order to be recognized by the Chair.

Pursuant to Council Rule VI.C.10, members of the public providing public comment in Chambers will be broadcast via Seattle Channel.

Please submit written comments to all Councilmembers four hours prior to the meeting at Council@seattle.gov or at Seattle City Hall, Attn: Council Public Comment, 600 4th Ave., Floor 2, Seattle, WA 98104.

Please Note: Times listed are estimated

A. Call To Order

B. Approval of the Agenda

C. Public Comment

D. Items of Business

1. Deployment of Automated Traffic Safety Cameras in Seattle

Supporting
Documents:

[Central Staff Memo](#)

[Central Staff Presentation](#)

[SDOT Presentation](#)

Briefing and Discussion

Presenters: Venu Nemani and Francisca Stefan, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT); Lish Whitson, Council Central Staff

2. [Res 32166](#) A RESOLUTION granting conceptual approval to install, maintain, and operate a pedestrian skybridge over and across 8th Avenue, north of Cherry Street; as proposed by FH, LLC d/b/a Skyline, in the First Hill neighborhood.

Supporting
Documents:

[Summary and Fiscal Note](#)

[Summary Att A – Skyline 8th Ave Skybridge Area Map](#)

[Central Staff Memo](#)

[Presentation](#)

Briefing, Discussion, and Possible Vote

Presenters: Amy Gray, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT); Michael Jenkins, Seattle Design Commission; Lish Whitson, Council Central Staff

E. Adjournment



Legislation Text

File #: Inf 2658, **Version:** 1

Deployment of Automated Traffic Safety Cameras in Seattle

January 8, 2025

MEMORANDUM

To: Councilmember Saka
From: Calvin Chow, Analyst
Subject: Automated Traffic Safety Cameras

This memorandum responds to your request to document Seattle's history with automated traffic safety cameras, recent changes to Washington State law, and next steps for deployment of new automated traffic safety cameras in Seattle. This memorandum describes the Executive's proposed expansion of the School Zone Camera program in 2025, the Council's recent budget actions to pursue deployment of cameras outside of school zones, and the legislative and administrative actions that will be required for implementation.

Background

Over the past 20 years, Seattle has deployed automated traffic safety cameras to detect various traffic violations. Seattle's camera programs were enacted under various provisions in State law which have continued to evolve over time. Seattle's existing Red Light Cameras and School Zone Cameras are authorized to continue operating as established by local ordinance; however, deployment of new camera programs must conform to current State requirements. Seattle's existing laws governing automated traffic cameras are primarily contained in [Seattle Municipal Code \(SMC\) 11.50.570](#).

Beginning in 2006, Seattle began deployment of [Red Light Cameras](#) to reduce the frequency of red light running and associated collisions. The last expansion of this program occurred in 2013, and Seattle now has 31 Red Light Cameras deployed. Revenues from Red Light Cameras support the City's General Fund. The Council has adopted camera revenue financial policies to direct 20 percent of these revenues to fund traffic safety improvements in School Zones ([SMC 5.82.010.A.2](#)).

In 2012, Seattle began deployment of [School Zone Cameras](#) to enforce School Zone speed limits. The program was suspended during the pandemic and resumed operation with the 2023-2024 school year. Seattle now has 35 School Zone Cameras deployed across 19 schools. Per Seattle's camera revenue financial policies, revenues from these cameras support traffic safety improvements in School Zones ([SMC 5.82.010.A.1](#)).

In 2020, new State authorization allowed for deployment of [Block the Box Cameras](#), [Transit Lane Enforcement Cameras](#), and other Restricted Lane Access Cameras under a pilot program. Seattle has deployed Block the Box Cameras at six intersections and Transit Lane Enforcement Cameras at six locations. Seattle utilized [Restricted Lane Access Cameras for the Spokane Swing Bridge](#) during the closure of the West Seattle Bridge; however, these restrictions were removed with the reopening of the West Seattle Bridge in October 2022 and the cameras were removed. Under State law at the time of implementation, 50 percent of net revenues from these

programs may be spent locally on transportation improvements that support equitable access and mobility for persons with disabilities; and the other 50 percent of the revenues were deposited into the State's Cooper Jones active transportation safety account. These requirements are reflected in [SMC 11.570.H.7](#).

In the 2023 Adopted Budget, the Council allocated funding to double the School Zone Camera program and requested that the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and the Seattle Police Department (SPD) provide an implementation plan for the School Zone Camera expansion and for expansion of other camera programs (SLI SDOT-304-A-001-2023). In response (SDOT memo, August 4, 2023), the Executive identified challenges to deploying new cameras before the start of the 2024-2025 school year and recommended a delay in implementation. SPD staffing constraints were identified as a primary concern as State law (at the time) required that only sworn police officers could review camera footage to issue citations (which must be issued within 14 days of the violation).

In 2023, the Council also passed legislation ([ORD 126869](#)) identifying 10 restricted racing zones as a preliminary step for future deployment of cameras to detect speeding violations in those zones. This legislation relied on provisions in State law that were authorized in 2022 but were later rescinded as part of State legislation on traffic cameras in 2024. Future legislation will be necessary to remove the restricted racing zone designations in [SMC 11.50.580](#). No cameras were deployed in Seattle under this authority.

Current State of Camera Expansion

In 2024, the State Legislature made comprehensive changes to State laws governing traffic cameras and consolidating authority that had been established for different camera programs ([ESHB 2384, 2024 Session Ch 307](#)). Key provisions of this legislation include:

- Authorization for trained civilian SPD and SDOT employees to review and issue citations ([RCW 46.63.030\(1\)\(d\)](#)).
- Rescinding authority for speed cameras under designated restricted racing zones (ESHB 2384, 2024 Session Ch 307 Sec 12)
- Maintaining authority to deploy one camera per 10,000 population to detect speed violations in locations with high crash risks ([RCW 46.63.250\(3\)](#)). Deployment of speed enforcement cameras outside of school zones would utilize this authority.
- Analysis requirements that include equity considerations and demonstrating the need for camera enforcement when deploying new cameras or relocating existing cameras ([RCW 46.63.220\(3\)](#)).
- Maintaining authority for Block the Box Cameras, Transit Lane Enforcement Cameras, and Restricted Lane Cameras (previously authorized as a pilot program). Revenues from these cameras may be spent on traffic safety activities, dedicating a proportional share of revenue for census tracts that have household incomes in the lowest quartile and those census tracts experiencing above average crash rates, and directing 25 percent of revenue to the State's Cooper Jones active transportation account after four years of camera operation (RCW 46.63.220(13)). These spending restrictions do not apply to

Seattle's existing School Zone Camera or Red Light Camera programs (RCW 46.63.220(13)(d)(ii)).

As part of his 2025 Proposed Budget, Mayor Harrell announced the expansion of the School Zone Camera program to deploy an additional 38 cameras in 19 school zones and utilize parking enforcement officers to provide additional staffing capacity ([Mayor's Budget Speech](#), September 24, 2024). During deliberation on the 2025 Adopted Budget, the Council added a proviso on \$1.18 million of SDOT's budget solely for deployment of additional traffic safety cameras outside of school zones. The proviso further specifies that the funding cannot be spent until authorized by future Council action.

Following direction from the Mayor and Council in the 2025 Adopted Budget, SDOT is working on implementing the School Zone Camera program expansion in 2025. As of the time of this writing, the Executive has not stated a position on the proviso for expansion of traffic safety cameras outside of school zones.

Anticipated Legislative Actions

The following is a brief description of anticipated legislative actions related to automated traffic safety camera deployment.

SMC Revisions to Conform with State Law

As the State has consolidated camera authority, legislation will be necessary to align current SMC with the provisions of the 2024 State Law for all camera programs authorized by the State. This would include revisions to the Traffic Code (Title 11 SMC) and to camera revenue financial policies (Chapter 5.82 SMC). Such legislation would rescind the designation of restricted racing zones (SMC 11.50.580) which are no longer authorized under State Law. SDOT is currently working on a legislative proposal, anticipating transmittal to Council in 1Q 2025.

Budget Proviso Lift

Budget legislation will be needed to lift the SDOT budget proviso on \$1.18 million for expansion of cameras outside of school zones. While SDOT is responsible for siting cameras, SPD manages the contract with the camera vendor. In addition to the cost of deploying new cameras, expansion of camera programs also impacts staffing necessary to issue citations (SPD) and to process payments (Seattle Municipal Court). The funding under proviso in SDOT is General Fund and could be transferred to other departments as needed. In consideration of an Executive proposal to lift the proviso, the Council could review locational priorities for camera deployment such as Alki Ave SW, Harbor Ave SW, and streets previously designated by the Council as Restricted Racing Zones. As of the time of this writing, the Executive has not stated a position on this proviso.

Fines and Civil Penalties

Lastly, the 2024 State law authorizes the use of an online ability-to-pay calculator to process and grant requests for reduced fines or civil penalties (RCW 46.63.220(14)). Implementing

legislation for Seattle Municipal Court may be necessary if not already covered by existing policies and procedures.

Administrative Steps for Camera Expansion

The Executive is responsible for managing traffic safety camera programs and implementing deployment of new cameras. In addition to the legislative actions described above, implementation will require the following administrative actions:

- SDOT will prepare the equity and needs analysis required for new camera locations under RCW 46.63.220(3) and the assessment of crash risk required for speed enforcement cameras deployed under RCW 46.63.250(3). These analyses would be recorded as a Clerk File to meet the State requirements.
- SDOT and SPD will coordinate with the camera contractor on design, permitting, and installation of specific camera sites. Sites may require installation of power supply by Seattle City Light.
- SDOT will install signs marking new camera locations at least 30 days prior to activation as required by RCW 46.63.220(7).
- SDOT and SPD will coordinate public engagement and outreach to announce new camera locations, including translation services.
- The Executive will post annual reports demonstrating the performance of traffic safety cameras with various metrics as required by RCW 46.63.220(6)(b)(i).

Traffic Safety Camera Programs led by non-City Agencies

In addition to the City's authority to deploy traffic safety cameras, State law allows for traffic safety cameras to be deployed on school buses (to enforce yielding to bus-armature stop signs) and on transit vehicles (to enforce transit lane restrictions). Currently, the City has no role in managing or implementing these programs.

According to media reports, Seattle Public Schools' agreement with the King County Sheriff to review infractions and process citations from school bus cameras expired in August 2022,¹ and King County Metro initiated a demonstration project (without enforcement) to test cameras mounted directly on coaches to detect bus lanes violations in December 2024.² While the City's camera program could potentially provide administrative services to other jurisdictions in the future, any such involvement would require Council approval.

cc: Ben Noble, Director
Yolanda Ho, Deputy Director

¹ David Kroman (2023), ["School bus stop-sign violators skirt consequences in King County,"](#) Seattle Times.

² Nicholas Deshais (2024), ["AI cameras on King County Metro buses record red lane violators,"](#) Seattle Times.



Recent Seattle Legislative Actions ^(1/2)

- **Sept 2020:** Authorized **Block the Box, Transit Lane, and Restricted Lane** cameras as allowed by 2020 changes to State Law (Ordinance 126183).
- **Nov 2022:** Allocated funding in the 2023 Adopted Budget to double the deployment of the **School Zone Camera** program; SDOT did not implement this program expansion in 2023.
- **July 2023:** Established **Restricted Racing Zones** as a preliminary step to deployment of cameras as allowed by 2022 changes to State Law (Ordinance 126869); the State **rescinded** this authority in 2024.
- **Nov 2024:** Allocated funding in the 2025 Adopted Budget to deploy an additional 37 **School Zone Cameras** at 19 locations.



