

## Levy to Move Seattle Oversight Committee Meeting

[Levy Oversight Committee bylaws – adopted April 2017](#)  
[Move Seattle Levy legislation, approved June 29, 2015\]](#)

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, April 6, 2021 / 5:00 – 7:00 PM

**Co-chairs:** Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Samuel Ferrara

**Location:** Video Conference

**Members present on the phone:** Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Vicky Clarke, Samuel Ferrara, Dennis Gathard, Joseph Laubach, Jennifer Lehman, Jen Malley-Crawford, Inga Manskopf, Ron Posthuma, Hester Serebrin, Kevin Werner, Councilmember (CM) Alex Pederson, Ben Noble (City Budget Office)

**Members Absent:** Todd Biesold, Lisa Bogardus, and Patrick Taylor

**Guests:** Kris Castleman, David Conway, Jim Curtin, Matt Gemberling, Elliot Helmbrecht, Chip McElearney, Katie Olsen, Annya Pintak, Dawn Schellenberg, Kristen Simpson (all SDOT), Aaron Blumenthal (City Budget Office), Ryan Packer (The Urbanist), Jeff Lundstrom

**MEETING CALL TO ORDER:** 5:05 PM

### Welcome and roll call

Samuel F. conducted a roll call for committee members. David Conway introduced City staff.

### Public Comment:

No public comments received.

## Agenda item #1: 2020 Annual Levy Report

*Presentation by Kristen Simpson and Dave Conway with added information from Jim Curtin (SDOT)*

David C. shared and discussed the main points of the [2020 Annual Levy Report presentation](#) which distilled the highlights, challenges, and finances noted in the [2020 Levy to Move Seattle Annual Report](#). David also discussed measures from the 2018 Workplan and upcoming updates for the LOC.

Jim Curtin answered several previously-submitted questions, to include:

- Joseph Laubach: concerns about bike commitments and goals.
  - Jim C.: SDOT is confident it shall reach the Workplan goals. There are over 20 miles of bike projects in the works in the next two years alone and several grants are in the works

now to add funding. Jim also raised again the possibility of adding in work done by the Stay Healthy Streets program to increase the bicycle program's deliverables.

- Inga Manskopf: concerns about pedestrian safety; there were fewer sidewalk and crossing deliverables than expected.
  - Jim C.: COVID-19 delayed progress in these areas last year. However, the delayed projects are back on track and he is confident the work will be done. Jim also highlighted the ongoing work in Vision Zero (*e.g.*, leading pedestrian intervals and lowered speed limits) and acknowledged there is more to do to best address evolving pedestrian safety issues in Seattle.

David C completed the presentation by discussing the soon-to-be online Levy dashboard for greater transparency and ease of communication.

Jennifer L.: follow-up question for Jim. Is the City looking at Stay Healthy Streets (SHS) to aid in the bike deliverable count?

- Jim C.: yes, these SHS investments in the bike network may be eligible for matching Levy funds.

Samuel F.: the SHS topic came up in January/February and the LOC was concerned with a possibility of incomplete Levy deliverables should energy and funds go towards Stay Healthy Streets projects. The committee did not want the Levy deliverables supplanted by SHS.

- Jim: SDOT is continuing discussions for accomplishing and funding both (Levy bike deliverables and SHS).

Vicky C.: What is being funded by SHS? What do the project designs encompass?

- Jim C.: SDOT will provide more details as to SHS to help clarify.

Joseph L.: as to the 2018 Workplan reset for bike programs, can SDOT clarify an approximately 40% reduction in miles from 50 bike & 60 greenway under the original Levy to 36 miles for bikes in the 2018 reset?

- David C.: yes, the original Levy called for 50 miles of protected bike lanes and 60 miles of neighborhood greenways. The 2018 Workplan reset the goals to a combined 50-55 total miles in PBLs, greenways, and bike lanes.

Rachel B.: underscoring Vicky's comment, even if SHS are serving different neighborhoods and communities, it would be helpful to show examples of what the SHS projects look like. The LOC needs more information to properly respond.

- Jim C.: agreed. SDOT will supply design examples.

Samuel F.: large capital projects and big contract-delivered work did not appear to be severely affected by COVID-19 impacts and crew work was harder hit. In the future, if crews are pulled away for other tasks, does SDOT have a plan to still deliver on traditionally crew-built work (*e.g.*, spot work)?

