



Meeting Information

Date: 9/16/19 (Meeting 008, 2nd Quarter Meeting 2019)

Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Location: Seattle Municipal Tower, Rooms 4050/4060 (40th Floor)

Facilitators: SDOT ADA Program

General: Committee Intent

The intent of the Pedestrian Access Advisory Committee (PAAC) meetings is to discuss potential accessibility issues or concerns within the Seattle public right-of-way for those living with disabilities. Finding solutions leading to better pedestrian access and prioritization for improvements is an important goal of the Committee. SDOT will strive to prioritize improvements based on Committee recommendations.

Meeting Minutes

- I. Welcome and Introduction (10:00-10:10 am)
 - *Question/Comment (Marci Carpenter): "Hi. Marci Carpenter. A couple of comments. Just general housekeeping things. One, I don't know if you advertised this meeting this way you, but if not, in the future could you advertise it as a scent-free space. I already had to use my inhaler this morning. So thank you. And I am going to put in just for everyone, I was talking to Mike earlier about accessing the presentation materials for those of us who can't pick up the piece of paper and so I'm going to put in a formal request to Mike so he has that on record as an accommodation request and so that in the future we can get the materials sent to us in an accessible format, like the end of the week before the meeting."*
 - *Response (Mike Shaw): "...We will definitely make note of both of those requests and we will move forward in making some improvements in both those areas..."*
- II. Accessible Parking in Seattle Overview (Mike Shaw, Mike Estey, SDOT) (10:10-10:30 am)
 - *Mike Estey from SDOT came to speak to the group about accessible parking in Seattle. Mike is manager of the SDOT curbside management program (a.k.a. parking program).*
 - *Mike Estey and Mike Shaw have been working together for the past few years to make sure that parking in the public right-of-way is accessible, and that we are being consistent with regulations and guidelines.*
 - *SDOT offers accessible parking in both commercial and residential locations. SDOT is working to install more accessible parking spaces throughout the City.*
 - *SDOT follows the federal guidelines for accessible parking spaces in the right-of-way. These guidelines are called PROWAG (2011 Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines). It can be challenging to meet the guidelines in an existing urban environment, but SDOT is working hard to ensure accessibility to all in our right-of-way and to prohibit discrimination.*
 - *Following the PROWAG guidelines, essentially 1 of every 25 parking spaces should be accessible for off-street parking. SDOT does not generally manage off-street parking facilities. For on-street parking, PROWAG guides us to assess parking provisions along*

the block perimeter when counting spaces. Parking spaces are counted along all 4 block faces of a typical block perimeter, and one accessible parking space would be provided for each 25 spaces available.