Recent Seattle Legislative Actions (2/2)

- **Nov 2024:** Allocated funding in the 2025 Adopted Budget for expansion of **cameras outside of school zones** consistent with current State Law; funding included \$1.18 million under proviso until authorized by Council.
- **Nov 2024:** Statement of Legislative Intent (SPD-111S-A-1) requested that the Seattle Police Department evaluate and make recommendations for deployment of **automated noise enforcement technology** (affirmed in Resolution 32165).
- **Feb 2025:** Signed Letter of Support for State legislation (SB-5417 and HB-1423) authorizing the use of **automated noise enforcement cameras**.

A photograph of a residential street with a speed limit sign and a blurred car. The sign is white with black text and a black border, reading 'SPEED LIMIT 25'. The car is red and is blurred due to motion. The background shows houses, trees, and a clear sky.

Automated Traffic Safety Camera Program Overview

City Council Transportation Committee
April 1, 2025

Our Vision, Mission, Values, & Goals

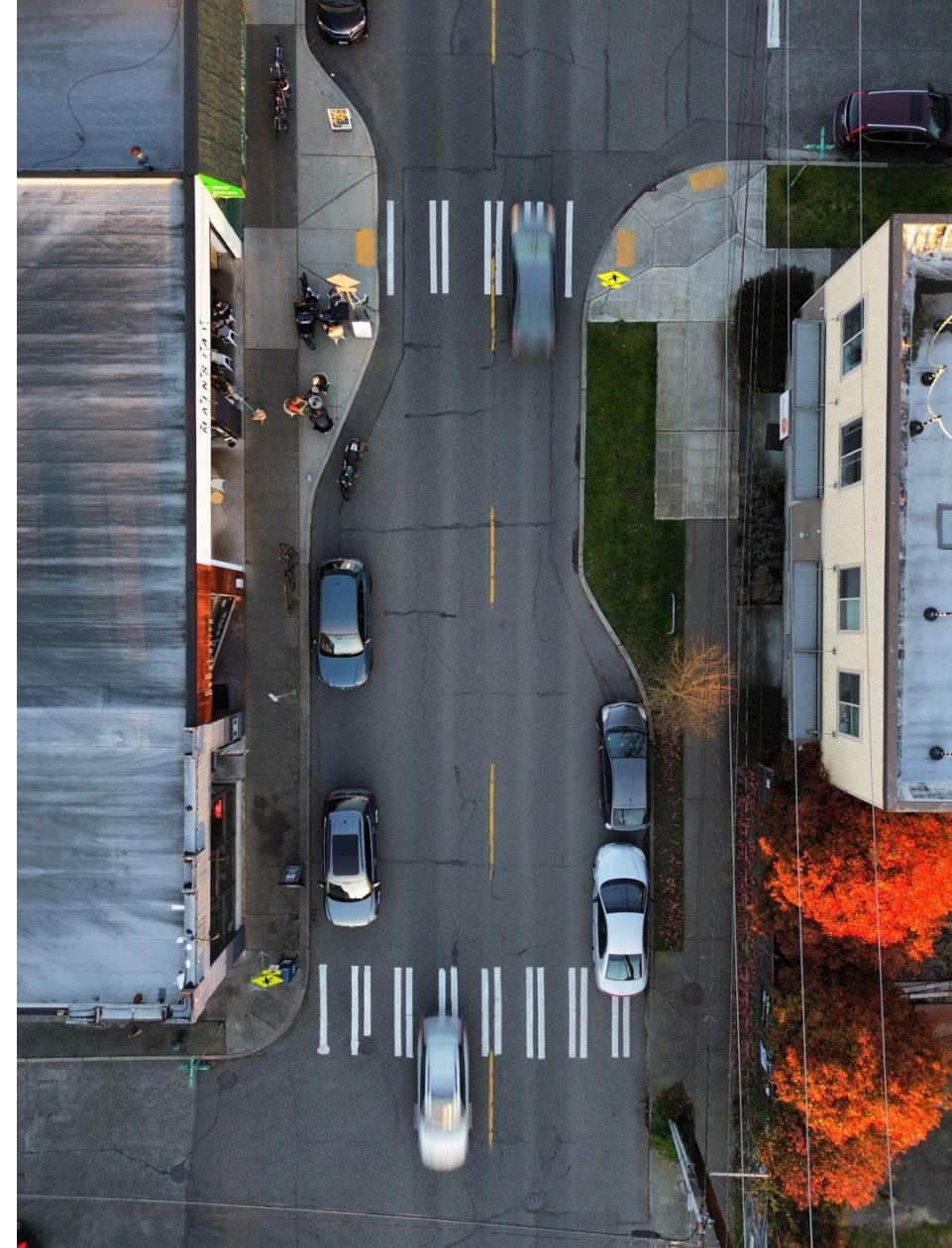
Seattle is a thriving equitable community powered by dependable transportation. We're on a mission to deliver a transportation system that provides safe and affordable access to places and opportunities.

Core Values & Goals:

Equity, Safety, Mobility, Sustainability, Livability, and Excellence.

Presentation Overview

- Automated Traffic Safety Camera (ATSC) Program Overview
 - Program Background
 - Existing Safety Camera Types and Performance
 - Roles and Responsibilities
- 2024 State Legislation
- 2025 ATSC Program Activities

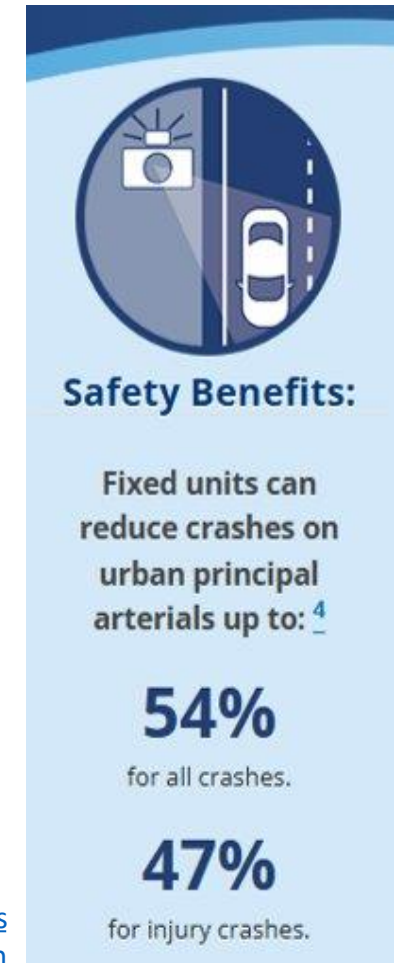


Program Background

- Safer Speeds is a key element of FHWA's Safe Systems Approach to achieving Vision Zero.
- ATSCs are an effective Proven Safety Countermeasure to improve safety.
- ATSCs have been used in Seattle since 2006, and is currently operating:
 - 31 red-light cameras
 - 6 public transportation-only lane (bus lane) cameras
 - 7 block-the-box cameras
 - 35 school speed zone cameras

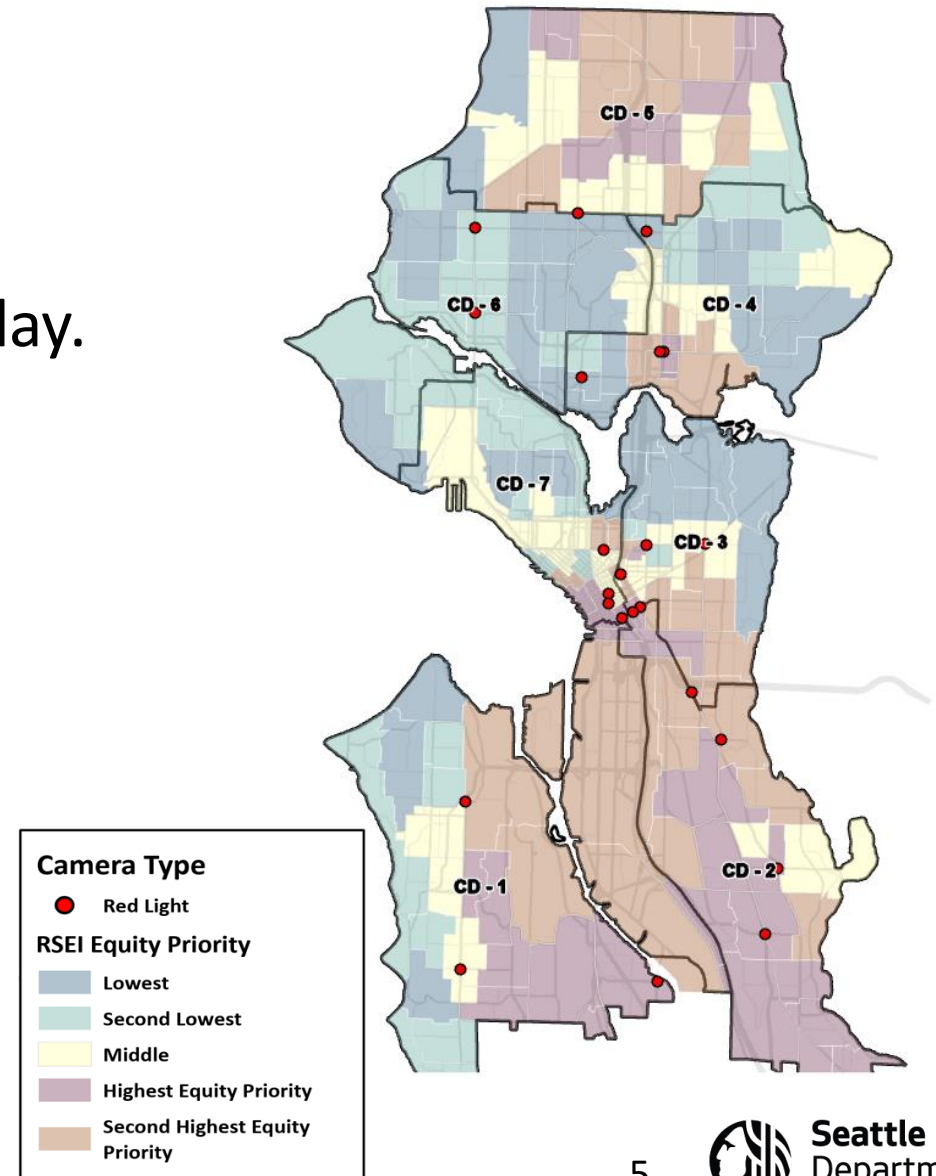


Graphic Sources: [FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures](#)
[USDOT Safe System Approach](#)



