



Legislation Text

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CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION relating to transportation; accompanying an ordinance requesting the 2024 Transportation Levy for citywide transportation maintenance and improvements, and providing further direction regarding reporting and implementation of the programs to be funded by the levy.

WHEREAS, Seattle voters have approved two previous transportation levies to fund significant transportation system maintenance and upgrades; and

WHEREAS, the 2006 Bridging the Gap Levy and the 2015 Levy to Move Seattle improvements included street paving, rehabilitation and seismic retrofit of bridges, transit corridor enhancements, new sidewalk construction, street sign replacements, crosswalk restriping, school safety-related projects, neighborhood-focused projects, and other activities to maintain and enhance The City of Seattle's ("City's") vast transportation system; and

WHEREAS, in April 2024, the City Council passed Resolution 32131 adopting a multimodal transportation vision and strategy for the next 20 years, known as the Seattle Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the adopted Seattle Transportation Plan sets forth several goals to guide future investments in transportation, including prioritizing safety for all travelers, implementing restorative practices to address transportation related inequities, responding to climate change through innovation and a lens of climate justice, providing reliable and affordable travel options that help people and goods get where they need to go, reimagining streets as inviting places to linger and play, and improving City infrastructure for the future; and

WHEREAS, the 2015 Levy to Move Seattle expires at the end of 2024 and the funding it provides must be replaced to continue investments in the City's transportation system to meet Seattle's transportation

needs over the next eight years; and

WHEREAS, the 2015 Levy to Move Seattle revenue accounts for over 30 percent of the Seattle Department of Transportation's dedicated transportation revenue and serves as a critical resource for maintaining bridges, repairing roads, and filling potholes; and

WHEREAS, the City has urgent maintenance and modernization needs to make bridges and streets safer; improve maintenance of streets and sidewalks; ensure that first responders can aid residents experiencing medical, fire, and other emergencies; and accommodate safer travel across all modes; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to provide further direction regarding reporting and implementation of the programs to be funded by the 2024 Transportation Levy; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:

Section 1. 2024 Transportation Levy. The City Council passed Council Bill 120788, placing a proposition to authorize an eight-year transportation levy ("2024 Transportation Levy") on the ballot in November 2024. This resolution requests the Executive to complete certain activities to ensure successful implementation of the programs and activities to be funded by the 2024 Transportation Levy, if the ballot measure is approved by the voters.

Section 2. Program Implementation. The proceeds generated by the 2024 Transportation Levy must be spent in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 of Council Bill 120788. The transportation improvements to be funded are described in Section 6 and Attachment A to Council Bill 120788 and include the following core investment areas: (i) Vision Zero, School and Neighborhood Safety; (ii) Street Maintenance and Modernization; (iii) Bridges and Structures; (iv) Transit Corridors and Connections; (v) Pedestrian Safety; (vi) Signals and Operations; (vii) Bicycle Safety; (viii) People Streets and Public Spaces; (ix) Climate and Resiliency; (x) Freight and Goods Movement; and (xi) Good Governance and Equitable Implementation Initiative. Funding for the programs and activities will be subject to City Council decisions made during the annual budget process. The Council requests that the Seattle Department of Transportation ("SDOT") address

the following guidance and expectations in future budget proposals and program implementation:

A. District Project Fund. In the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget, provide procedures and processes for administration of the District Project Fund. The proposal should describe how projects will be identified, evaluated, and selected, and the process for receiving Council approval of funding allocations. The proposal should give special consideration to ensuring accountability and transparency with regard to program and project award decisions.

B. Neighborhood-Initiated Safety Partnership Program. In the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget, provide procedures and processes for administration of the Neighborhood-Initiated Safety Partnership Program. The proposal should describe the processes for partnering with neighborhood and community groups and soliciting projects, evaluating and developing project proposals, and the project selection process, including by defining project prioritization factors and selection criteria.

C. Transit Passenger Safety. In the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget, provide a description of how funding for this purpose will be used. The proposal should primarily prioritize funding for transit and public safety personnel services on-transit, with secondary consideration given to infrastructure improvements for physical security. Funding should be frontloaded for the greatest impact in the near-term to (1) provide a safe, welcoming environment for transit riders and operators, (2) reset and improve upon passenger norms regarding what constitutes acceptable behavior and conduct while riding transit, (3) increase the public's perception of safety and security while riding transit, and (4) boost ridership. SDOT should coordinate implementation of any strategies with King County Metro ("Metro"), and the funding designated for this purpose should not be used to supplant Metro's funding for personnel security services.

