



# SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

## Transportation Committee

### Agenda

Tuesday, February 6, 2024

9:30 AM

Council Chamber, City Hall

600 Fourth Avenue

Seattle, WA 98104

Rob Saka, Chair

Joy Hollingsworth, Vice-Chair

Robert Kettle, Member

Dan Strauss, Member

Tanya Woo, Member

Chair Info: 206-684-8801; [Rob.Saka@seattle.gov](mailto:Rob.Saka@seattle.gov)

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#### February 6, 2024 - 9:30 AM

#### Meeting Location:

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

#### Committee Website:

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

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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.

Submit written comments to Councilmember Saka at  
[rob.saka@seattle.gov](mailto:rob.saka@seattle.gov)

*Please Note: Times listed are estimated*

**A. Call To Order**

**B. Approval of the Agenda**

**C. Public Comment**

**D. Items of Business**

**1. Introduction to the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)**

*Supporting Documents:* [Presentation - Intro to SDOT](#)

**Briefing and Discussion** (60 minutes)

**Presenters:** Greg Spotts, Francisca Stefan, Rodney Maxie, Liz Sheldon, and Kris Castleman, SDOT

**2. Introduction to Term Permits and Street Vacations**

*Supporting Documents:* [Presentation - Street Vacations and Term Permits](#)

**Briefing and Discussion** (20 minutes)

**Presenters:** Alyse Nelson, Beverly Barnett, and Amy Gray, SDOT; Lish Whitson, Council Central Staff

**E. Adjournment**



Legislation Text

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**File #:** Inf 2381, **Version:** 1

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Introduction to the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)



# Introduction to SDOT

# Today's presentation

- SDOT mission & values
- Leadership & organization
- Lines of business
- How SDOT is funded

# 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.

# Maintain a safe and functional public right of way





# SDOT runs a 24/7 Transportation Operations Center in SMT



# Signals

## Traffic signal crews and engineers

- Optimize, operate and maintain >1,100 signals
- Install and maintain >500 Cameras
- Install and maintain over >1,000 Auxiliary Traffic Devices including DMS, Speed Signs, RRFBs, School Beacons and Overhead Warning Beacons
- Emergency response to damages 24/7
- Support for capital and SIP projects
- Support interdepartmental (SCL/SPU/KC Metro/Sound Transit) work





# Transportation Ops, by the numbers

- ~150 Engineers, Planners, Data Analysis, Permit Specialist, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officers, Ops Center Operators and Signal Electricians
- Locations(s): Sunny Jim Traffic Shop & Seattle Municipal Tower 37<sup>th</sup> Floor
- Manage 24/7 operations of the transportation system including special event and emergency response
- In 2023 we:
  - Installed 99 Leading Pedestrian Intervals
  - Implemented over 73 intersections with No Turn On Red
  - Optimized five arterial corridors for improved operations for all users
  - Installed four traffic signals
  - Reviewed an Approved 1000s of Engineering and Traffic Control Plans
  - Completed Annual Traffic Report
  - Piloted Artificial Intelligence to support safety and data collection
  - Simulated and reviewed operation impacts for changes to the ROW
  - Received and review over 2300 customer service requests

# Signs & Markings

## Annual programs

- Restripe all arterials
- Remark 1,500 crosswalks
- Replace regulatory signs

## Projects and maintenance

- Crash cushions
- Guardrails
- Decorative crosswalks
- Bike racks
- Protected bike lanes
- Red bus lane markings
- New sign install



# Chief Safety Officer & City Traffic Engineer

Venu Nemani

- Key member of senior leadership team
- Provides clear voice for safety across department and the city
- Develops and implements safety plans and projects
- Guides traffic policy and influences national guidance
- Reviews claims and participates in Civil Court proceedings



# Vision Zero Program

Launched in 2015, Seattle's goal to end traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets by 2030

## Key principles:

- Traffic deaths and injuries are unacceptable
- Humans make mistakes, are vulnerable and fragile
- Success hinges more on design of a safe system than on individuals
- Responsibility is shared
- Safety is proactive
- Redundancy is crucial

## Highlights:

- Approaches safety in a responsive, proactive manner using data
- Leverages partnership and grant opportunities to promote safety
- Implements LPIs, NTORs, Traffic Calming etc.
- One major effort in the near-term is to implement Safe Streets and Roads for All - a \$25.654M federal grant



# Customer Care, Dispatch & SDOT Response Teams

## Customer service

- Manage Customer Care Center:  
684-ROAD & 684-TREE
- Conduct outreach for crew projects
- Troubleshoot and respond to claims

## 24/7 operations teams

- Traffic incident management
- Seattle Response Team
- Radio dispatch
- Emergency response and hazard mitigation spill response and cleanup



# Right of Way maintenance day & night shifts

- Snow and ice, windstorm, landslide response
- Street sweeping, Clean Streets Program
- Pothole repair
- Sidewalk shims
- Mowing vegetation
- Right of Way cleaning and maintenance
- Pavement crack sealing







# Urban Forestry

## Arborist Services

- Street tree ordinance and policy, permitting, inventory
- Claims investigation and response

## Landscape Architect Services

- Design guidance /plan review
- Enforce land use requirements

## Field Operations

- Maintenance and planting
- Customer service and safety
- Volunteer support program

# SDOT's Emergency Operations mission essential functions

1. Maintain key arterial and waterway operations
2. Mitigate hazards in the public right of way (ROW)
3. Issue permits authorizing use of the public ROW
4. Disseminate critical transportation information