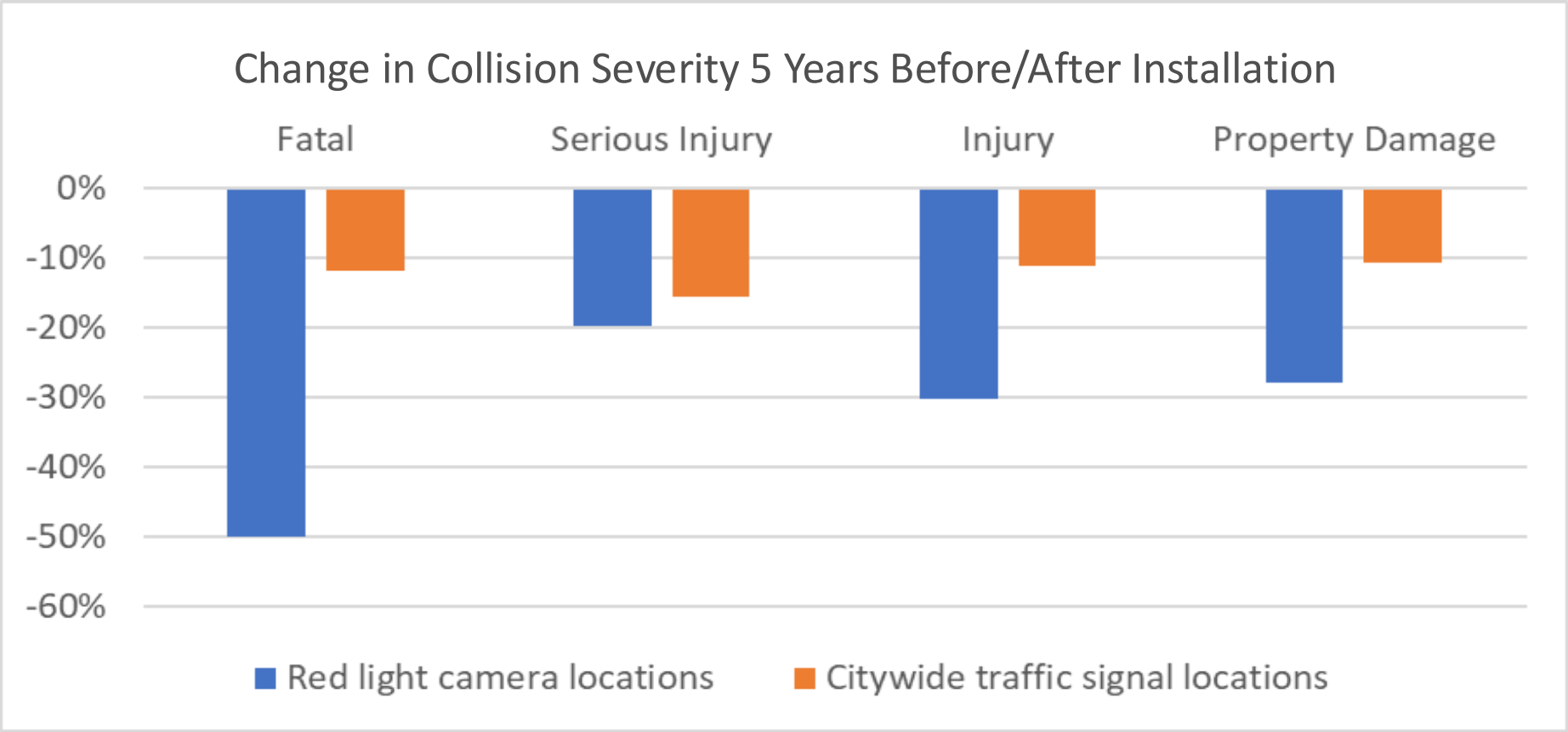
Red-Light Safety Cameras

- Piloted in 2006, last installation in 2013.
- 23 locations with 30 cameras in operation today.
- Selected based on collision frequency and severity, observations and geographic distribution.
- Observed reduced collision severity after installation.



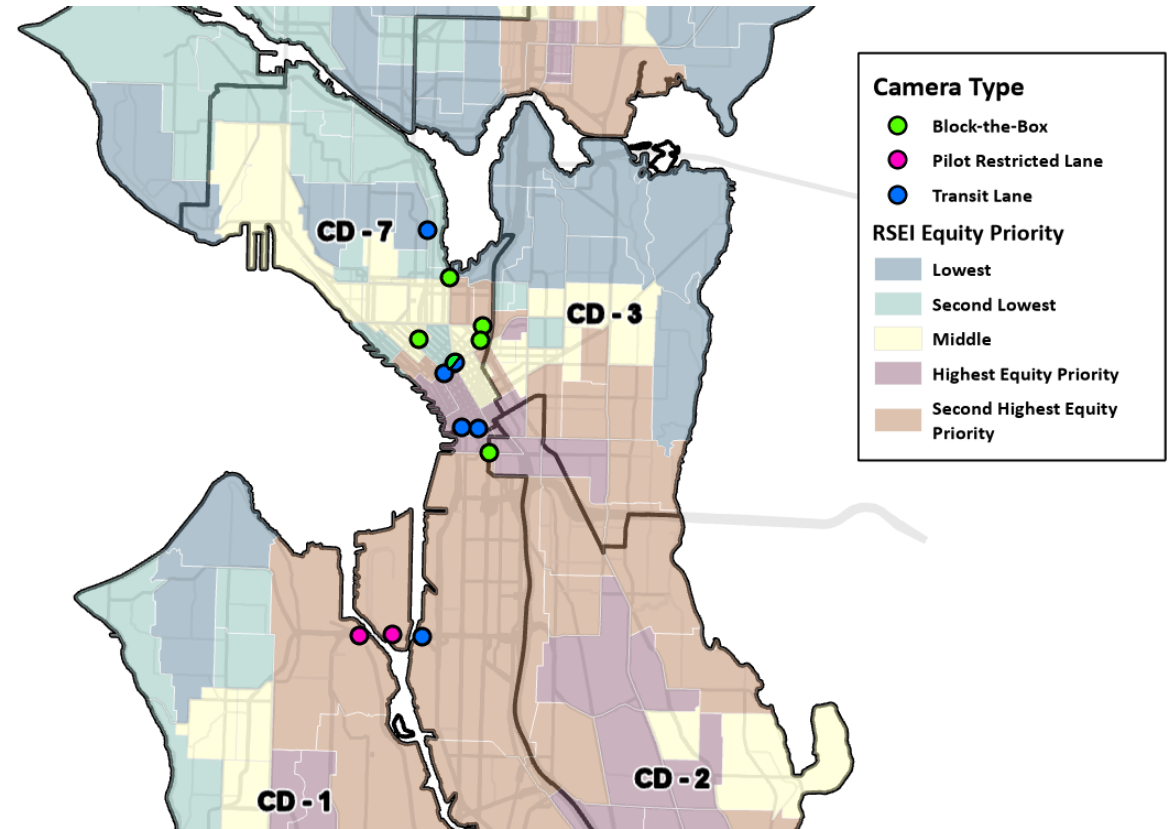
Red-Light Safety Camera Performance

Red-light cameras improve safety outcomes compared to locations without cameras.



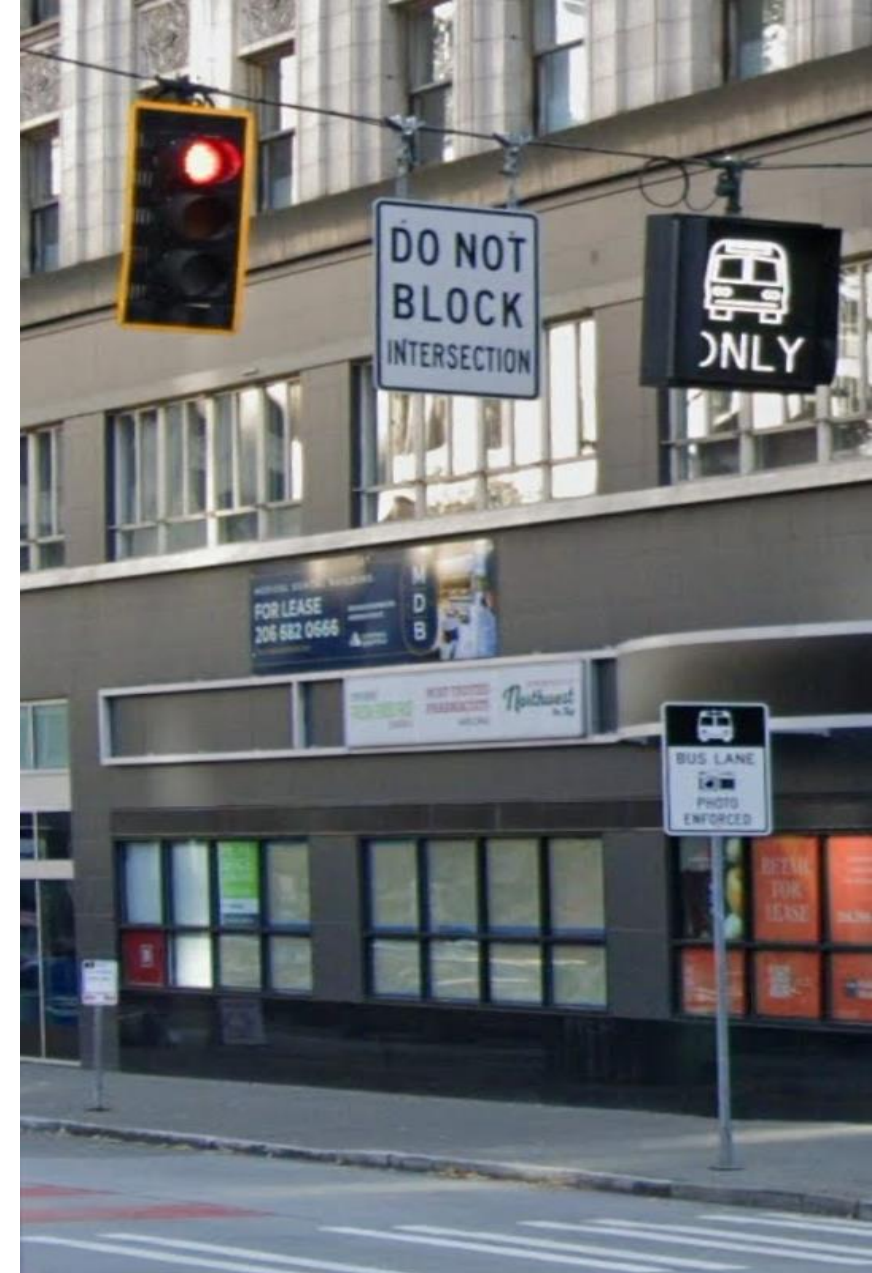
PTOL/BTB Safety Cameras

- Public Transportation-Only Lane (PTOL)
 - 6 locations with 6 cameras in operation.
- Block-the-Box (BTB)
 - 6 locations with 7 cameras in operation.
- Restricted Lane
 - 1 location with 2 cameras, deactivated - Spokane Low Bridge.



