



## Memorandum

Date: Tuesday, July 23, 2013

To: Transportation Committee

From: Peter Hahn, Director

**Subject: Director's Report**

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### Highlights by Division

#### Street Use/Urban Forestry

**Creative Uses of Public Right-of-Way:** This week Publicola and the Capitol Hill Seattle Blog reported on the plan presented to the City Council to support more active use of public spaces like sidewalks, parking spaces and alleys. Possessing many elements, the five-year plan will feature a pilot program this summer for several “parklets” established in on-street parking spaces, which were requested and sponsored by nearby businesses.

#### Target:

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update |
|---------|----------|------------------|
| 1st     | On Track | 84 trees planted |

#### Target:

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update                 |
|---------|----------|----------------------------------|
| 1st     | On Track | 992 trees pruned for maintenance |

#### Street Maintenance

**NE 125<sup>th</sup> Street / Sand Point Way NE Paving Project:** This major paving project is going well. Base repair on Sand Point Way has been completed, the last of the grinding was finished in the area currently under detour and public concerns about construction impacts have been addressed in a timely manner.



**Call on the specialists for SDOT's heavy-duty work:** The Street Maintenance Division has called again on specialists to clear slopes under the Alaskan Way Viaduct: a herd of 120 goats from Rent-a-Ruminant. Local broadcast and print media had fun with the photo-opportunity when these hard-core cleaners moved in last week. Reporters interviewed goat wrangler Tammy Dunakin who explained that, while it may be difficult for our crews to work on steep slopes, especially using heavy equipment, it's a cinch for these guys, and it means we don't have to use herbicides. The herd quickly strips the area of blackberries, thistles and other tough stuff. The herd will likely complete their work between Lenora and Blanchard by next week, and then move on to the Pike Hill Climb for another week of urban grazing.

Work on the north half of NE 125<sup>th</sup> Street (base repair and curb ramp installation) has progressed from 40<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE. Work on the south side will be finished and this section paved before Lake City celebrates Pioneer Days on August 3.

Target:

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update            |
|---------|----------|-----------------------------|
| 1st     | On Track | 2,859 curb miles were swept |

Target:

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update                        |
|---------|----------|---|
| 1st     | On Track | 1.8 block equivalents of sidewalk built |

Capital Projects/Roadway Structures

**Artists selected for 'Art Interruptions 2013 temporary projects**



Twelve emerging artists have been selected to create temporary art installations along the [Beacon Hill Neighborhood Greenway](#) and the [Central Waterfront](#) for the project *Art Interruptions 2013*, in partnership with the

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). The artworks will inhabit city sidewalks and parks and offer passers-by a brief interruption in their day, eliciting a moment of surprise, beauty,

contemplation or humor. Each artist will develop a series of artworks on display for approximately six weeks beginning in August.

**South Park Bridge Taking Shape:** Work continues to progress with the assembly of the moveable bridge components. On June 3, the trunion bearings were set on the south side towers. These will hold the trunion shafts that the bascule leaf will pivot on. The shaft is 3 feet in diameter and held in position by the bearings shown. The contractor will finalize the alignment of the bearings by stringing a piano wire through all four bearings. Then they will drill 16 - 3" diameter bolts through each housing to secure them to the tower. The bascule leaves will be set sometime in July on this side. The bridge is scheduled to open to vehicle traffic in early February 2014, with all work complete by the end of April 2014.

**Linden Ave N Complete Street:** Construction of the Linden Avenue North Complete Street Project is finished. SDOT crews placed the thermal plastic striping for the cycle track with two more driveways scheduled (weather permitting). These green-colored safety markings are designed to increase awareness and visibility of cyclists, and are part of the City's overall effort to make cycling a comfortable part of everyday life.