- Jim C.: yes, SDOT has demonstrated crew flexibility by repurposing crews such as urban forestry providing help with signage work. Additionally, SDOT has successfully packaged smaller projects

for bid and contract delivery. This effort has even resulted in greater time efficiencies (a two-year body of work being done in 1.5).

Inga M.: concerned about the ability of SDOT to build 10 miles of bike lanes per year when it has never achieved such ambitious numbers. How can it be done?

- Jim C.: upcoming projects have been in planning stages for some time and are much larger projects for the most part than before. These will result in more lane-miles. Projects include the MLK PBL, Georgetown to South Park, Beacon Ave., Green Lake, and others. Serena Lehman will be presenting the 2021 BMP Implementation Plan update at tomorrow's [Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board meeting](#), should anyone want more details.

Kevin W.: Can you talk more about the Mt. Baker station project?

- Jim C.: SDOT has received grant funding and is working to design several near-term bike/ped projects to include rescaling and making intersection improvements (at Rainier Ave S and MLK Jr Way S), channelization changes, expanded space for people walking, and the MLK Jr Way S protected bike lanes. We are also working on significant changes to signs and markings.

Vicky C.: Can you tell us more about the BMP Plan update being given tomorrow? I thought that after the last BMP draft plan was produced, received public input, then finalized, it became THE plan for the rest of the Levy. Is this new Plan going to receive more public input and how does this fit with the Levy?

- Jim C.: The BMP team has requested input from the Bike Board for the 2021 Implementation Plan, but they are not planning significant changes or further outreach. The presentation is to elicit comments from and give updates to the Bike Board.

## **Agenda item #2: Transportation Equity Framework (TEF) Part 1: Values & Strategies**

*Presentation by Annya Pintak, SDOT*

Annya P. walked the Committee through the [presentation](#), discussing SDOT's approach to transportation equity, how the process was developed, and where SDOT is in the process. She outlined 2021 efforts underway and walked the meeting attendees through a brief exercise where everyone reflected on a moment when they felt affected by our transportation system.

Samuel F. shared experiences when riding busses where there were riders that made him feel unsafe and he chose to move rather than confront the riders.

Hester S. concurred with Samuel F., saying she had also experienced this on Metro busses.

Rachel B. shared that she loves the work done on and near the Montlake Bridge to improve the bike/ped crowding problem; cyclists used to make her feel "super" unsafe to walk there.

Vicky C. shared she was struck by how uncomfortable she felt biking in the City when she had to share a lane with cars compared to how nice of an experience she has riding in a protected bike lane (PBL). She often chose to bike elsewhere instead of riding with vehicles and that it is a luxury we do not often have to ride in PBLs.

Kevin W. affirmed Vicky's sentiments about how tough it feels cycling with cars. He added that it is also scary to cycle on streets in poor repair.

Annya P. finished her presentation and accepted questions.

Rachel B. asked how the TEF process relate to the Levy tree-replacement requirement for two new trees planted for every one removed. She sees BIPOC areas as tree deserts worries if there are not trees there to replace, those areas may not have any planted and she sees this as an example of legislative policy that failed to address this equity issue.

- Annaya P.: The TEF group actually has a member from the Urban Forestry team and Annaya will share Rachel's feedback since these are the kind of issues with which the TEF group is working.
- Elliot H.: I've added a link in the chat to a relevant SDOT blog post about the Urban Forestry program (and Katie Olsen also provided other links):
  - [FOLIAGE WEEK | New online tool can help you identify the right tree to plant so we can all keep our urban landscape happy & healthy.](#)
  - [FOLIAGE WEEK | Spring has sprung! Over the weekend, we planted about 40 new trees in South Park.](#)
  - [FOLIAGE WEEK | Meet Shane Dewald](#)
  - [FOLIAGE WEEK | Yes, we're still celebrating the first full week of spring! Today, learn about the work of our Urban Forestry Irrigation Team.](#)

Hester S. commented these TEF issues and discussions give us lots to think about and much 'homework' about how to address equity in the next levy. The LOC is an older group of white individuals and should consider how to develop the next Levy in conjunction with groups outside the LOC like Annaya's.