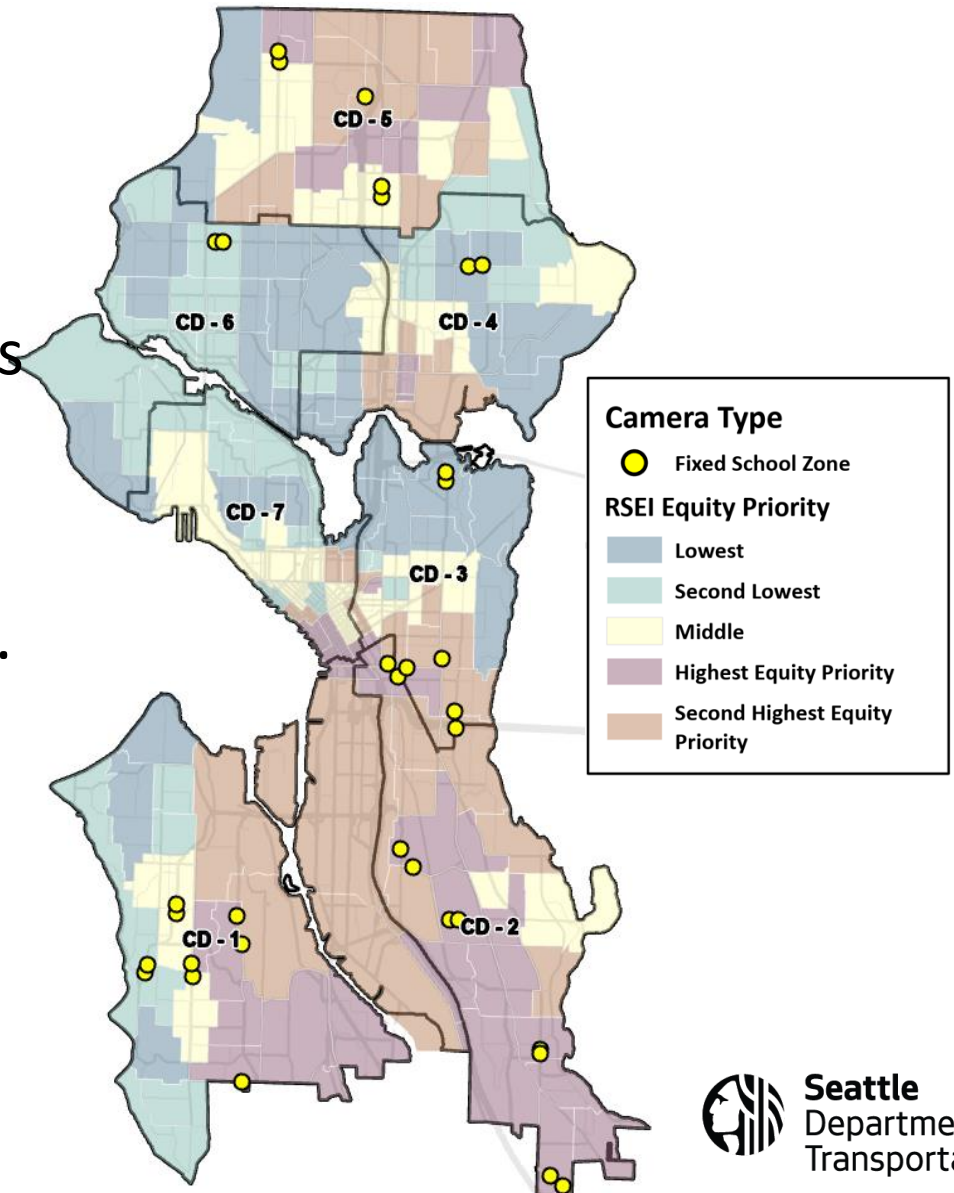
PTOL/BTB Performance

- Public Transportation-Only Lane (PTOL)
 - 2024 average monthly citations – 1,700
 - 2024 recidivism rate – 33%
- Block-the-Box (BTB)
 - 2024 average monthly citations – 11,400
 - 2024 recidivism rate - 9%



School Speed Zone Safety Cameras

- 19 locations with 35 cameras in operation.
- School speed zones with 85th percentile speeds over 30 MPH prioritized.
- Flashing beacons installed prior to deployment.
- Cameras considered if speeds still above 30 MPH.



School Speed Zone Camera Performance

SINCE START OF SCHOOL SPEED ZONE SAFETY CAMERA PROGRAM



↓ 64%

The average number of traffic violations per camera *per day* has decreased by 64%



↓ 4%

Average speeds have decreased by 4%



90%

90% of people who receive a speeding citation and pay it, do not pay for another citation

COLLISIONS ARE DOWN

↓ 50%

50% drop in total collisions, pedestrian, and bicycle collisions, all times of the day

↓ 71%

71% drop in total collisions during the camera activation hours

0

No pedestrian/bicycle collisions in the after period during camera activation times

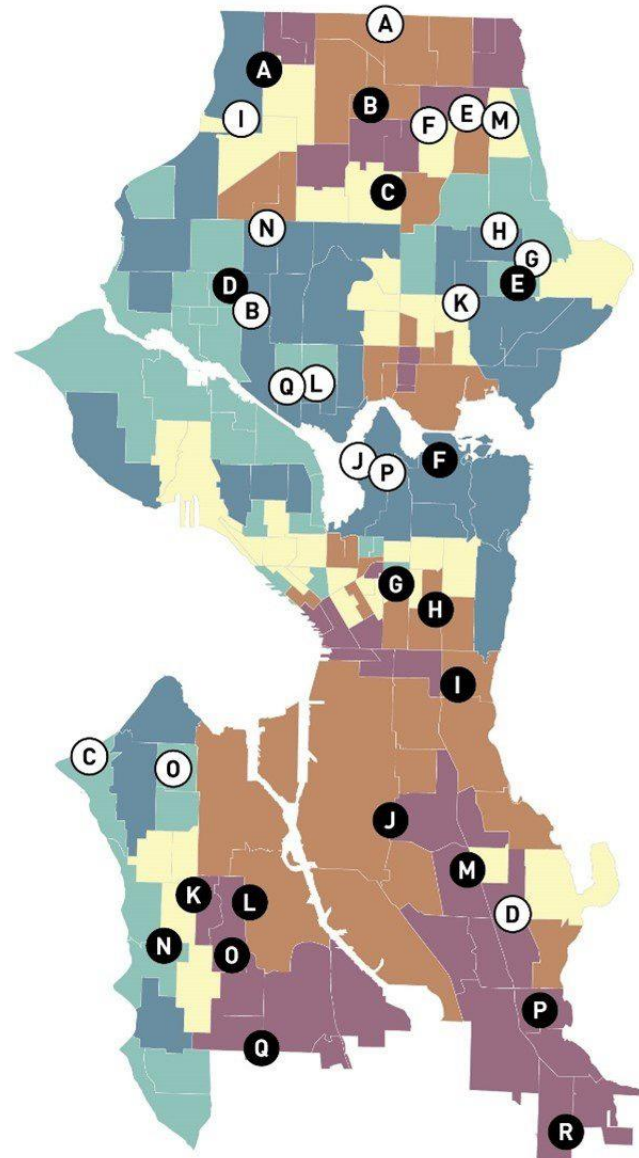
School Zone Cameras effectively reduce speeding and enhance safety for Seattle students.

School Speed Zone Safety Camera Expansion

- Preparing to install 37 new school speed zone cameras at 19 locations in 2025
- Locations were identified through a system-wide safety needs analysis and equitable distribution.
- Only prioritizing locations after flashing beacons are not sufficiently influencing speeds.



New school speed zone camera locations



Existing and Planned School Speed Zone Enforcement Locations by Racial and Social Equity Index

Existing

- A** Broadview-Thomson K-8
- B** Northgate Elementary
- C** Olympic View Elementary
- D** Whittier Elementary
- E** Eckstein Middle School
- F** Montlake Elementary
- G** Bailey Gatzert Elementary
- H** Garfield High School
- I** Thurgood Marshall Elementary
- J** Mercer Middle School
- K** Fairmount Park Elementary
- L** STEM at Boren
- M** Dearborn Park Elementary
- N** Gatewood Elementary
- O** Our Lady of Guadalupe School
- P** South Shore K-8
- Q** Holy Family Elementary
- R** Rainier View Elementary

Planned

- A** St Matthew School
- B** West Woodland Elementary
- C** Alki Elementary
- D** Rainier Valley Leadership Academy
- E** Nathan Hale High School
- F** Hazel Wolf K-8
- G** View Ridge Elementary
- H** Our Lady of the Lake School
- I** Viewlands Elementary
- J** TOPS K-8
- K** Bryant Elementary
- L** Hamilton Middle School
- M** John Rogers Elementary
- N** Greenwood Elementary
- O** West Seattle High School
- P** Bertschi School
- Q** BF Day Elementary

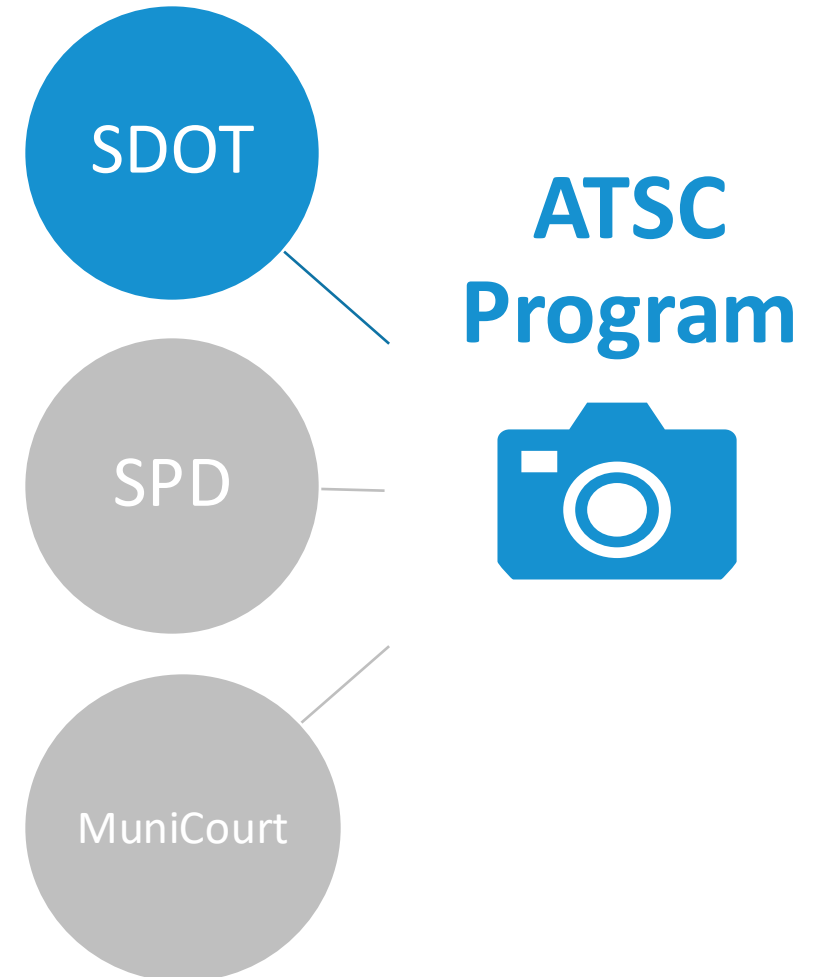
Disadvantaged Communities

- Lowest
- Second lowest
- Middle
- Second highest
- Highest

Departmental Roles/Responsibilities

SDOT's Roles and Responsibilities:

- Identify locations for addition, removal, or relocation based on safety and equity analysis.
- Coordinate with other departments on design, permitting, construction and inspection.
- Manage safety investments using net revenues.
- Engage public on any camera location modifications.