- *In Seattle, some blocks do not have parking. Some blocks are on very steep slopes, that could be challenging for some.*
- *SDOT has begun applying these federal guidelines and adding accessible parking spaces in the downtown area, our highest demand paid parking area. We will continue to add accessible parking spaces in other high demand areas in the future.*
- *Washington State law requires that accessible parking spaces be free even in pay parking areas.*
- *SDOT has a more active residential accessible parking program to help people access their homes or properties. These spots can't be assigned to individuals, but SDOT works with the requestors to assign an accessible parking space in a location that best serves the need. There are currently more than 2,000 accessible parking spaces in residential areas throughout Seattle.*
- *Requests for accessible residential parking spaces can be made by contacting SDOT directly or through the SDOT website.*
- *It can be challenging to find places for accessible parking spaces in the downtown area and/or neighborhood business districts. SDOT tries to find spaces that are near the end of the block, with access to an existing curb ramp for sidewalk access. Ideally, these spaces are barrier-free on the passenger side of the vehicle. Spaces may also be located near pedestrian attractions or important destinations.*
- *Some of the challenges in choosing locations for accessible parking can include existing topography or street slopes, existing barriers in the right-of-way adjacent to parking spaces, and a number of interests competing for spaces at the end of the block (food trucks, delivery vehicles, bicycle parking, etc.). SDOT is putting a priority in providing accessible parking spaces in, and would like feedback from the group and the community to help us best understand preferred locations.*
- *SDOT is working to continue forward with its residential parking request system, but to also incorporate accessible parking in commercial zones as a part of SDOT capital projects as well as private development.*
- *Mike Ester is a member of a group called the International Parking & Mobility Institute, which is an organization that represents the parking industry. Recently, this group put out a publication called Let's Make Parking More Accessible. A sub-group of this institute, called the Accessible Parking Coalition, is working to help promote accessible parking and thoughtful selection of spaces as well as other considerations.*
- *Question/Comment (unnamed): "Maybe this was on the slide and I couldn't see it, but so as far as the federal guideline of one parking spot for every 25, where is Seattle in reaching that? Like how many more spots need to be installed in the downtown area or Seattle more -- I don't know if you are siting Seattle more broadly or just in the downtown core."*
- *Response (Mike Estey): "I think everybody heard that, but I will repeat it. We talked a little bit about where the ratio to install one accessible space per 25 general spaces -- that typically applies off-street -- that we are taking as guidance for on-street, and the question is where are we at in essentially doing that. We're starting with downtown. Have done that analysis of where we have existing spaces and where we are deficient. Then we are building out, sort of thinking that's the biggest demand is downtown, and then move outward a little bit. It's work that's ongoing. I don't have a good number off the top of my head. We can follow up with that. I'm sure we're short. But again, I think it's our desire to make sure that we have the guideline, understand what the need is, make sure as part of our work plan we're going through that process*

on a regular basis to evaluate. So that we can, again, bring those numbers up wherever it makes sense and that's going to be, again, in paid areas, neighborhood business districts and moving outward."

- *Question/Comment (unnamed): "Do you have a sense of how many assemble parking spots -- you said there were 2,000, is that the whole city or that was residential, versus how many parking spots there are non-accessible in specific spots?"*
- *Response (Mike Estey): "The question is, again, we have about 2,000 signed accessible spaces, mostly in residential areas. We don't have a good number of how many on-street parking spaces there are throughout the city. We have in our paid areas, our spaces we know down to the linear foot. The rest of the city we don't. Again, that 2,000 number is mostly residential. But I think part of our charge over time, working with Mike, is to be more transparent about reporting that number on an annual basis so that we know what the number is now, what the number is at the end of next year and the next year, so we sort of have a baseline and then a sense for how we're doing over time. So that's my way of saying I don't know right now off the top of my head but I think you'll see more and more of this going forward as we work with Mike."*
- *Question/Comment (Marci Carpenter): "Yes, hello. There's an area near the Deaf-Blind Services Center and some of that industrial area is also residential and a lot of the parking is not available. People who live in the area are taking over those spots, so they are not available to those of us that need the accessible parking. Even though the signs might show that that spot is specifically for commercial purposes, the residents -- the residential people are taking those spots."*
- *Response (Mike Estey): "So I think then the question is do we have an ability to follow up and clarify the sign and the regulations in the vicinity of that location so that you will have reliable accessible parking." "Okay so where we have accessible parking signed already, that needs to be enforced. Where we don't have sufficient accessible parking signed, we need to make sure we have enough installed so that that community has the ability to access that facility and their services. And we're happy to work with you and others on that."*
- *Question/Comment (Marci Carpenter): "So you talked about the guidelines for developers. So, let's say there's a developer who is going to impact -- I'll just use an example -- the west side of Fifth Avenue between Columbia and cherry. They are -- their development is not impacting the rest of the three sides of that block. How do you assess whether they need to put accessible parking or whether there needs to be accessible parking there? Do you take into account the whole block? Or do you use the development as a tipping point? Or do you just -- how do you assess that?"*
- *Response (Mike Estey): "So the question of how to assess accessibility needs and requirements associated with a development such as the one at fifth and Columbia and cherry. It's a little bit of a dance. In some cases, those developments aren't actually installing any on-street paid parking, which theoretically means there's not a requirement to install an assemble space, but in some of those cases, if they have installed loading, if nothing else, we need to make sure that that loading is assemble. We are also then taking into account those other three sides of that black perimeter, to make sure that we're at least in compliance with the minimum requirements. And I think through the design review process and the work that other departments do in terms of the accessibility of off-street spaces, we need to make sure that the off-street spaces are meeting requirements. So, it's a combination of a variety of things like that. If there are circumstances where you feel like a development is not meeting its requirements, we're happy to hear about that and see if we need to intercede somehow."*
- *Comment (Mike Shaw): "Thank you, Mike. And I just want to add a little bit. It's going to take some time. We are revamping the way that we look at accessible parking. I*