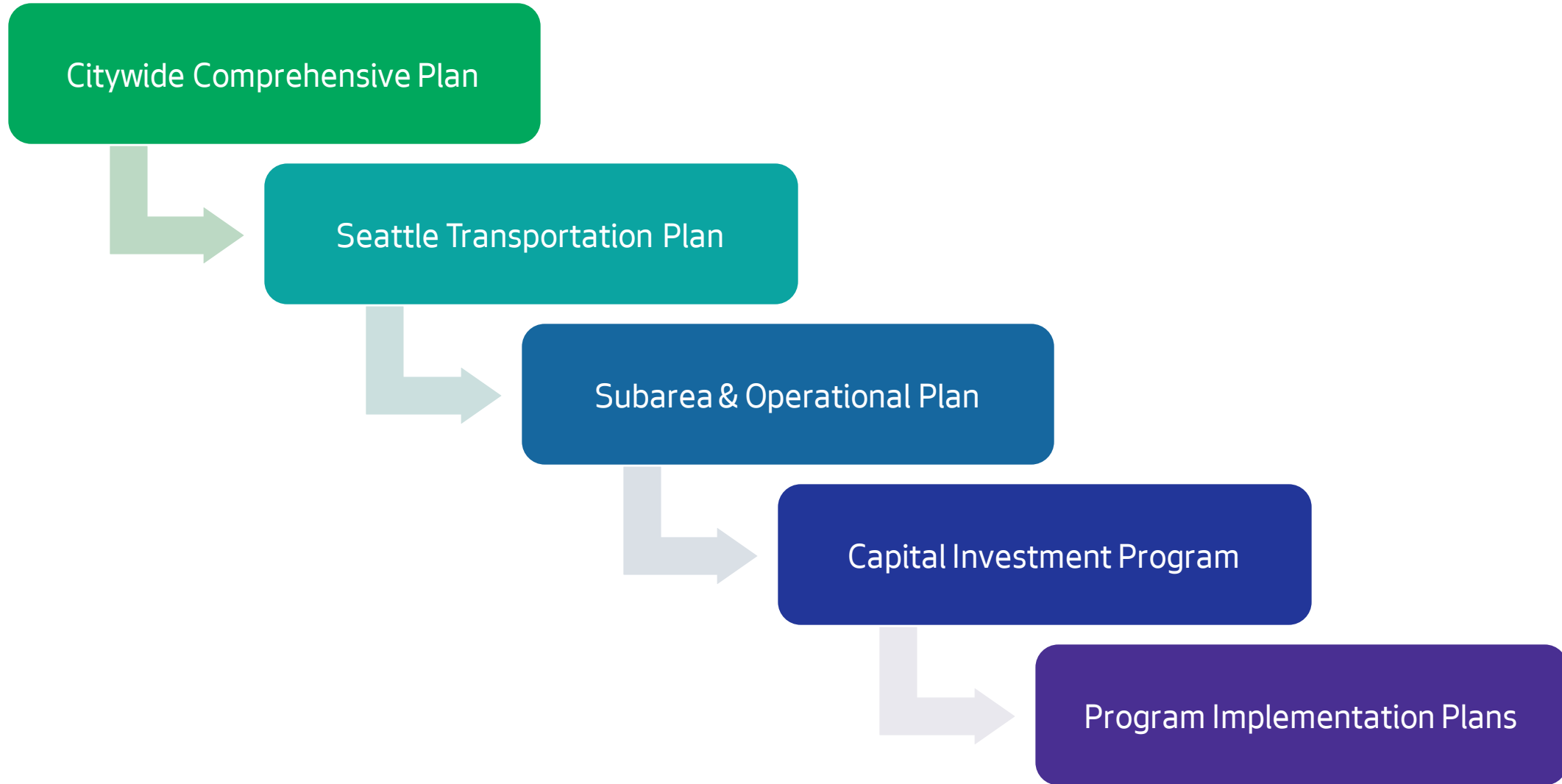


*We train and prepare staff to implement response and recovery plans for Winter Weather, Emergency Bridge Closures, and other incident response needs.*

Maintain and modernize transportation assets and infrastructure as stewards of public investments

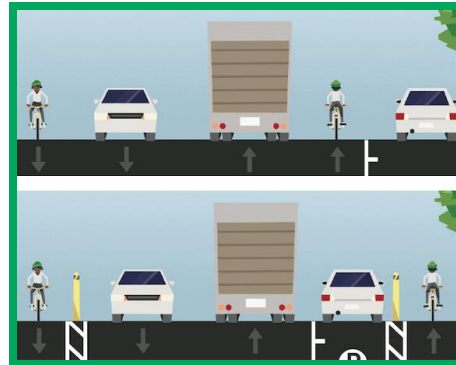


# Visioning & Planning Tools



# What is project development?

Project development is the process of scoping a project during 0-30% design. It is followed by 30-100% design and ultimately construction and project completion.



**Seattle  
Transportation  
Plan**



**Project  
Development  
(0-30%)**



**Project  
Design  
(30-100%)**



**Construction  
and Completion**

# Crew Project Delivery

- Designs and delivers 200+ crew-built projects annually
- Provides early design guidance and cost estimates
- Designs projects from roughly 30 to 100 percent design
- Coordinates construction with Maintenance Operations, Signal Operations, SPU, SCL, King County Metro, and others



# Paving - Asphalt

- Asphalt shims
- Asphalt medium-large repairs
- Arterial and non-arterial paving
- Speed hump installment
- Utility cut restoration
- Pathway and alternative walkway construction



# Paving - Concrete

- Street and sidewalk maintenance and restoration
- Concrete repairs
- Arterial and residential paving
- ADA ramp construction
- Sidewalk reconstruction
- Utility cut restoration
- Metro bus pad construction





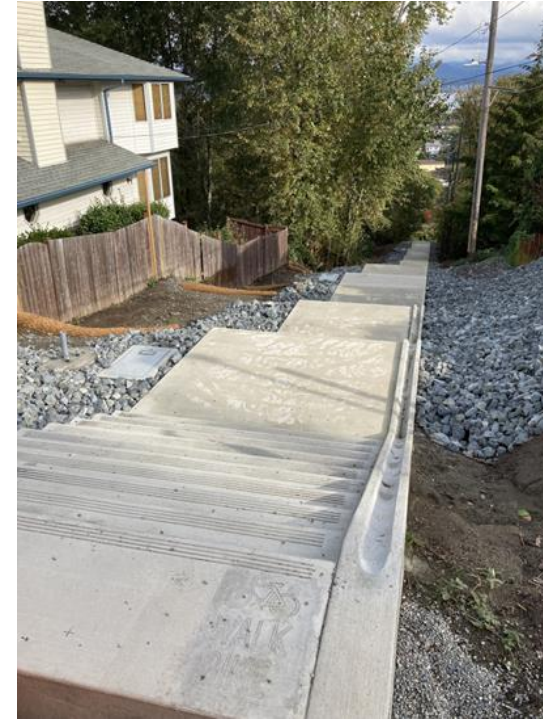
# Capital Projects

Manage projects \$500,000 or more, and can include:

- Bridge repair, replacement, painting
- New bridges
- Major paving projects
- Major transit and multimodal projects
- Neighborhood walking and biking projects
- Seawall and retaining walls