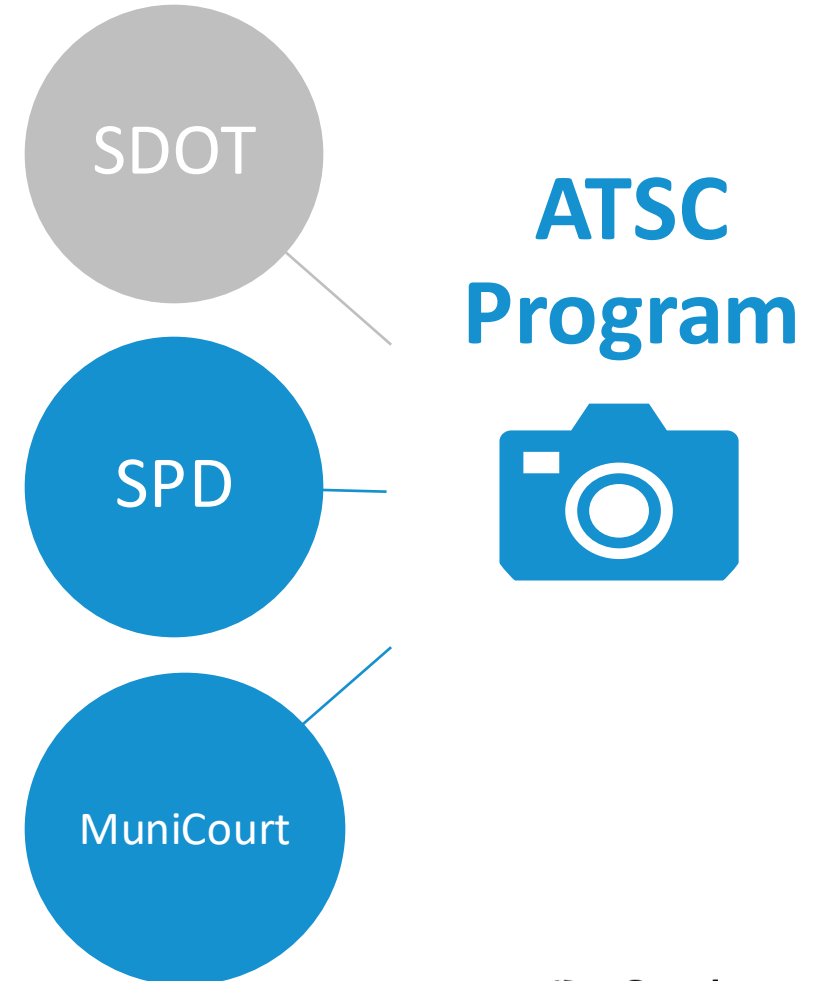
Departmental Roles/Responsibilities

SPD's Roles and Responsibilities:

- Administer vendor contract.
- Issue work authorization for new cameras.
- Resource and prioritize violation reviews.
- Issue citations within the 14-day window per State law.

MuniCourt's Roles and Responsibilities:

- Administer court proceedings.
- Collect payments.
- Manage fine mitigation programs.



MuniCourt Fine Mitigation Options

- **Ticket Debt Reduction Hearings**

- Eligible residents can apply for a debt reduction hearing for parking, traffic, or camera ticket debt >\$300

- **Payment Plans**

- Reduced monthly payment plans (\$25-50) are available for eligible residents to pay fines and fees

- **Community Service Plans**

- Eligible residents may request to perform community service work in lieu of paying fines and fees

- **Unified Payment Program**

- Unpaid fines in more than one King County jurisdiction can be combined into a single monthly payment



Seattle Municipal Court

I Can't Pay My Ticket Right Now

If you are unable to pay your ticket in full by its due date, please call [\(206\) 684-5600](tel:2066845600) and press 0 to speak to a representative for help.

Payment Plans and Community Service Plans

You can request to set up a [payment plan](#) with a minimum monthly payment of \$50 for up to two years. If your income is below federal poverty guidelines, you may be eligible for a monthly payment as low as \$25, or setup a [community service plan](#) to volunteer at an approved service agency instead of paying.

A \$4 administrative fee is added to any payment plan that includes non-criminal obligations. (E.g. traffic/non-traffic/parking/traffic camera citations).

To qualify for lower monthly payments of \$25 or to volunteer at a community service agency instead of paying the fine, **proof of public assistance is required.** Community service hours are credited at a rate equal to Seattle's minimum wage.

2024 State Legislation

HB 2384 Bill Highlights:

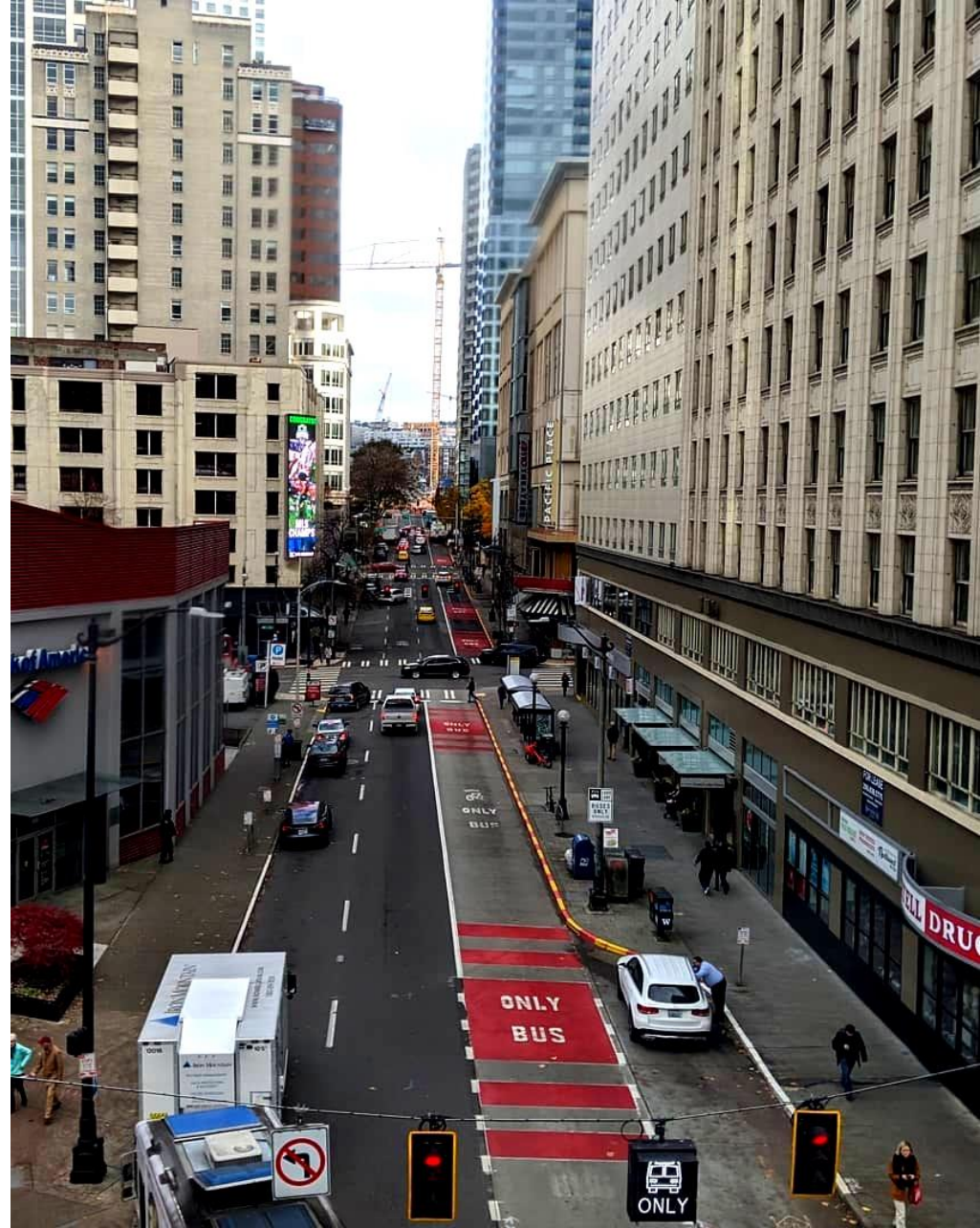
- Allows citation review by civilian employees,
- Requires equity analysis for siting new or relocating existing cameras,
- Increases annual reporting requirements.
- Permanently authorizes pilot authorities (BTB, PTOL, restricted lane),
- Repealed racing zone speed camera authority,
- Simplified allowable types of full-time speed zone cameras,
- Allows online ability-to-pay calculator to grant requests for reduced penalties,
- Requires penalty reduction for first-violation for recipients of government assistance.



Allowable Camera Types Under State Law

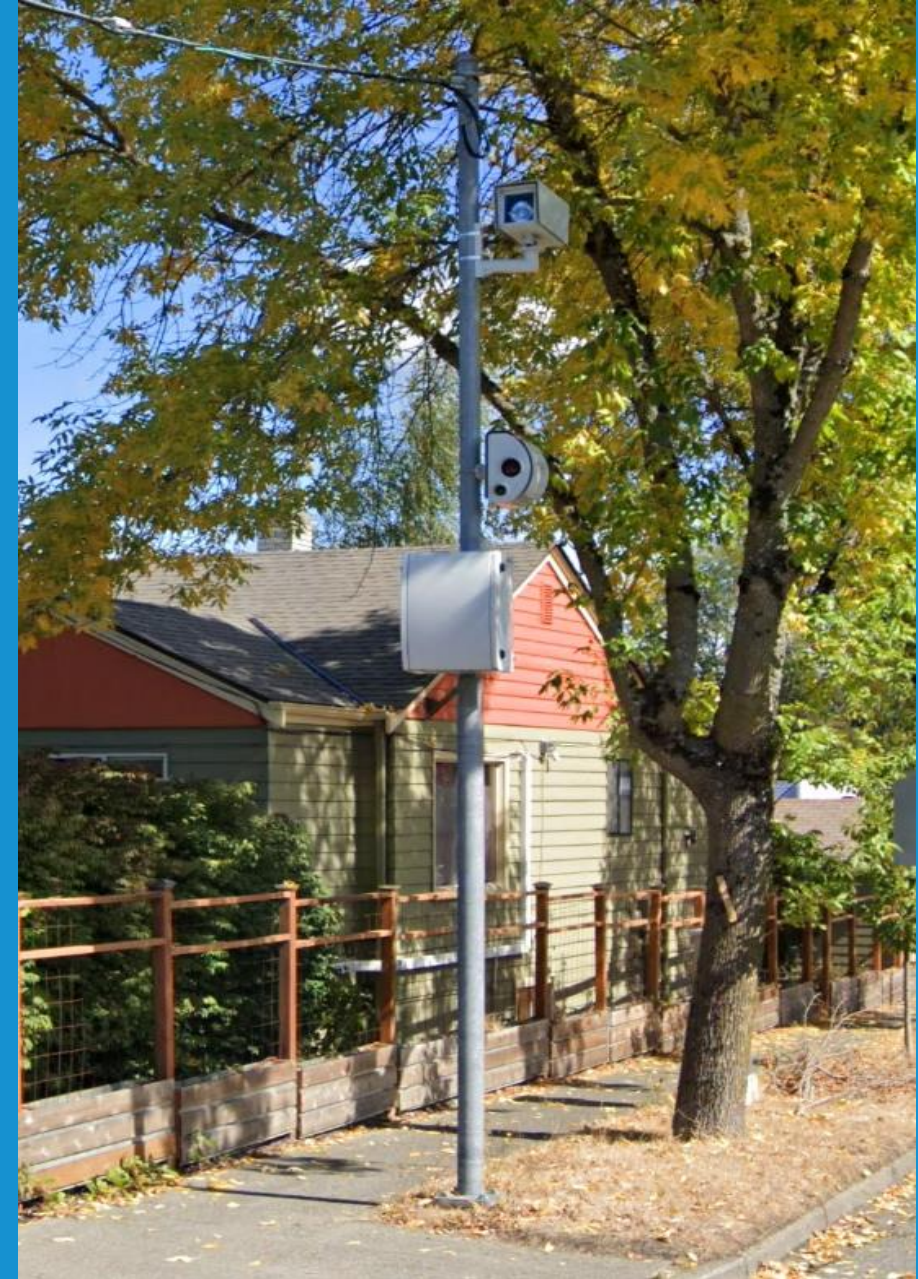
1. Red-Light
2. School Speed Zone
3. Restricted Lane (Deactivated)
4. Public Transit-Only Lane
5. Block-the-Box
6. Railroad Crossing
7. Ferry Queuing
8. Speeding:
 - High Crash Risk Locations
 - Park and Hospital Zones
 - School Walk Routes
 - Roadway Work Zones

Previously-deployed camera types



Forthcoming Local Legislation

- Update SMC Traffic Code to align with the new state law's provisions.
- Consolidate financial policies for various camera types within SMC 5.82.
- Facilitate administration of a single holistic program.
- Consolidate all revenues, with exception of red-light camera GF allocation, into retitled SSTPI Fund.
- Update eligible uses of net revenues to reflect consolidation.