have been trying for the past couple years to educate our engineers and to make sure that we are building in these accessible parking spaces into our capital projects so you will start to see some additional parking options out there, but we want to work with you to, again, to better understand everyone's needs and make sure that our assumptions are correct and that they are informed, but you should start to see some changes as the culture -- cultural change and the awareness of the need is occurring here at SDOT and we are working on the solution. One thing I would add also, in case you are not aware, we typically look at on street parking options. If you are visiting a hospital or a restaurant or anything that's off the street, they have their own obligations to provide accessible parking within their parking facility. And I'm always happy to help. I answer a lot of questions that they will call me and can me what they are required to do, but they have their own requirements. But at the end of the day we all need to be working together to make sure we're providing all of those accessible parking options both on the street and off the street. So we'll continue with this discussion more and more, but we hope that you guys are excited to hear about some of the steps that we're taking."

III. SDOT Sidewalk Repair Program (Ross McFarland, SDOT) (10:30-11:15 am)

- *Ross McFarland, manger of the Sidewalk Repair Program (also known as the Sidewalk Safety Repair Program) at SDOT, talked about his program, how it works, funding sources, and how projects are prioritized. This program oversees the maintenance of existing sidewalks.*
- *The main goal is to make sidewalks safe and accessible. This happens through sidewalk replacement, when necessary, and repair. Repair efforts, at locations where there is sidewalk uplift as an example, can be executed by beveling or shimming sidewalks. These efforts help to make the transition between sidewalk segments smooth. Beveling is the grinding away of sidewalk, where shimming is applying asphalt to an area for a smooth transition.*
- *The program also helps to handle the enforcement of sidewalk repair when the adjacent property owner is responsible for those repairs. Per the Seattle Municipal Code, adjacent property owners may be responsible for maintenance and repair of sidewalks and keeping them clear (including removal of grass clippings, snow, etc.).*
- *In some cases, sidewalk maintenance may not be appropriate if replacement is needed. For example, damage to a sidewalk due to tree roots may not be mitigated with interim maintenance or repairs.*
- *The Sidewalk Repair Program currently contracts out sidewalk beveling efforts, where sidewalk uplifts are cut or ground away.*
- *There are two full-time employees working for the Sidewalk Repair Program, but they rely on SDOT crews and other partners within SDOT to execute repairs.*
- *In 2017, SDOT commissioned a sidewalk assessment citywide with the help of interns. Observations were made where there were uplifts, cracking, obstructions, or cross slope concerns. The interns assessed all known sidewalks, which is 2,300 miles of sidewalk or 34,000 individual block faces. A map was demonstrated that indicated the locations of observations made throughout the City.*
- *Comment (Emily Burns): "Hi. My name is Emily Burns. I worked as a project manager on this effort and I just wanted to call out that all of our SDOT asset maps currently list conditions, so if there are particular sidewalks that you are interested in, closer to you, you can actually drill down and see that information. And we are also working on updating some maps of the actual individualized conditions. And, Ross, I don't know if this is going to be covered later in your presentation, but not only did we look at the sidewalk block face and then apply a condition to that block face. It may not be in some cases that there are a number of maybe uplifts along that block face.*