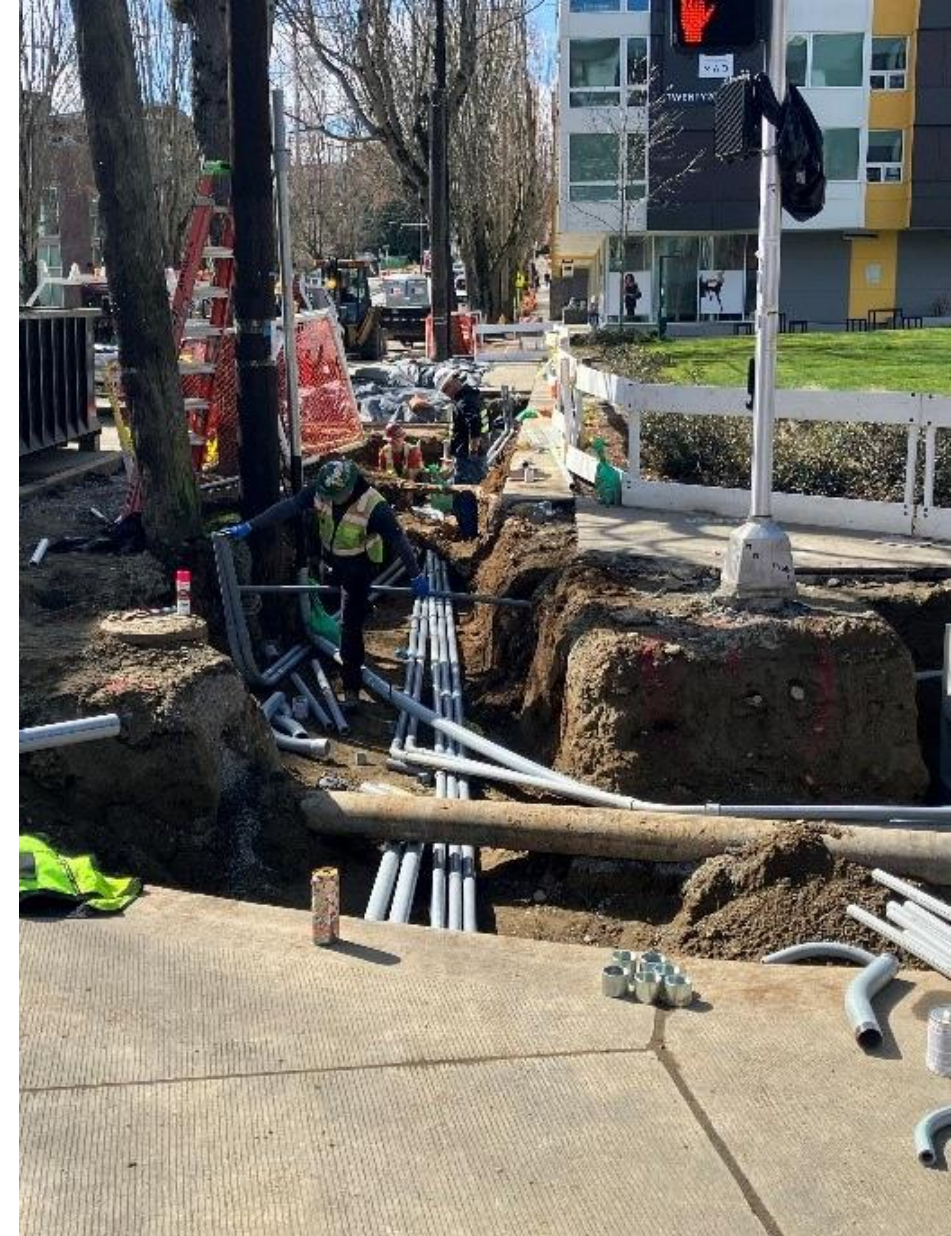
# Capital Projects: recent projects



John Lewis Memorial Bridge, RapidRide H + Multimodal Corridor, S Henderson Stairs

# 2024 Capital Projects highlights

- Bridge Seismic Phase III projects
- Southeast Seattle Safety Projects
  - Martin Luther King, Jr
  - Beacon Hill
  - Georgetown to Downtown
  - Georgetown to South Park
- E Marginal Way Corridor Improvement Project
- RapidRide J + Multimodal Corridor
- 15<sup>th</sup> Ave Paving & Safety Project



E Denny Way westbound RapidRide station

# Bridges and roadway structures, by the numbers



125

Bridges

\$7.53B



613

Retaining walls

\$1.3B



502

Stairways

\$79M



238

Areaways

\$208.5M



Manage assets valued at \$9.1 billion

# Bridges & structures: metrics & accountability

- Average 14K movable bridge openings and 204 bridge inspections per year
- Average \$13M for non-levy capital program management, inspection, maintenance, and movable bridge operation per year
- Levy to Move Seattle deliverables include:
  - Bridge seismic reinforcement
  - Bridge spot repairs
  - Bridge planning
  - Public stairway rehabilitation and replacement