2025 ATSC Program Activities

- Introduce new legislation to align SMC with RCW.
- Publish Implementation Guidance for ATSC Program Management.
 - Methodology for siting various camera types using safety and equity criteria.
 - Community engagement framework.
 - Performance evaluation metrics
 - Complementary countermeasures to pair with camera installation
- School Speed Zone Camera Expansion – 19 new locations.
- Evaluation of PTOL and BTB camera experience.
- Complete safety and equity analysis for initial deployment of five full-time speed cameras.



From the entire SDOT Team
Thank you!



Legislation Text

File #: Res 32166, **Version:** 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION granting conceptual approval to install, maintain, and operate a pedestrian skybridge over and across 8th Avenue, north of Cherry Street; as proposed by FH, LLC d/b/a Skyline, in the First Hill neighborhood.

WHEREAS, FH, LLC d/b/a Skyline (“Skyline”), an organization committed to improving the lives of older adults by integrating housing and community services; and

WHEREAS, Skyline developed its original facility (“Cascade Tower”) providing 275 independent senior residential units, 105 units for residents needing assisted living, memory support, rehabilitative care, or skilled nursing, and other amenities for the residents; and

WHEREAS, Skyline developed its second facility (“Olympic Tower”) providing 77 independent senior residential units and amenities including an auditorium, fitness center, restaurant, and other services; and

WHEREAS, Skyline applied for permission to construct, maintain, and operate an above-grade private pedestrian skybridge over and across 8th Avenue, north of Cherry Street (“Pedestrian Skybridge”); and

WHEREAS, Skyline, at the request of building residents, wishes to connect Cascade Tower and Olympic Tower to support connectivity and resident safety, access to services, and support community and family activities with the Pedestrian Skybridge; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 15.64 requires public benefits to offset the impact of the Pedestrian Skybridge on the adjacent public realm and Skyline worked with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and the Seattle Design Commission and is proposing the following public benefits:

- A. Open space improvements and activation on 8th Avenue adjacent to its building, including new plantings, furnishings, and pet relief area;
- B. Integrated public art in the enhanced 8th Avenue landscape area;
- C. Pedestrian improvements at 8th Avenue and Marion Street, including extending the existing curbs and curb ramps; and
- D. Interpretive wayfinding signage for the Park to Park Loop project; and

WHEREAS, Skyline presented the proposal, including public benefits, to the Seattle Design Commission on May 2, 2024, and October 17, 2024, and the Seattle Design Commission recommended approval of the Pedestrian Skybridge and public benefit proposal; and

WHEREAS, Skyline is responsible for obtaining permits, installing and maintaining the public benefits, and any changes to this proposal requires SDOT review and SDOT may request the Seattle Design Commission review; and

WHEREAS, in making a recommendation, the Director of SDOT considered the plans and application materials submitted by Skyline to construct the Pedestrian Skybridge and the Seattle Design Commission's report and recommends that conceptual approval be granted; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The City Council finds that the pedestrian skybridge that would run over and across 8th Avenue, north of Cherry Street ("Pedestrian Skybridge"), as proposed by FH, LLC d/b/a Skyline, is in accordance with and in the public interest.

Section 2. As conditions for obtaining permission to construct the Pedestrian Skybridge, which will be reflected in the term permit ordinance described in Section 3 of this resolution, FH, LLC d/b/a Skyline shall:

- A. Provide engineering and utility plans for additional review and permitting by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), which the Director of SDOT ("Director") will circulate to other City departments

and any public and private utilities affected by the installation of the Pedestrian Skybridge;

B. Provide a surety bond, covenant agreement, and public liability insurance naming the City as an additional insured or self-insurance, as approved by the City's Risk Manager;

C. Pay all City permit and review fees;

D. Obtain all other necessary permits;

E. Construct and maintain the following public benefits:

1. Open space improvements and activation on 8th Avenue adjacent to its building, including new plantings, furnishings, and pet relief area;

2. Integrated public art in the enhanced 8th Avenue landscape area;

3. Pedestrian improvements at 8th Avenue and Marion Street, including extending the existing curbs and curb ramps; and

4. Interpretive wayfinding signage for the Park to Park Loop project;

F. Maintain and inspect the Pedestrian Skybridge; and

G. Remove the Pedestrian Skybridge and restore the right-of-way to in as good condition for public use as existed prior to construction of the Pedestrian Skybridge and in at least as good condition in all respects as the abutting portions of the public place as required by SDOT right-of-way restoration standards upon expiration of the term permit, or at the direction of the Director or City Council in accordance with the provisions of the term permit ordinance.

Section 3. After this resolution is adopted, SDOT will present to the Council a draft term permit ordinance identifying the conditions under which permission may be granted for the use of the right-of-way for the Pedestrian Skybridge as documented in Section 2 of this resolution. Permission to use the right-of-way is subject to the Council's decision to approve, deny, or modify the draft term permit ordinance presented by the Director.

Section 4. As recommended by the Director and the Mayor, conceptual approval for construction of the

Pedestrian Skybridge is granted.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2025, and signed by
me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2025.

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the _____ day of _____, 2025.

Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2025.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE

Department:	Dept. Contact:	CBO Contact:
Seattle Department of Transportation	Amy Gray	Christie Parker

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title:

A RESOLUTION granting conceptual approval to install, maintain, and operate a pedestrian skybridge over and across 8th Avenue, north of Cherry Street; as proposed by FH, LLC d/b/a Skyline, in the First Hill neighborhood.

Summary and Background of the Legislation: This resolution grants conceptual approval for construction of a new pedestrian skybridge and outlines certain conditions for obtaining permission to construct the private pedestrian skybridge. The pedestrian skybridge would connect two existing senior residential buildings located at 715 8th Avenue and 725 9th Avenue. The two buildings are a Continuing Care Retirement Community that provides housing for seniors, with access to higher levels of care for residents when necessary, including on-site skilled nursing and rehabilitation services.

The Seattle Design Commission reviewed the proposal and although it is the City's policy to limit the proliferation of skybridges, they were persuaded by the stated concerns of the residents regarding a protected access to the buildings and were willing to recommend and set conditions for this skybridge. Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 15.64 requires public benefits to offset the impact of skybridges, and the applicant has proposed the following public benefits:

1. Open space improvements and activation on 8th Avenue adjacent to 725 9th Avenue;
2. Integrated public art in the enhanced 8th Avenue landscape area;
3. Pedestrian improvements at the intersection of 8th Avenue and Marion Street, including extending the existing curbs and adding curb ramps; and
4. Interpretative wayfinding signage to the Park to Park Loop project.

SDOT reviewed the proposal against the following criteria: the skybridge provides adequate clearance above-grade; is not on a view corridor; there will not be a significant reduction in natural light; it will not have a significant impact on traffic or pedestrian safety; and it will provide another accessible route for residents of the buildings to move between them to access amenities or visit friends/family. A below-grade pedestrian tunnel was not feasible. SDOT determined that the proposal was sufficiently consistent with Seattle Municipal Code 15.64.050 and recommends approval.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? ☐ Yes ☒ No

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City? ☐ Yes ☒ No

3.d. Other Impacts

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle, including direct or indirect, one-time or ongoing costs, that are not included in Sections 3.a through 3.c? If so, please describe these financial impacts.

If a future term permit ordinance is approved by the City Council, the City will receive permit fees associated with the pedestrian skybridge.

If the legislation has costs, but they can be absorbed within existing operations, please describe how those costs can be absorbed. The description should clearly describe if the absorbed costs are achievable because the department had excess resources within their existing budget or if by absorbing these costs the department is deprioritizing other work that would have used these resources.

N/A

Please describe any financial costs or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation.

N/A

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

a. Please describe how this legislation may affect any departments besides the originating department.

N/A

b. Does this legislation affect a piece of property? If yes, please attach a map and explain any impacts on the property. Please attach any Environmental Impact Statements, Determinations of Non-Significance, or other reports generated for this property.

Yes, this legislation would affect properties located at 715 8th Avenue and 725 9th Avenue.

c. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative.

i. How does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you arrive at this conclusion? In your response please consider impacts within City government (employees, internal programs) as well as in the broader community.

This legislation does not impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities.

- ii. **Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses in the development and/or assessment of the legislation.**

N/A

- iii. **What is the Language Access Plan for any communications to the public?**

N/A

d. Climate Change Implications

- i. **Emissions: How is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way? Please attach any studies or other materials that were used to inform this response.**

This legislation is not likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way.

- ii. **Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.**

This legislation is not likely to increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency to climate change in a material way.

- e. **If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s)? What mechanisms will be used to measure progress towards meeting those goals?**

N/A

5. CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Is a public hearing required?**
- ☐ **Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required?**
- ☐ **If this legislation changes spending and/or revenues for a fund, have you reviewed the relevant fund policies and determined that this legislation complies?**
- ☐ **Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP project that involves a shared financial commitment with a non-City partner agency or organization?**

6. ATTACHMENTS

Summary Attachments:

Summary Attachment A – Skyline 8th Ave Skybridge Area Map

Skyline 8th Ave Skybridge Map



Map is for informational purposes only and is not intended to modify or supplement the legal description(s) in the Ordinance.

March 10, 2025

MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Committee
From: Lish Whitson, Analyst
Subject: Resolution 32166: Skyline Skybridge

On March 18, the Transportation Committee will receive a briefing on Resolution 32166, which would grant conditional approval of a new skybridge across 8th Avenue between Columbia and Cherry streets on First Hill (Council District 7).

Skybridges that are placed above the public right-of-way requires a Skybridge Term Permit under Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) [Chapter 15.64](#). Skybridges are held to a higher level of review than other types of significant structure term permits. SMC 16.64.010 states:

It is the intent of the City Council to limit the proliferation and adverse effects of skybridges. Council will consider requests for new skybridges, and the repermitting of existing skybridges upon expiration of the term of the permission, with regard to how well they serve the public interest and their relationship to the cityscape. The provisions of [Chapter 15.64](#) shall be liberally construed in carrying out the intent of the Council.

For more information about the skybridge approval process, please see Attachment 1.

Resolution 32166 contains standard conditions, including requirements that the skybridge owner file covenants and attain public liability insurance, receive all necessary permits, pay all necessary City fees, and agree to remove the skybridge at the City's discretion.

This memorandum describes the proposed skybridge, the City's review of the skybridge and recommendations, and identifies next steps.

Skyline Skybridge

The Skyline retirement community consists of two towers located on either side of 8th Avenue on First Hill, together containing 457 units for independent living, assisted living, memory support, rehabilitative care, and skilled nursing. The Cascade Tower is located at 725 9th Avenue, between 8th and 9th avenues, and the Olympic Tower is located at 715 8th Avenue on the west side of 8th. In this area, 8th Avenue is a non-arterial street.