D. Electric Vehicle Charging. In the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget, provide a detailed plan for the deployment of electric vehicle charging stations throughout the duration of the levy. The plan should seek to deploy an equal number of new level two and level three charging stations, and it should include a monitoring plan to track the deployments against the identified need for charging infrastructure. Additionally, the plan

should describe how SDOT and other City departments intend to pursue non-City sources of funding for this purpose, including federal and state grants and public-private partnerships.

E. Access During Construction. Prior to any transportation improvement project entering construction, SDOT should ensure that the plans maintain an accessible path of travel and comply with applicable law governing accessibility standards, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, *et seq.* (“ADA”), the 2010 ADA Standards, the Washington Law Against Discrimination, RCW 49.60 *et seq.* (“WLAD”), and the Consent Decree in *Reynoldson v. City of Seattle*, 2017 WL 9470569 (W.D. Wash. 2017), throughout the duration of the project.

F. Project Coordination. SDOT should enhance its efforts to coordinate the construction of infrastructure projects throughout the city to minimize disruptions to communities and avoid the need for streets and sidewalks to be restored multiple times within a short timeframe.

G. Transportation Funding Task Force. The 2024 Transportation Levy includes funding to support a Transportation Funding Task Force that would be charged with recommending a broad range of funding, program management, and policy solutions to address Seattle’s significant transportation infrastructure needs. The Council requests that SDOT propose legislation establishing the Task Force to the Council by August 1, 2024, and that the proposal include a diverse membership that represents the perspectives of neighborhoods, businesses, accessibility and mobility advocates, labor, the development community, and subject matter experts in the area of transportation project delivery. The Task Force should focus on practicable options that the City could consider and unilaterally implement in a short timeframe, and final recommendations should be delivered to the City by the end of 2027. The Council expects the Task Force to direct particular attention to the transportation network’s greatest needs, including sidewalks, bridges, and paving projects. If the Task Force recommends a new levy to generate funding for the maintenance and repair of existing road and bridge infrastructure and that levy is subsequently approved by voters, the Council may consider commensurately reducing tax collections from the 2024 Transportation Levy intended for the same purposes.

H. Freight and Goods Movement. SDOT should continue exploring zero-emission alternatives for “last-mile” deliveries to customers to reduce carbon emissions, alleviate traffic congestion, and increase business efficiency.

I. Bridges and Structures

1. Under the Magnolia Bridge Replacement Alternatives Cost Estimate updates in the Project Readiness category, SDOT should evaluate emergency access routes, including a potential connection from W Galer St to W Marina Pl.

2. Under the Bridge Structural Repairs and Upgrades category, SDOT should consider widened pedestrian access across Ballard Bridge using a cantilevered design on the bridge approaches.

J. New Sidewalks and Sidewalk Alternatives. SDOT should evaluate the following locations for implementation:

1. Complete north side of NE 95th St from Lake City Way NE to NE 25th St;
2. Roosevelt Way N: 1st Ave NE to Aurora Ave; and
3. Sandpoint Way: NE 125th St to NE 77th St.

Section 3. Oversight and Reporting. Section 7 of Council Bill 120788 establishes an Oversight Committee to monitor revenues, expenditures, and program and project implementation, as well as to provide advice to the City on the spending of levy proceeds. Section 8 of Council Bill 120788 specifies the reporting requirements of the Director of Transportation, including an annual progress report on levy spending and project and program delivery. In addition to the oversight responsibilities and reporting requirements contained in Sections 7 and 8 of Council Bill 120788, the Council requests the following:

A. Asset Condition. The Oversight Committee should take into consideration the state of SDOT’s assets, including pavement (e.g., asset sustainability ratio, paving condition index), sidewalks (e.g., sidewalk inventory, missing sidewalk segments), and bridges (e.g., bridge rating).

B. Performance Evaluation. The Oversight Committee should focus particular attention on the

performance of maintenance programs for bridges, paving, pothole repair, and sidewalks.

C. Readiness Assessment, Preparation, and Planning. SDOT should prepare an initial readiness assessment and high-level implementation plan to demonstrate its ability to deliver 2024 Transportation Levy programs and projects on-time and on-budget (collectively, the “Levy Readiness & Action Plan”). The Levy Readiness & Action Plan should include: (1) a spending plan for levy proceeds that takes into account SDOT’s potential capacity constraints, including those related to staffing, hiring, and contracting; and (2) a description of how SDOT intends to evaluate changes, if needed, to the projects or programs identified in Attachment A of Council Bill 120788 for the duration of the 2024 Transportation Levy. The Council requests that SDOT submit the Levy Readiness & Action Plan to the Chair of the Council’s Transportation Committee by September 30, 2024.