# Enhance the transportation network and creating attractive places



# Transit corridors & streetcars

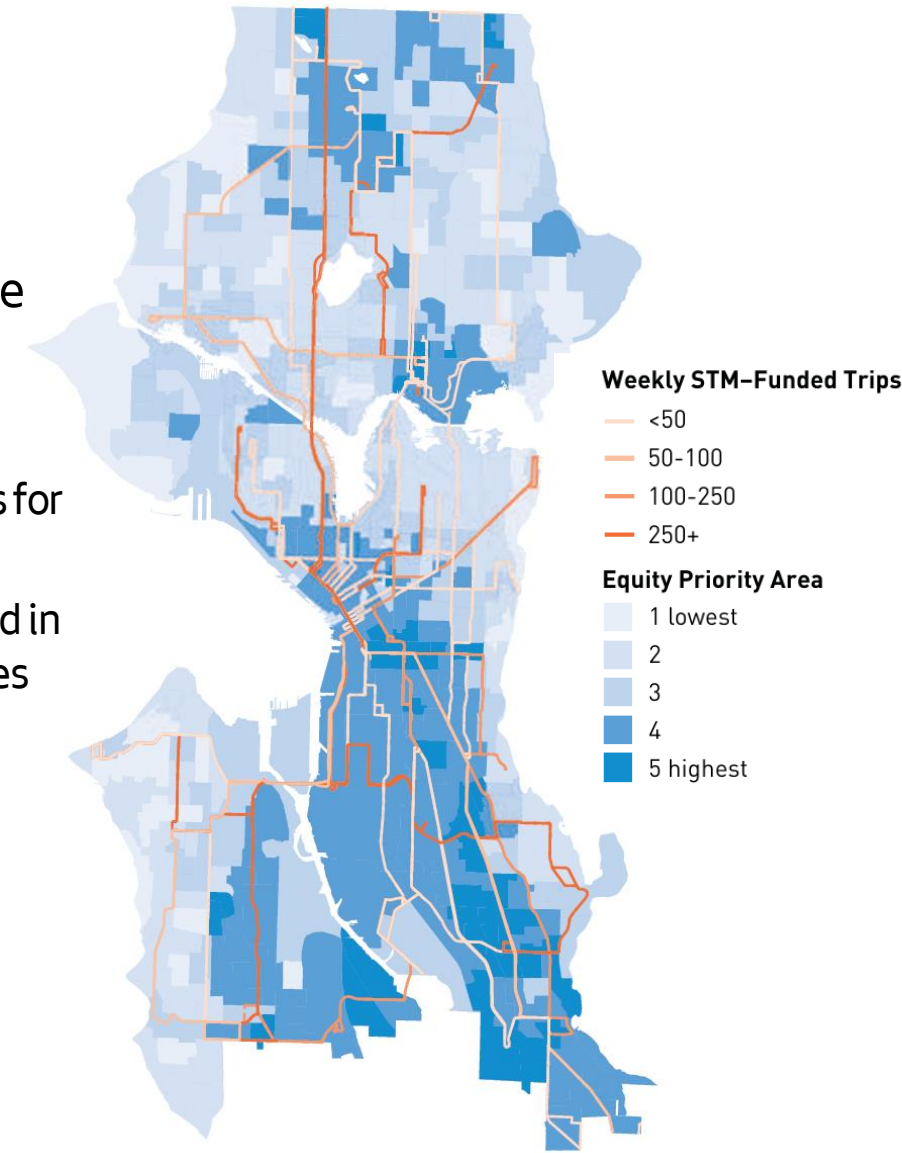
- **Streetcar System:** SDOT owned and Metro-operated. First Hill and South Lake Union streetcars; project owner for Culture Connector
- **Transit + Multimodal Corridors:** Levy to Move Seattle improves seven high ridership corridors
- **Transit Spot Improvements:** Capital improvements to support frequent reliable buses and streetcar service



# Seattle Transit Measure

- 80% of voters approved, revenue collected 2021- 2027, supports:
  - 145,000 hours of Seattle transit service purchased from Metro
  - Transit capital improvements to support frequent, reliable bus service
  - Transit access subsidies and programming for youth, low-income residents, and seniors, including:
    - Seattle Housing Authority Transit Pass Program: fully subsidized ORCA cards for SHA residents; 6,850 ORCA cards distributed; ~100,000 boardings/month
    - Downtown Circulator: A free, fixed-route shuttle through downtown operated in partnership with Solid Ground, connecting low-income riders to social services
- **Development of transit policies and regional transit planning**
- **Maintain strategic regional partnerships**

Routes with STM Investments and  
Equity Priority Areas - December 2022





# Mobility Solutions

- **Bike, scooter and car share:** Policy and program management of up to 3,500 bikes, 7,000 scooters, and 350 hybrid cars
- **Emissions reduction:** Engage ~ 270 worksites in commute trip options; Work with stadiums/events to encourage less driving
- **Automation:** Anticipate and adapt to autonomous vehicle deployments - AV permit program!
- **Transportation electrification:** Support charging on streets and push for clean technology in partnership with OSE and City Light
- **Policy and strategies for emerging mobility**



# ADA Program

- Oversee federal compliance requirements, training, and policy development
- Responsible for Dept. of Justice Consent Decree curb ramp oversight which requires SDOT to build 1,250 ADA curb ramps annually through 2035
- Respond to Customer Service Requests for curb ramps and audible pedestrian signals
- Liaison to Pedestrian Access Advisory Committee



# Pedestrian Programs & Safe Routes to School

## New sidewalks

- Builds about 25 blocks of new walkways annually and has delivered nearly 250 blocks through the Levy to Move

## Safe Routes to School

- Delivered safety improvements at every public school through Levy to Move Seattle

## Pedestrian crossing improvements

- Delivers new crosswalks, curb bulbs, and leading pedestrian intervals at a minimum of 16 intersections per year through Levy to Move Seattle



# Neighborhood Greenways + Home Zones

- **Neighborhood Greenways/Healthy Streets**
  - Creating safer, calmer neighborhood streets and arterial crossings where people walking and biking are the priority; SDOT will deliver about 60 miles of Greenways through LMS
- **Home Zones**
  - Working with communities to create holistic plans for traffic calming and more pedestrian friendly streets





# Bicycle Program & Neighborhood Street Fund

- Protected Bicycle Lanes (PBLs)
  - Improve safety by providing dedicated space for people biking by delivering more than 40 miles of PBLs through the Levy to Move Seattle
- Urban Trails and Bikeways
  - Delivers maintenance and capital improvements for Seattle's multiuse trail system
- Neighborhood Street Fund
  - Community-driven program that builds a wide range of transportation projects

# Urban design recent work

- **Detective Cookie Chess Park** - A space for youth in Rainier Beach
- **Portal Porch** - A new public open space in Belltown
- **Thomas St Redefined** - Landscaped bike/ped corridor to Seattle Center
- **Ballard Ave Café Street** - Activation and access on Ballard Ave
- **Wayfinding** - Support walking journeys during 2023 MLB All Star Game and 2026 FIFA World Cup
- **Public art** to support activation and walkability in equity priority neighborhoods
- **Third Ave and Yesler Way Safety Improvements** - Improving walking, biking, and transit access in historic Pioneer Square



# Interagency programs & projects

- Engage with other cities, Sound Transit, the Port, and WSDOT
- Employ mix of engineering, public engagement, and utility and permitting expertise to guide projects with shared boundaries



SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program

# Sound Transit 3 (ST3)

At \$12 billion, the W Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions are the largest infrastructure projects in City history.

These projects bring great opportunity for transformation, and potential for significant impacts as they are constructed through our communities.