The Cascade Tower includes facilities to provide medical services for residents of both towers. The Olympic Tower includes amenities such as a restaurant and fitness center available to residents of both towers. The proposed skybridge would connect the towers, increasing opportunities for the seniors who live at Skyline to move between Skyline's facilities without needing to go outdoors. The proposed skybridge would connect the fourth floors of the towers.

Public benefits proposed to accompany the installation of the tower include:

1. Open space improvements and activation on 8th Avenue adjacent to its building, including new plantings, furnishings, and pet relief area;
2. Integrated public art in the enhanced 8th Avenue landscape area;
3. Pedestrian improvements at 8th Avenue and Marion Street, including extending the existing curbs and curb ramps; and
4. Interpretive wayfinding signage for the Park to Park Loop project.

Skybridge Review

This is the second time that a skybridge has been proposed to connect these facilities. A previous proposal, submitted in 2019 when the Olympic Tower was undergoing permitting, was rejected by the Seattle Design Commission (SDC) and the Skybridge Review Panel, and was withdrawn. A new application was submitted in 2024, informed by residents' experience in living and moving between the two towers. In 2024, the Skybridge Review Panel recommended against approving the skybridge, but the SDC did recommend approval, and the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has recommended approval.

On May 2 and October 17, 2024, the Seattle Design Commission recommended approval of the skybridge and the public benefit package respectively. In its minutes from the May 2 meeting, the Commission notes:

Commissioners were concerned about the precedent that this skybridge will set if it is approved by the City Council. Commissioners support for the skybridge is based on the unique set of circumstances in this proposal – improving mobility beyond ADA for residents of an existing senior living community located in two buildings divided by a right of way. Commissioners expressed that this use should not be considered like other residential uses for the purpose of future policy or precedent. Commissioners look to the City Council to ensure that if the skybridge is approved, that its approval will not establish a precedent that would conflict with Council policies that discourage the proliferation of skybridges.

In the Summary and Fiscal Note for Resolution 32166, SDOT made the following statement regarding the criteria for new skybridges in Chapter 15.64:

SDOT reviewed the proposal against the following criteria: the skybridge provides adequate clearance above-grade; is not on a view corridor; there will not be a significant reduction in natural light; it will not have a significant impact on traffic or pedestrian safety; and it will provide another accessible route for residents of the buildings to move between them to access amenities or visit friends/family. A below-grade pedestrian tunnel was not feasible. SDOT determined that the proposal was sufficiently consistent with Seattle Municipal Code 15.64.050 and recommends approval.

Next Steps

Resolution 32166, if adopted, would grant conditional approval for the Skyline skybridge. It would direct SDOT to develop a term permit ordinance for Council consideration which would respond to the conditions included in the Resolution. Approval of this resolution is a required step in the skybridge approval process and sets the terms of final approval. If the Council votes to adopt this resolution, the Council will be committing to approve future Ordinances that meet the conditions laid out in the Resolution.

If the Committee votes on Resolution 32166 at its April 1 meeting, it could be considered by the City Council as early as April 8.

Attachments:

1. Skybridge Term Permits

cc: Ben Noble, Director
Yolanda Ho, Deputy Director

Attachment 1: Skybridge Term Permits

Skybridge Permits

Property owners who seek to build a pedestrian bridge over a City street, alley, or other public place¹ must seek skybridge permit approval from the City Council under Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) [Chapter 15.64](#).

The City's skybridge regulations state that:

It is the intent of the City Council to limit the proliferation and adverse effects of Skybridges. Council will consider requests for new skybridges, and the repermitting of existing skybridges upon expiration of the term of the permission, with regard to how well they serve the public interest, and their relationship to the cityscape. The provisions of Chapter 15.64 shall be liberally construed in carrying out the intent of the Council.

Consistent with that intent, in the last ten years, new skybridges have only been approved for hospitals and medical centers, where the need to safely move patients between buildings without exposure to the weather is essential.

After receiving a skybridge application, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) files the application with the City Clerk and circulates it to interested City departments, utilities, and the Seattle Design Commission (SDC). SDOT convenes a Skybridge Review Committee to consider the application and make a recommendation to the SDOT Director who makes a recommendation to the City Council based on the Committee and Commission's recommendations.

SMC 15.64.050.C lays out a series of topics to consider in determining whether to approve a skybridge application:

1. Adequacy of horizontal and vertical clearance;
2. View blockage;
3. Interruption or interference with existing streetscape or other street amenities;
4. Impacts due to reduction of natural light;
5. Reduction of and effect on pedestrian activity at street level;
6. Number of pedestrians projected to use the skybridge;
7. Effect on commerce and enjoyment of neighboring land uses;
8. Availability of reasonable alternatives;
9. Effect on traffic and pedestrian safety;
10. Accessibility for the elderly and handicapped; and
11. The public benefit mitigation elements provided by the proposal.

Skybridges must allow continued use of the street, alley or other public place for travel, utility purposes, and other public purposes.

¹ A "public place" is defined as: "public right-of-way and the space above or beneath its surface, whether or not opened or improved, including streets, avenues, ways, boulevards, drives, places, alleys, sidewalks, planting strips, squares, triangles, and plazas that are not privately owned." ([SMC 16.02.046](#))

When the Director is ready to make a recommendation, SDOT will transmit the recommendation along with background information to Council. A recommendation to approve the skybridge application will take the form of a Resolution.

Council Action

Upon receiving the Director's recommendation, the Council may "approve, deny, or approve with requirements or conditions" the skybridge application by Resolution. The Council's decision must consider the topics listed in SMC 15.64.050.C. According to SMC 15.64.065, the Council may not grant approval for a new skybridge "unless it finds that the skybridge is in the public interest and no reasonable alternative to the skybridge exists." If the Council seeks to approve the application, it will adopt a resolution that provides "conceptual approval." Council denial of an application is the final step in the process for a skybridge that is not approved.

Conceptual approval of the skybridge allows for publication of Master Use Permit decisions for development that includes the skybridge and allows for submission of construction plans for the skybridge. Once SDOT and the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) have determined that the construction plans are consistent with the initial plans and meet all applicable codes, SDOT will prepare a final Ordinance for Council consideration. The Ordinance will reflect any conditions for approval. SDOT will typically include conditions responding to [SMC 15.64.090](#) with language developed in consultation with the City's Risk Managers. The conditions will include the following:

- the term of years that permission is granted and renewal periods, if any;
- provision for regular inspection of the skybridge;
- procedures for closure or removal of the skybridge;
- requirements for performance bonds, public liability insurance, indemnification, conformance with other laws, and annual fees;
- prohibition against assignment without City consent;
- a recorded covenant ensuring that obligations and conditions imposed on the permittee run with the land, where applicable;
- public benefit mitigation elements; and
- repeal of approval in the face of untimely acceptance of permission.

Every skybridge permit must allow the City to require that the skybridge be removed for any reason.

The current practice of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is to recommend 15-year permits that can be renewed for an additional 15 years for a total term of approval of 30 years. After 30 years, the skybridge's owner will need a new permit from the Council to continue operating the skybridge. The code provides for two different times when the Council may be called on to review an existing term permit: at the expiration of a term, which requires a new permit, or during the renewal of a term permit if amendments are proposed.



FH, LLC (Skyline) Pedestrian Skybridge

Council Transportation Committee
Amy Gray, Senior Planning & Development Specialist
March 18, 2025

Presentation overview



- Skyline is seeking conceptual approval for a private pedestrian skybridge over 8th Ave, north of Cherry St
- The pedestrian skybridge will connect two senior residential buildings located at 715 8th (District 7) Ave & 725 9th Ave (District 3)
- The pedestrian skybridge will allow residents to accessibly move between the two buildings to access services and amenities
- SDOT recommends conceptual approval for the skybridge permit

Term Permit Process – New Permits

Step 1: Resolution for Conceptual Approval

- At 60% design, identifies conditions to be met prior to final approval

Step 2: Ordinance Passage:

- At 100% design and after all conditions in the resolution are met
- Grants the permit for 15 years, with one renewable 15-year term
- Details the terms and conditions of the permit including public benefits and permit fees



Review Process

SDOT Review

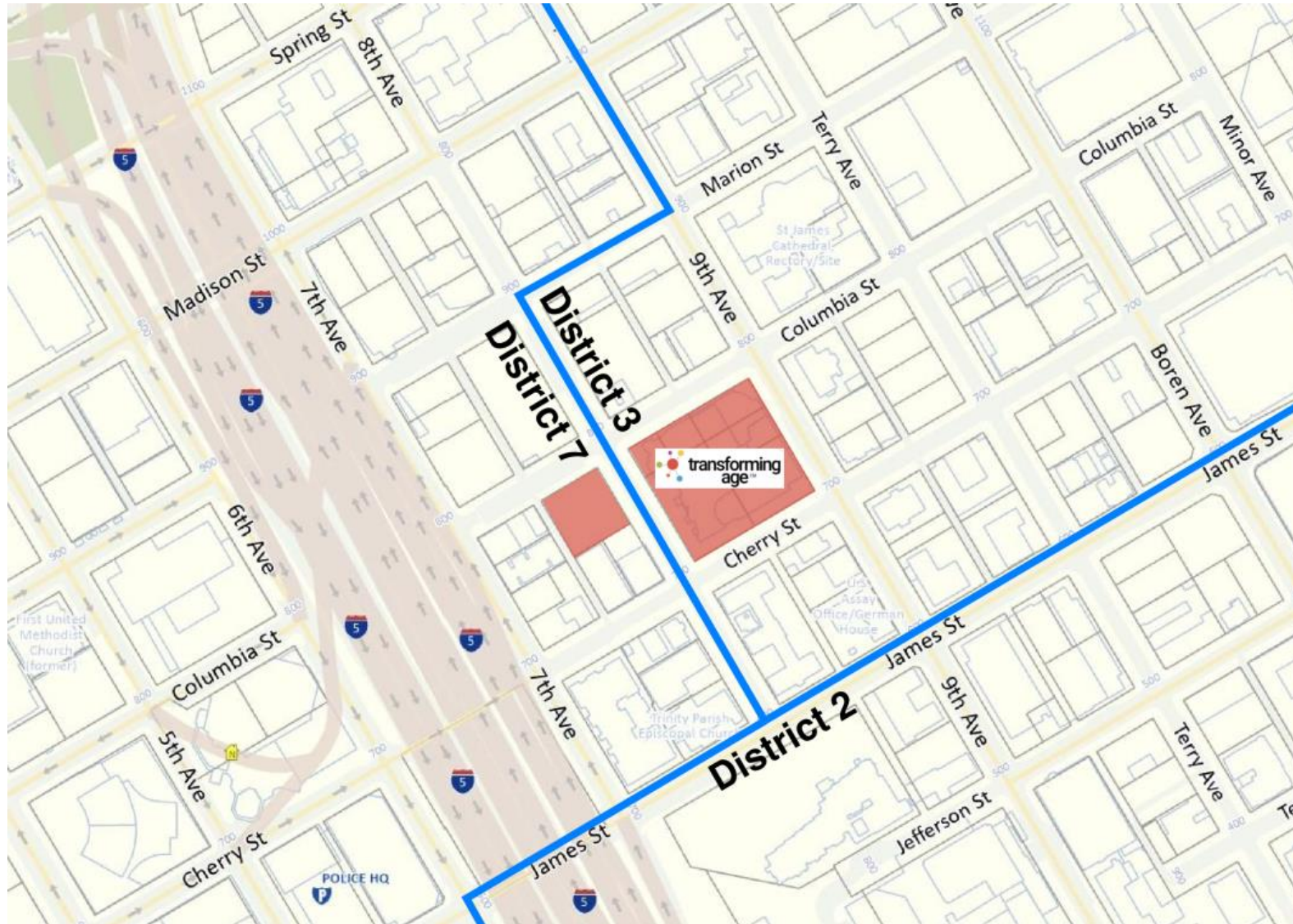
- Reviews against the criteria in SMC 15.64.050
- Includes review by the Skybridge Review Committee