Target: Fund 9 art interruption projects out of 1% for art

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update  |
|---------|----------|---|
| 1st     | On Track | Art Interruptions will create temporary art installations along the Beacon Hill Neighborhood Greenway and Central Waterfront. The call for applications has gone out and the deadline for submittal is May 3. |

Target: Rehabilitate 3 public stairways

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update  |
|---------|----------|---|
| 1st     | On Track | - NE 130th St Stairway (not 135th as stated in the 1st Qtr update) is 100% complete<br>-W. Mercer Street Stairway is 95% complete<br>- E. Thomas St. Stairway, 50 % complete<br>SW Genesee St. Stairway is 20% complete |

Target: Implement 9 Neighborhood Street Fund projects

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update           |
|---------|----------|----------------------------|
| 1st     | On Track | Projects are 50% complete. |

### Policy and Planning

**Downtown to Ballard Transit Expansion Study:** On Thursday, June 27, SDOT and Sound Transit hosted a second open house at Ballard High School. Over 170 residents attended the community meeting, reviewed the latest study materials and provided input. The focus of the meeting was to review eight light rail and rapid streetcar corridors and provide community preferences and comments about those corridors. The corridors included options for surface running rail, elevated and tunnel alternatives, as well as, various locations to cross the Ship Canal. This project team will use the community input to assist in developing four corridors for additional analysis and refinement. A third community meeting will be held later this year in late fall.

**Bicycle Urbanism Symposium:** The International Bicycle Symposium, held at the University of Washington on June 19-22, brought together practitioners, academics, policy makers, and advocates to explore ways that cities can best encourage and accommodate bicycle travel in the future. Speakers came from around the world to lead sessions about imagining the 20-30 year future of bicycle-friendly cities, effects of bicycle use on health and the environment, policies for developing bicycle infrastructure and programs, etc. The keynote address was given by bicycle researcher, John Pucher, from Rutgers University. SDOT was a sponsor of the symposium and was involved in the local host committee to.

**Bridging the Gap to fund more bus service:** Local media and community blogs reported Mayor Mike McGinn's announcement that Seattle will buy more bus service on eight routes using \$750,000 from Bridging the Gap savings. The Seattle Transit Blog explained that this will help Metro increase evening and weekend frequency to every 15 to 30 minutes up from every 30 to 60 minutes on these routes.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Ave Transit Priority Study:** Transit Programs is finalizing a consultant contract to identify and design options to increase transit priority on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Currently, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave operates as a Transit Only street, with some local circulation allowed, during peak hours between Yesler Way and Stewart Street. The analysis will assess current operations and identify areas where transit operations can be further improved. The study will also evaluate 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave between Stewart Street and Denny Way and determine appropriate transit priority measures to be implemented.

Transit priority measures may include extending the Transit Only designation, Bus/BAT lanes, signage, striping, queue jumps, and signal timing. The analysis will consider the impact on general purpose traffic with each transit priority measure. The analysis, including the design should be completed in September 2013.

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update  |
|---------|----------|---|
| 1st     | On Track | The Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board has been reviewing draft plan elements. A draft plan will be available for public review in June |

Target: Complete 100% design of the Belltown/Uptown electric trolleybus project

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update    |
|---------|----------|---------------------|
| 1st     | On Track | 90% design complete |

Target: Complete 4 transit spot improvement projects

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update             |
|---------|----------|------------------------------|
| 1st     | On Track | 2 complete, others in design |

### Major Projects

**Streetcar Tracks Laid in Pioneer Square:** The First Hill Streetcar is making visible progress in Pioneer Square, with much of the streetcar track now laid between Occidental and 3<sup>rd</sup> and the remaining pieces scheduled for installation this month.



Track installation also began in Chinatown-ID in June, with completion between 5th and 8th Avenues expected in August. The trackway installation is accommodating Dragon Fest and other local summer activities in the community.

The streetcar project has become the focal point in SDOT's efforts on how to effectively integrate the City's Race & Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) into its large projects. A significant percentage of those living, working, and/or shopping in Chinatown-ID are immigrants. Many there have limited or no proficiency with English, presenting challenges to the efforts of the project team to ensure that those impacted by the lengthy construction period are engaged and kept informed.

In response to concerns raised by some in that community, door to door materials in Chinatown-ID and Little Saigon are being translated into both Chinese and Vietnamese, and



interpreters in those languages are accompanying outreach staff visiting businesses and residences. In addition, the project has begun advertising in the wide array of ethnic newspapers that serve this community, including Korean and Japanese publications, in addition to those published in Vietnamese and Chinese.

**Public Art Installations for First Hill Streetcar:** The first of a number of site-integrated art pieces along the 2.5 mile route of the First Hill Streetcar was installed earlier this week in front of Yesler Terrace. Seattle artist, Claudia Fitch, has developed individual site-specific pieces mounted on the poles that will hold the streetcar power lines.