# Regulating the ROW



# Parking

- Manage 12K on-street paid parking spaces; make regular data-driven rate adjustments to meet SMC target of 70 - 85% occupancy
- 75%+ of on-street paid parking transactions via mobile device
- Issued over 850 work instructions in 2023 in response to customer requests for changes to parking, loading
- Oversee Restricted (Residential) Parking Zones - 35 zones and 20k permits issued annually
- Prioritize critical access needs at the curb: loading for people, goods; restaurant and retail pick-up zones
- Addressing emerging needs at curb: e-cargo bikes, musician loading



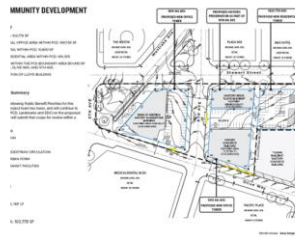
# Street Use the stewards of public right-of-way (ROW)

## Permit Services



- Customer service
- Permitting
  - ROW management
  - Minor utility
  - Maintenance

## Operations



- Major infrastructure permits
- Shoring and landslide mitigation
- Development Review

## Inspections



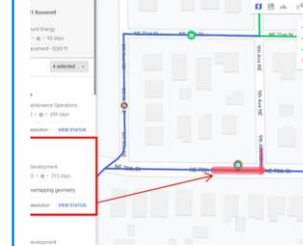
- Construction inspections
- Construction service request response
- Emergency response

## Public Space Management



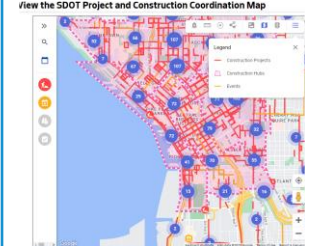
- Long-term uses and vacations
- Shoreline Street Ends
- Community-oriented public space use
- ROW enforcement

## Data and Geographic Info Systems



- Reporting
- Performance metrics
- GIS and mapping

## Construction Coordination



- ROW construction scheduling
- Construction Hubs

# Street Use: by the numbers



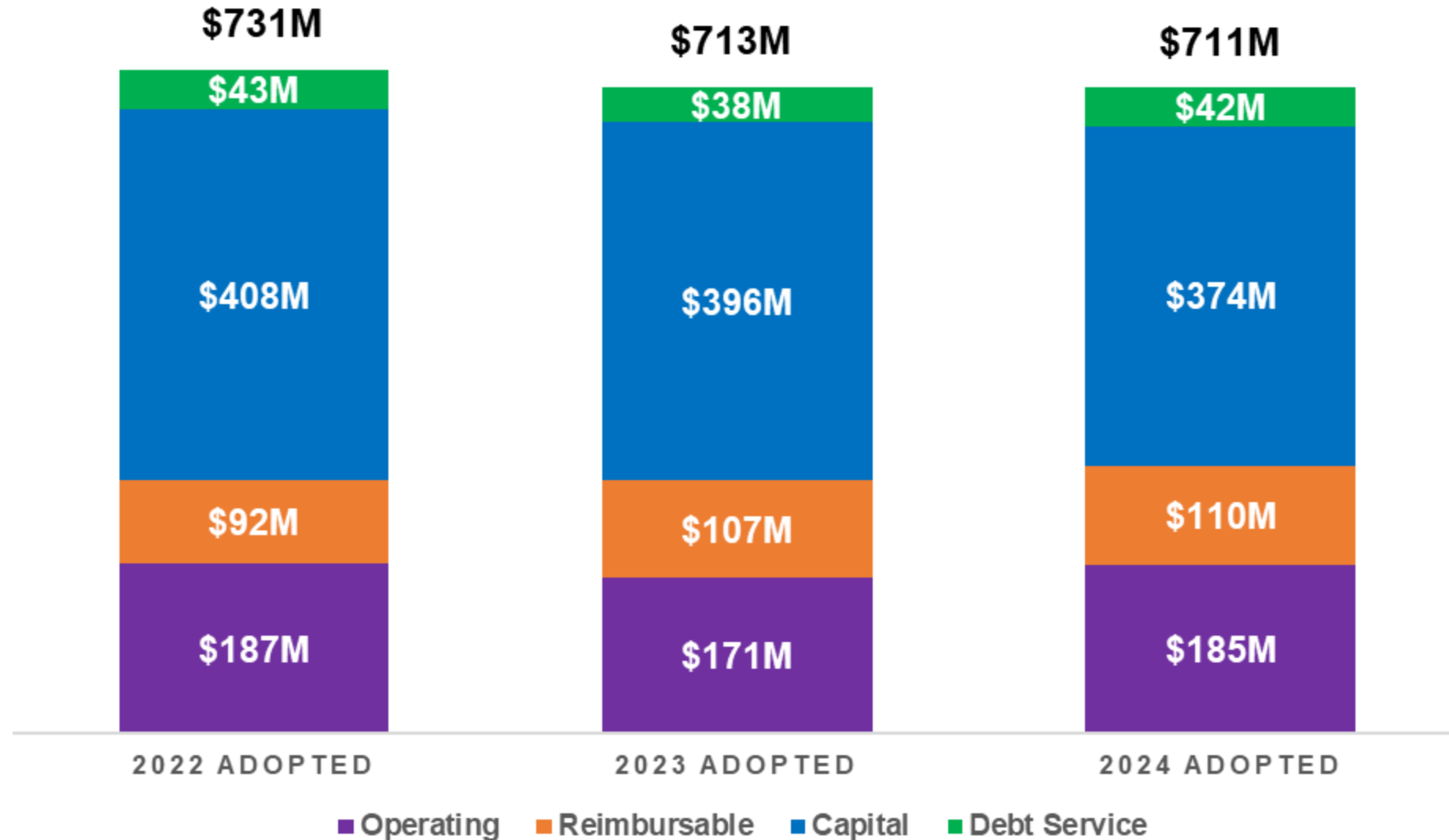
## In 2023, we:

- Processed over 16,000 applications
- Issued over 12,000 permits
- Completed 38,000 inspections
- Scheduled & coordinated 2,000 construction closures in Hubs
- Reviewed over 700 Preliminary Assessment Reports
- Responded to over 2,000 Service Requests