Seattle Design Commission

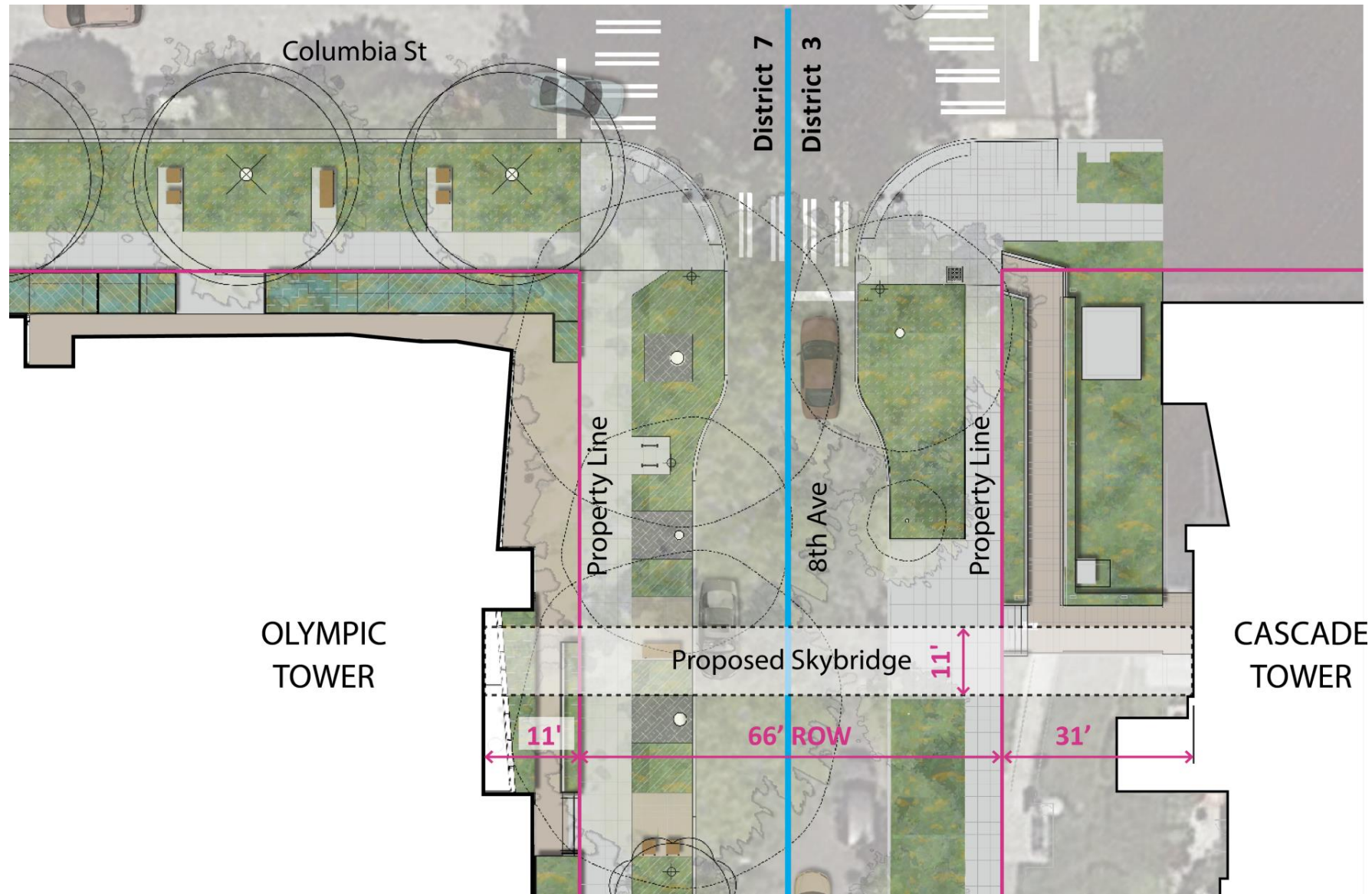
- May 2, 2024 – partial approval of urban design phase.
- Sep 18, 2024 – subcommittee approval of urban design phase.
- Oct 17, 2024 – partial approval of public benefits package.
- Dec 5, 2024 – subcommittee approval of wayfinding.



Area Map w/ Districts 3 & 7



Skybridge Proposal



Skybridge Proposal

View looking south along 8th Ave (without trees)



View looking south along 8th Ave (with trees)



View looking north along 8th Ave (without trees)

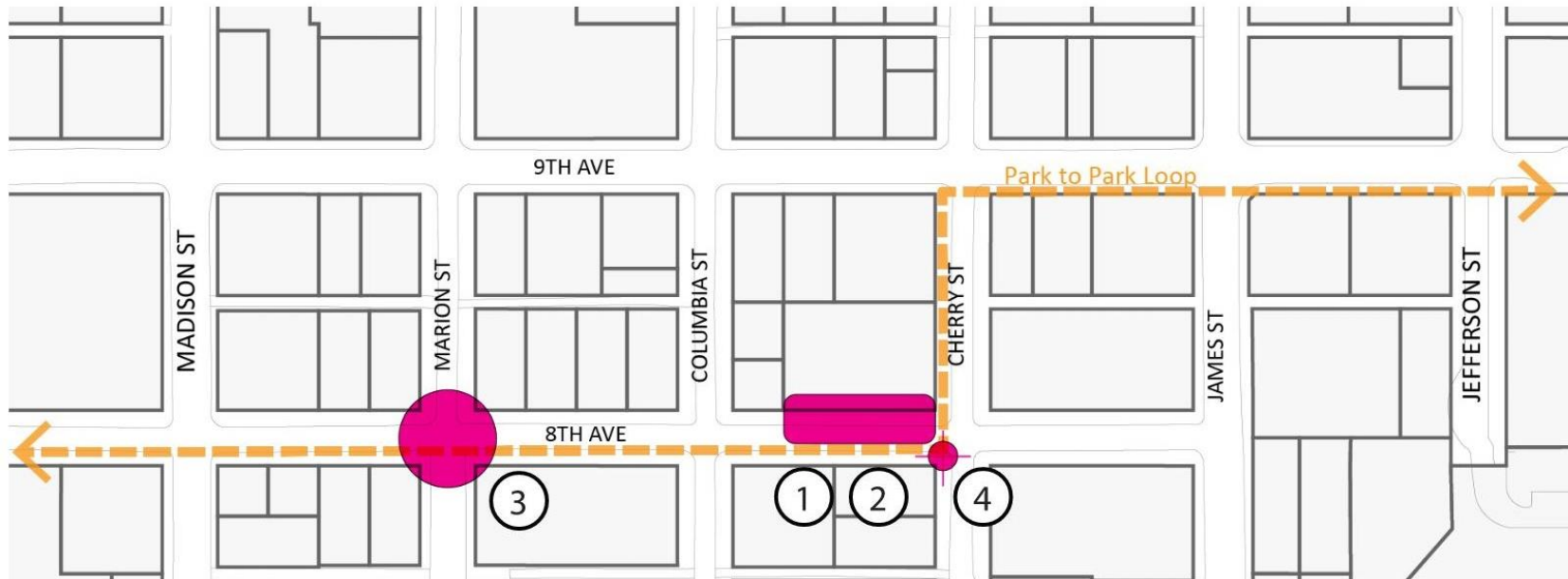


View looking north along 8th Ave (with trees)



Public Benefits

- ① **Open Space Activation:** Improvements to 8th Ave Landscape & ROW
- ② **Public Art:** Integrated Artwork by Norie Sato
- ③ **Pedestrian Enhancements:** 8th Ave & Marion Intersection
- ④ **Interpretive Wayfinding Signage:** Design & Fabrication

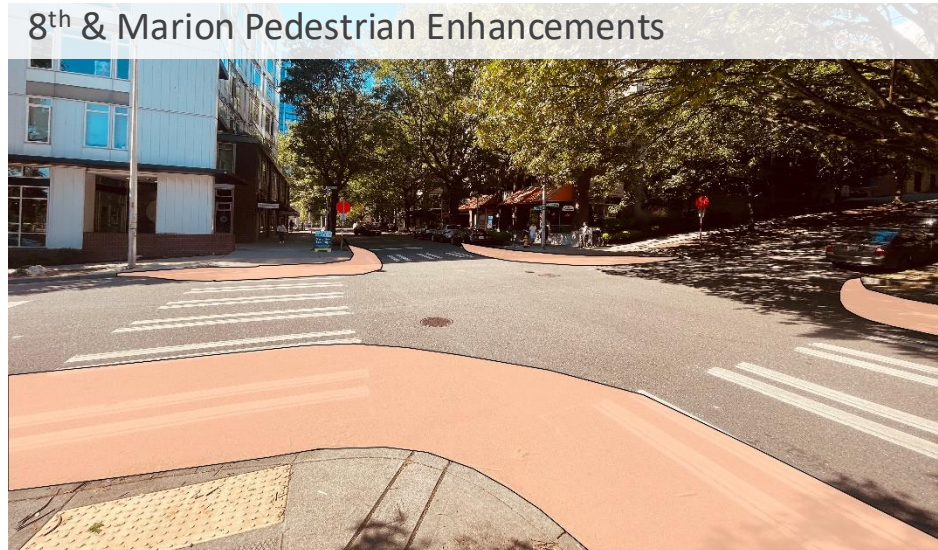


Public Benefits

8th Ave Open Space Activation & Public Art



8th & Marion Pedestrian Enhancements



Interpretive Wayfinding Signage



Public Benefits

PUBLIC BENEFIT	DESCRIPTION	PROPOSED BENEFIT	ESTIMATED COST
1 Open Space Activation: Improvements to 8th Ave Landscape	New garden plantings, furnishings, and pet relief area	4,450 SF	\$100,000
	Planting Area	2,200 SF	
	Paved Area	160 SF	
	Furnishings	20 LF	
	Trash	Quantity: 2	
	Pet Relief Area	175 SF	
2 Public Art: Integrated Artwork by Norie Sato	Publicly accessible artwork within deep setback along 8th Ave		\$250,000
	Screen pieces	Quantity: 3	
	Sculptural pieces with integrated lighting	Quantity: 6-8	
3 Pedestrian Safety: 8th Ave. & Marion	Extension of existing curbs, curb ramps, crosswalks and adjustments to storm drain.		\$100,000
	COS standard curbs	280 LF	
	COS standard curb ramps	Quantity: 4	
	COS standard sidewalk paving	2,100 SF	
	COS standard crosswalk striping	Allowance	
	COS storm drainage inlet	Quantity: 4	
4 Interpretive Wayfinding Signage: Park to Park Loop Signage	Development and documentation of interpretive wayfinding signs for Park to Park Loop project		\$50,000
	Fabrication Documents	Each sign	
	Prototype sign(s)	Each sign	

Requested action

SDOT recommends Council conceptually approve the proposed pedestrian skybridge

If the resolution is adopted, SDOT will prepare the term permit ordinance for Council consideration in 2025



amy.gray@seattle.gov | (206) 386-4638
www.seattle.gov/transportation