- Elliot H.: Good comment; we are planning to work in conjunction with other groups when creating the next levy proposal.
- Samuel F.: I agree with Hester. The LOC was reactionary in dealing with an already-passed Levy and looking ahead, better coordination presents a great opportunity to practice equity.

Kevin W.: Hester's comments strongly resonate with me and we need more diversity and focus on equity. How do we currently assess equity in SDOT services?

- Annaya P.: The TEF is working on how to better measure equity. Because SDOT delivers so many different services, it is hard to characterize how much growth has occurred in the last three years but the TEF group is having discussions on how to measure outcomes.

Samuel F.: Concerning COVID reprioritization work in the last year, we have often look at projects geographically to address equity. But larger projects serve many people from many areas. How are you dealing with the struggle to measure equity in these large projects?

- Annaya P.: Good distinction. The TEF group s also having discussions about measuring equity in large project planning vs. geographically-distinct projects.

Rachel B.: Will TEF workshop members continue to participate in LOC meetings?

- Annaya P.: I am talking with Rachel McCaffrey about how to stay connected as this year's focus for TEF is on part 2 of their work, the Implementation Plan, but we will be reporting back to the LOC as efforts continue.

### **Agenda item #3: VLF \$20 Update**

*Presentation by Katie Olsen, SDOT*

Samuel F. introduced the VLF \$20 topic and summarized the process up to the present time, including how the LOC provided input to City Council and how he was pleased with Council's response to the proposed spend plan.

Katie O. then walked everyone through the draft spend plan and outreach update. She also provided a [link in the chat to a relevant SDOT blog post](#). The presentation covered the spend plan timeline, meetings with labor and modal representatives and equity-focused stakeholders, specific projects and programs, and how the resulting spend plan was crafted to address feedback received. The plan will be presented to City Council on 21 April, be approved in the following weeks, and then the VLF\$20 funds will be collected.

Samuel F.: Is some of the VLF\$20 funding to be applied to projects (including Levy projects) that were not originally properly funded?

- Katie O.: Yes, and part is to be used to increase certain programs' Levy performance.
- Elliot H.: That is correct. Some of these programs that will benefit from the added funds are the Vision Zero corridors, crosswalks, sidewalk repair, and so forth, allowing more SDOT deliverables. Also, to Hester's earlier point about how to incorporate the TEF into future planning, some of the additional money goes to planning.

### **Agenda item #4: Committee business**

*Subcommittees and modal board reports – Inga Manskopf*

Inga M. asked members for specific updates.

- Ron P.: Nothing to share; there had not been a recent meeting about which to report.
- Jennifer L.: The Ped Board also received Annya's presentation at the last meeting and they have interviews scheduled for three new board members.
- Jen M.: (via chat) No update.

*Meeting minutes for approval (March 2, 2021) – Rachel Ben- Shmuel, Sam Ferrara*

Samuel F. asked if anyone had anything to discuss about the previous minutes.

Vicky C. saw Ron's comments about needing finance sub-committee participation and that she is interested.

- Ron P.: Good, we could use another member.

Samuel F. moved to approve the previous minutes. Ron P. seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Rachel B. asked if Elliot could share out the blog link about Urban Forestry.

- Elliot H.: Yes, and we will work on bringing in more people to share about the Urban Forestry work and planning at a future meeting.

Joe L.: Are any members using any of the new Levy projects? I like the Lander Street Bridge overpass and use it often. The new Avalon bike lanes are also “fantastic.”

- Samuel F.: I have walked around the Fairview Bridge work and it looks great. There are big pedestrian sidewalks and it is exciting to see the progress.
- Jennifer L.: I have biked 12<sup>th</sup> Ave to Beacon and the Jose Rizal bridge improvements are “really nice.”
- Ron P.: The Green Lake and 80<sup>th</sup> reconfiguration will be thrilling when it is done later this year.
- Vicky C.: I like the better intersection put in by Green Lake and it has been good to see so many new sidewalks built over the years.
- Inga M.: I also like the new Green Lake intersection from a driver’s perspective.
- Kevin W.: Both the Bridging the Gap and Levy staircases being built have been good to see.
- Elliot H.: Thank you everyone for the positive feedback!

**Adjourn: 6:48 PM**

### Action items

Action items below capture tasks from previous meetings. Completed items will remain on action item tracker for one additional set of meeting minutes to capture “complete” status and will then be removed.

Action item	Meeting	Lead	Status	Deadline