As the streetcar is intended to various communities along its route, Ms. Fitch says that she views the route as a thread that connects these neighborhoods. She draws on metaphors related to sewing, needlework and beadwork. Streetcar poles are capped with the needle. Additionally, poles are being installed such as pictured at Yesler Terrace.

Ms. Fitch worked closely with representatives of Chinatown, Japantown, and Little Saigon to design the beads along Jackson Street. The poles on S Jackson Street incorporate large scale, abstract bead shapes that reflect the visual vocabulary (forms, colors and references) of Chinese, Japanese, and Vietnamese cultures. The pole at 6th & Jackson, in the area sometimes referred to as Japantown, will have the shape and colors of a Taiko Drum. At 7th & Jackson, the Chinatown theme is Four Seasons Flowers, and in Little Saigon at 10th & Jackson, the installation will be lantern forms with drum patterns.



connect the route, Ms. Fitch views the power line as a thread that connects these neighborhoods. She draws on metaphors related to sewing, needlework and beadwork. Streetcar poles are capped with the needle. Additionally, poles are being installed such as pictured at Yesler Terrace.

community Japantown beads along Jackson

Traffic Management

**West Seattle Bike Counter:** The new bike counter located at the east end of the Spokane Street swing bridge began operating last week, as reported by Q13, Seattle Bicycle Blog, West Seattle Blog, Cascade Blog, and West Seattle Bike Connections. *The Seattle Times* had announced previously that the bike counter was installed, soon to be operating. Like the counter located at the Fremont Bridge last fall, the installation and first year's operational costs are covered by a private grant given to SDOT through the Cascade Bicycle Club. While the first week's numbers are much lower than in Fremont, the Spokane Street site is among locations most frequented by bicyclists south of downtown.

**Walk Bike Ride Challenge Is Off To a Strong Start** The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk Bike Ride Challenge launched on July 15 with the goal of attracting 2,000 participants by the program's conclusion on September 9. This is part of the Mayor's Action Agenda to raise awareness of travel options. This program encourages participants to travel to their destination by walking, biking, carpooling or transit rather than drive their cars. The Challenge's fourth year has seen its best start yet by far in just 12 days. Over 1,050 participants have reported upwards of 7,000 walk, bike and riding trips in just 12 days. An ongoing campaign to attract sign-ups through the summer includes promotions with Sub Pop Jubilee and the Capitol Hill Block Party.

**Personnel:** Becky Edmonds is now official in her role of Associate Transportation Planner with the Parking Operations group in Traffic Management. Becky has already been at SDOT now for about 1 ½ years, working on SDOT's innovative parking programs. She has played a critical role in analyzing huge datasets for Seattle's paid parking program, as well being instrumental in bringing car2go to the Seattle market. She started in the Policy and Planning Division in January 2012 and joined Traffic Management in April 2013. Becky holds a Master of Public Administration from the Evans School at the University of Washington and a BA from Indiana University.

Install 400 bike parking spaces

| Status | Quarterly Update   |
|--------|--|
| Q1     | 58 bicycle parking spaces installed. The majority this work is typically done in the fourth quarter. |

Install 7 miles of bike lanes and sharrows

| Status | Quarterly Update  |
|--------|---|
| Q1     | Less than a mile of bike lanes and sharrows has been installed. The majority of this work is planned for the third quarter. |

Install 7.5 miles of neighborhood greenways

| Status | Quarterly Update  |
|--------|---|
| Q1     | Outreach has been completed for two greenways and construction is underway on one. We expect most of the construction will take place in third and fourth quarters. |

Build 7 blocks (block face equivalents) of sidewalks

| Status | Quarterly Update   |
|--------|--|
| Q1     | Design is nearly complete for the 2013 sidewalks. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of the fourth quarter. |

Resource Management

Target: Complete all 42 of SDOT's Bridging the Gap funded deliverables

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update                   |
|---------|----------|------------------------------------|
| 1st     | On Track | Deliverables on are track for 2013 |

Target: Pursue grants to help fund the City's transportation projects

| Quarter | Status   | Quarterly Update   |
|---------|----------|--|
| 1st     | On Track | SDOT applied for 5 grants totaling about \$6.7 million. SDOT has been awarded 1 grant for \$1 million to replace Stop and Yield signs city-wide. A decision on a grant for \$125,000 from the Washington Traffic Safety Commission is pending. |