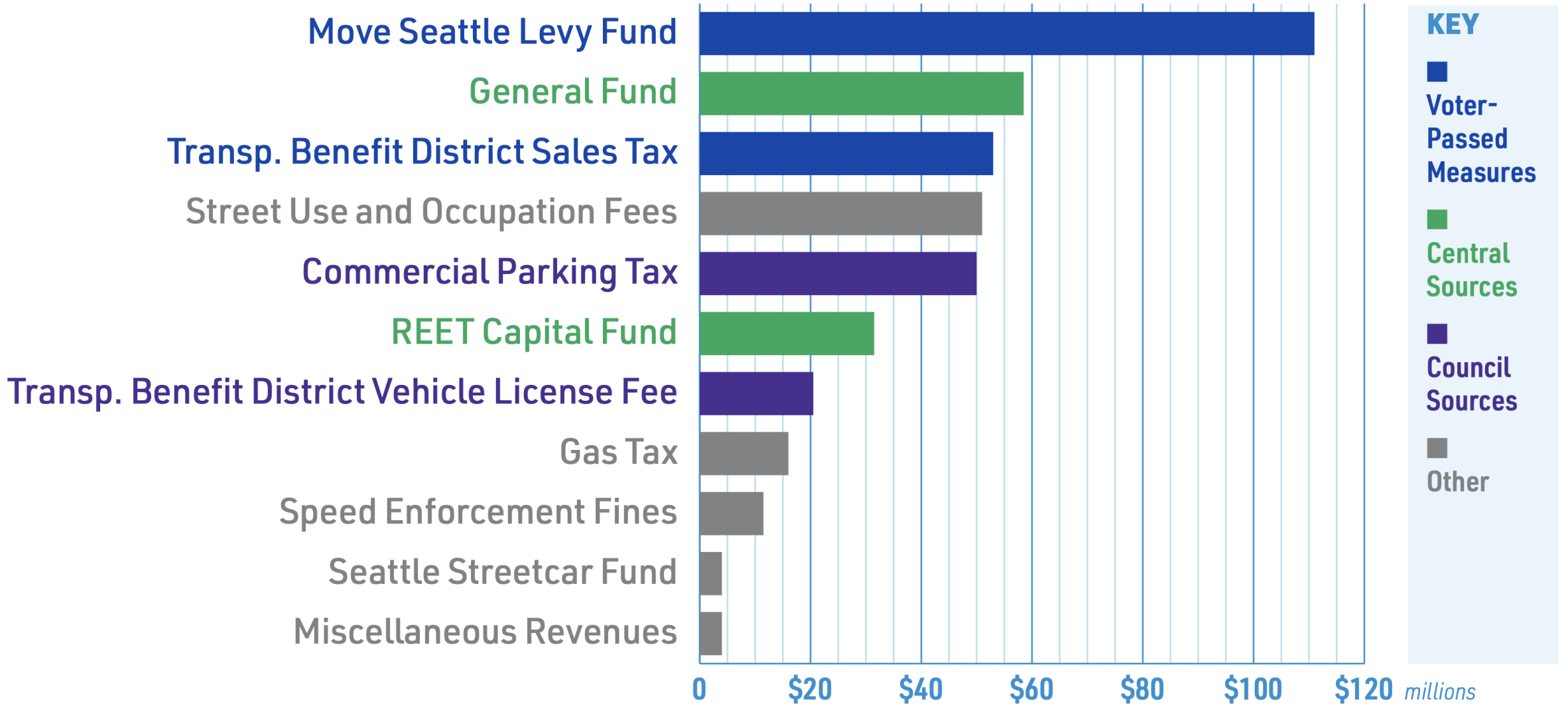
# How SDOT is funded



# SDOT Adopted Budget History (2022-2024)



# SDOT's 2024 Budget by Funding Source





From the entire SDOI Team:

Thank you!







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Introduction to Term Permits and Street Vacations