D. Annual Levy Delivery Plan. For each year of the 2024 Transportation Levy, SDOT should prepare a plan describing anticipated levy spending and program and project deliverables for the upcoming year. The Oversight Committee should review and provide feedback and recommendations, as appropriate, to the Council on the plan, which should also describe: (1) how the anticipated annual spending comports with or deviates from the overall levy spending assumptions; and (2) any proposed changes to the list of projects or programs identified in Attachment A of Council Bill 120788 so that the public and Oversight Committee have an opportunity to provide comment. The Council requests that SDOT submit an annual plan to the Chair of the Council’s Transportation Committee beginning on January 31, 2025, and every year of the levy thereafter.

E. Post-Project Delivery Design and Impact Evaluation. Upon completion of any capital project with a contracted cost of at least \$25 million expected to be in construction for at least six months (from notice to proceed to substantial completion) and may cause street closures, reroutes, or other disruptions; but in any case, for no fewer than one capital project per year, SDOT is requested to conduct a retrospective evaluation of project performance against design objectives and residual stakeholder opinion, no sooner than 30 days after substantial completion as follows:

1. This retrospective evaluation should include, but not be limited to: (a) soliciting feedback, which may include a survey when viable, from residents geographically proximate to the project or otherwise likely to regularly use the right of way in the project area; (2) comparing actual project outcomes against design objectives; (3) assessing final cost and schedule deviations from the original budget and schedule, including total cost increases greater than \$500,000; and (4) soliciting feedback, which may include a survey when viable, from businesses directly impacted during project construction. SDOT should use outreach and analysis methodologies scoped appropriately in proportion to the size and scope of the project being evaluated.

2. The data should be used to evaluate resident and business sentiment regarding the final project result and identify the durable impacts to and benefits for these stakeholders.

3. SDOT should evaluate whether cost effective or cost saving changes can be made to future projects to reduce identified impacts and increase benefits.

4. Upon completion of each evaluation, SDOT should publish a report on a City webpage beginning on June 1, 2025, and every year thereafter until June 1, 2028. SDOT should offer present its findings to Council annually. The Council may request that SDOT extend its evaluation process beyond June 1, 2028, at a future date.

Section 4. Issues for Future Council Consideration. The eight-year term of the 2024 Transportation Levy provides an opportunity for the Council to explore specific transportation topics in greater detail and consider if additional policy direction or adjustments are necessary to meet Seattle's transportation needs. The Council intends to engage further on the following issues during the duration of the levy:

A. Vision Zero. The Council plans to review the implementation of Vision Zero, with a focus on investments in corridors identified in the High Injury Network, and evaluate SDOT's alignment with the federal Safe Systems Approach, which considers five elements of a safe transportation system: safe road users, safe vehicles, safe speeds, safe roads, and post-crash care. The Council requests that the Executive expand the City's network of traffic cameras and increase civilian staffing to further the goals of Vision Zero and generate

revenue for Safe Routes to Schools and other traffic safety improvements.

B. Paving/Corridor Project Scoping. The Council intends to review the process by which SDOT scopes and develops major paving and corridor projects. The review will: (i) evaluate the City's current policies governing the planning, design, and implementation of paving projects, including Complete Streets; (ii) evaluate the City's ability to efficiently and effectively fund transportation improvements; (iii) review SDOT's incorporation of community feedback and outreach into project decisions; and (iv) explore the Council's role in making funding decisions for individual projects.

C. General Fund Support. Section 5 of Council Bill 120788 specifies that the minimum annual General Fund appropriation is \$50,740,000 in the first year of the levy, which will be increased in each subsequent year of the levy by an inflationary factor. The Council intends to review the level of General Fund support for transportation purposes to evaluate whether the amount can be increased as financial conditions allow and during the consideration of annual budget proposals.

D. Lidding Interstate 5. The Council intends to support community efforts to lid Interstate 5 ("I-5") and will encourage the Office of Planning and Community Development and SDOT to continue pursuing the next steps recommended by the City's "I-5 Lid Feasibility Study Summary Report" published in September 2020 and as described by Resolution 32100, adopted in September 2023, that expressed the Council and Mayor's shared commitment to explore specific actions to further develop the concept and identify potential funding options. Additionally, the Council intends for such work to be eligible for one or more categories of funding from the 2024 Transportation Levy.

E. Emergency Vehicle Access. The Council intends to support the ongoing collaboration and coordination between SDOT, the Seattle Fire Department, and other emergency responders to ensure that any projects that propose to reconfigure the public right-of-way or add elements intended to reduce vehicle speeds continue to maintain access for emergency response vehicles, including fire trucks, while also improving safety for the traveling public.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2024, and signed by
me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2024.

President _____ of the City Council

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)