# Street Vacations & Term Permits

Transportation Committee

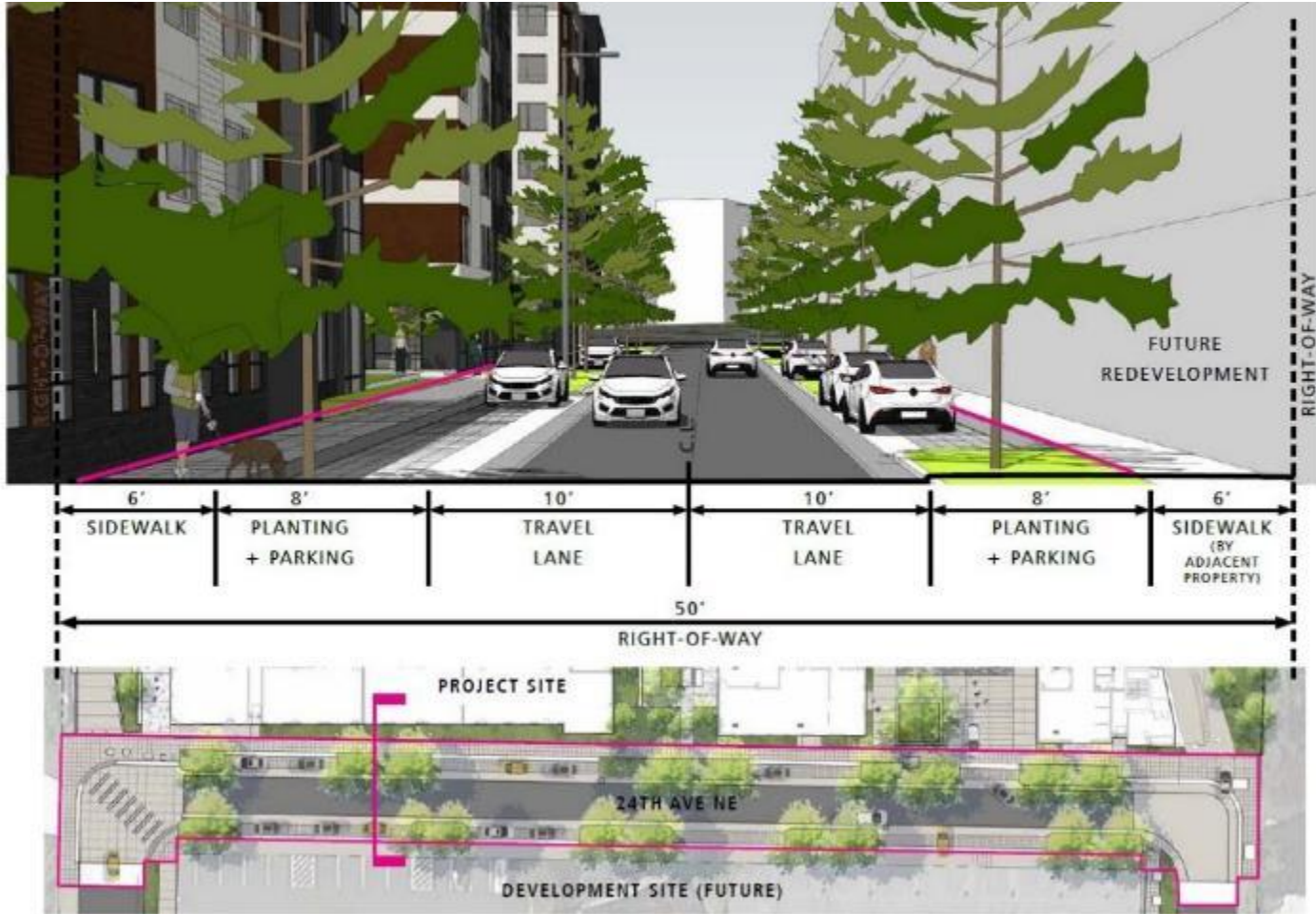
February 6, 2024

# Presentation Outline

- Introductions
- What is right-of-way (ROW)?
- Street Vacation Policies
  - Public Trust Analysis
  - Public Benefits
- Street Vacation Examples
- Significant Structure Term Permits
- Skybridge Term Permit
- Term Permit Process



# What is Right-of-Way (ROW)?



Trailside - 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NE improvements

- Property dedicated or acquired for public transportation and utility use, including streets and alleys
- Held in public trust - City acts as trustee
- Generally created by plat or dedication
- No rights to vacate or use for private purposes
- Vacated property may only be acquired by abutting property owners
- Vacation must be in public interest (e.g. public trust, public benefits)

# City Council Street Vacation Policies



Adopted policies per Resolution 31809 (2018), and criteria per RCW 35.79, and SMC 15.62



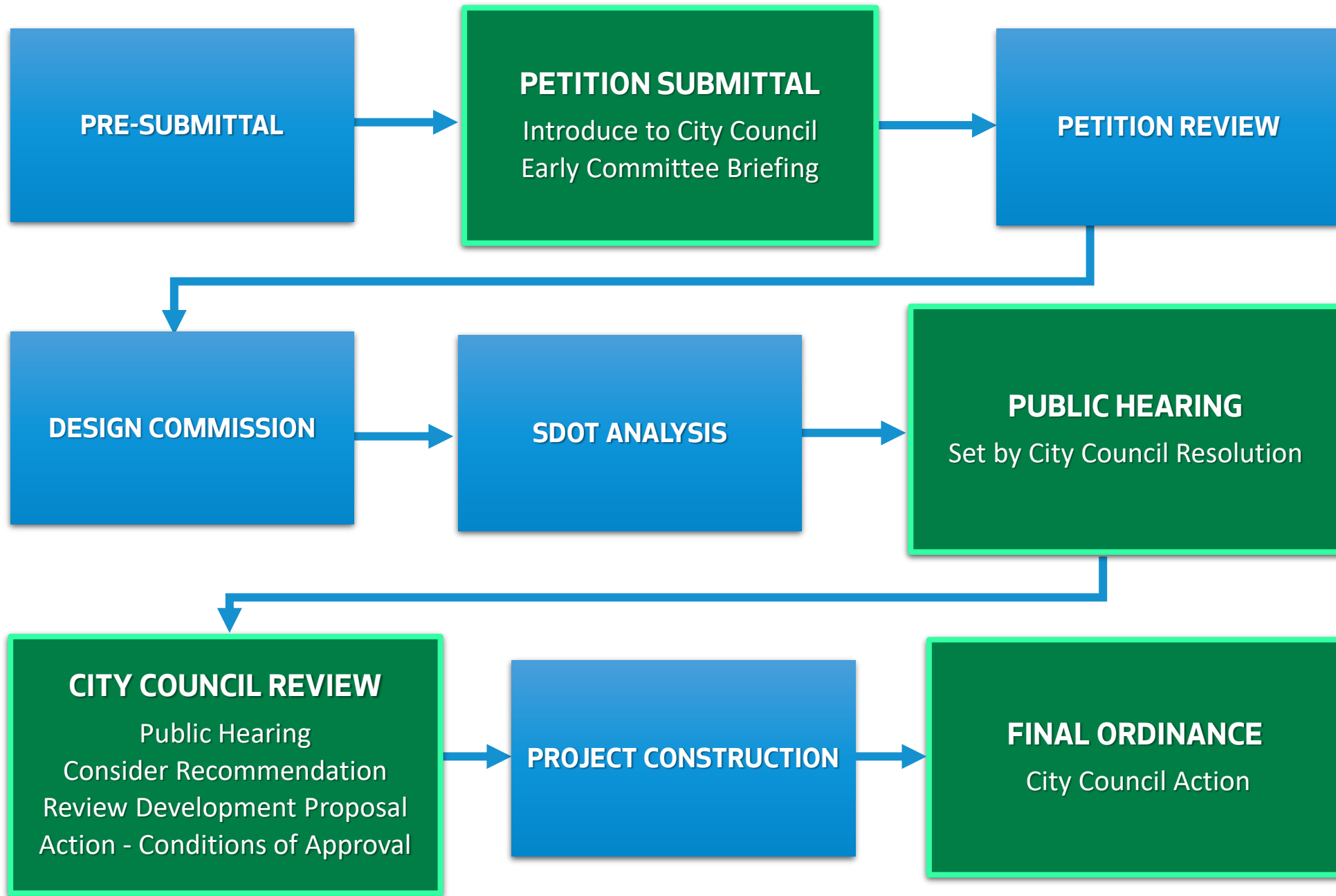
Policies establish the principles of the review process and information required



Policies define "public benefit analysis" and "public trust"



Legislative function under State law, SDOT administers the process at request of City Council



# Step 1: Vacation Public Trust Analysis

## Based on role of streets and alleys:

- Circulation
- Access
- Utilities
- Open Space
- Light and Air
- Views
- Free Speech
- Public Assembly
- Land Use and Urban Form



# Step 2: Vacation Public Benefits

## Overview

- Long-term benefit to the public
- Proportional to the benefit gained due to the vacation
- Beyond mitigating the impacts of development or code requirements
- Consider race and social equity (such as off-site public improvements)
- Include ideas from community

## Categories

- Physical - streetscape enhancements, art, wayfinding, plazas, bike and ped enhancements, etc
- Community programming
- Real property
- On-site or off-site
- Payment of funds in certain circumstances (in addition to other fees)



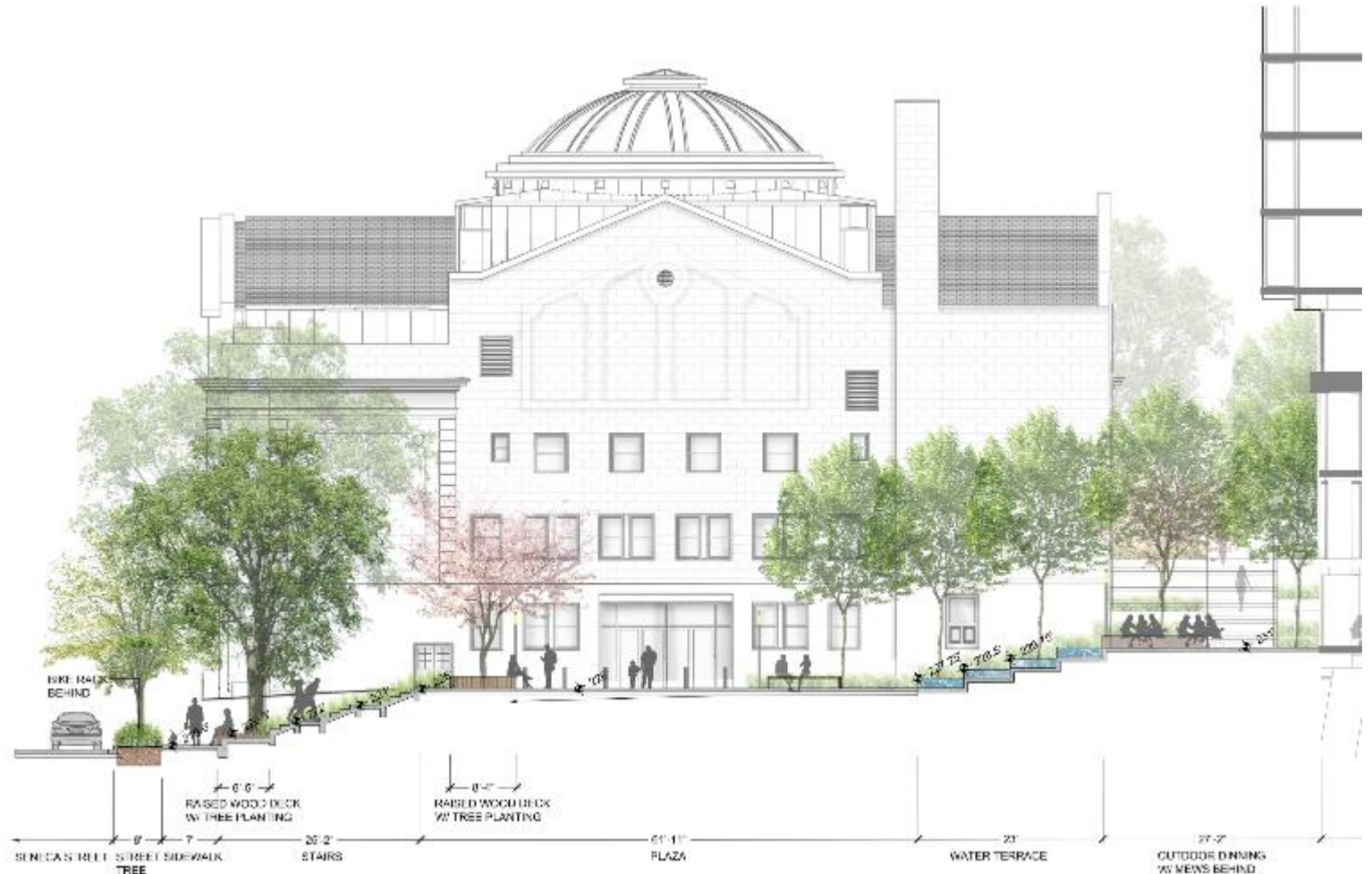
# Vacation Overview: Lennar Ovation



Existing Alley  
3,842 SF

# Vacation Public Benefit Example: Lennar Ovation

- Public Plaza
- Town Hall Improvements
- ROW Improvements
- Freeway Park Connection



# How Street Vacations Change Seattle



# Significant Structure Term Permits

**Significant structures:** objects that have a long duration in ROW, impede City's or public's use of the public space, or necessary for functions of the adjacent property, for example:

- Tunnels, pipelines, private utilities, and plazas

City Council approves these objects by ordinance for a fixed time, or Term. Recommendation to Council following review by SDOT and Seattle Design Commission (SDC).

Public benefit mitigation may be required



King County Alki Transformer

# Skybridge Term Permits

Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) defines the three types of skybridges:

- **Public use:** open to everyone and no access barriers
  - **Semi-public use:** open to everyone, but access may be limited or through a private structure
  - **Private use:** access is restricted for private users only
- The City discourages strictly private skybridges but has allowed skybridges for public or semi-public uses
  - SDOT leads interdepartmental review through Skybridge Review Committee (SRC)
  - SDC reviews and makes recommendation to SDOT Director
  - Public benefit mitigation required



UW Skybridge

# Term Permit Process

- ❑ **Step 1:** Resolution – early conceptual approval for new projects and occurs after SDC review (if applicable). Identifies conditions to be met prior to final approval
- ❑ **Step 2:** Ordinance – occurs at 100% design, after conditions have been met, and is the final approval
  - **New structures** – set duration, terms and conditions
  - **Term permit renewal** – at specified points, may amend existing ordinance or SDOT may renew administratively
  - **Term permit expiration** – at end of term, continued use requires a new application

City Council reviews and decides to approve, deny or modify legislation.



Fremont Solar Collector



# Questions?

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[amy.gray@seattle.gov](mailto:amy.gray@seattle.gov) | (206) 386-4638

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



# Skybridge Review

SDOT and the SRC review for code compliance, technical feasibility, and policy objectives:

- Consider compelling need that cannot be accommodated on private property
- Provide recommendation to Seattle Design Commission (SDC)

SDC reviews urban design implications, impact on surrounding streets, and merits of public benefit proposal



Pike Place Market Skybridge