- Sometimes we applied conditions based upon the cross slope and interpreting how difficult it would be to potentially traverse that area. It also could be the width. So, there are a number of things that go into the sort of block-long conditions, but the observations themselves, if you are interested in those, are also available on our own -- on our own maps and we can provide that information to this group."*
- *According to the sidewalk assessment, there are between \$500 million and \$1.3 billion worth of repairs that may be necessary to correct sidewalks and remove all known obstacles. In 2019, the program had a budget of \$5.7 million. That included sidewalk replacement as well as spot repairs. The program has surpassed planned accomplishments in 2019 as planned under the Move Seattle transportation levy.*
 - *GIS mapping helps the program to prioritize improvements. Severity of observations, density of observations, and sidewalk usage are all gauged to determine high priority areas. Usage includes proximity to schools, government facilities, transit stops, healthcare facilities, etc.*
 - *In situations where SDOT-owned street trees cause damage to sidewalks, SDOT repairs or replaces sidewalks in need. This is also the case where the sidewalk is located adjacent to city-owned facilities.*
 - *The program partners with other SDOT capital projects and/or ADA improvements to maximize efficiency in delivery.*
 - *The program is using a grid approach for maintenance and hopes to perform maintenance activities, where needed, for all sidewalks throughout the City on a four- or five-year rotational schedule.*
 - *The program is also looking at other cities for ideas or possible solutions to sidewalk maintenance and repair. In reviewing other approaches, SDOT is mindful to consider an equitable distribution of improvements throughout the City.*
 - *Comment/Question (unnamed): "When you are thinking with the sidewalks, I am wondering about when the sidewalks are frozen and what kind of precautions are made in order to help people stay safe and not trip and fall down steep slopes or otherwise. What are you doing? Is there a textured surface you are going to install when you replace the sidewalk pieces? Or what kind of permanent way can you address that?"*
 - *Response (Ross McFarland): "Well, I can say from a design perspective, I mean, this is not something that we've ever implemented in the city of Seattle because of our typically or at least historically milder climate, but there are some cities, particularly in more heavily traveled central business districts where they may actually heat their sidewalks. This could be through installing coils or steam pipes or other type of conduit underneath the sidewalk that would actually melt any sort of ice that falls on that, but there aren't any locations that I'm aware of where we have heated sidewalks in the city of Seattle. So that's from a design perspective. At least for us our approach to frozen sidewalks would largely be an enforcement issue. And I know that this came up at the last PAAC meeting when Darren Morgan was here talking about our snow and ice response and I was here as well and I heard there are a lot of concerns about how we're dealing with ice and snow enforcement. So, at the moment, know, we don't have a concerted effort, specifically around sending notices for frozen sidewalks that property owners would then need to clear with a shovel or put down ice or sand. But I definitely would like to have that conversation moving forward about how we can be more prepared to proactively and quickly respond to icy sidewalks during the winter season. I think Marci had a question first."*
 - *Comment/Question (Marci Carpenter): "Thanks. So when trips and falls -- when someone trips and falls and injures from someone on a free uplift on the sidewalk and writes to a city staff person, what would prompt the SDOT to come out and put like little swipes of paint on all the uplift spots on a particular block?"*

- *Response (Ross McFarland): "As much as possible we try to send someone out to do the initial kind of painting you're talking about, the initial assessment of the condition, install some paint on the uplift if needed. And depending on the severity of the fall or the injury or the nature of the claim, we do make sure that we send a notice to the property owner when they are responsible, so that way they are, you know, they are on the look -- on the hook for being notified to perform that sidewalk repair. And if it's something that is being caused by an SDOT tree or something that otherwise we need to respond to, we try to get that on our list to prioritize."*
- *Comment/Question (Marci Carpenter): "Okay. Maybe I need to talk to you about making a more formal complaint. East side of California between Hanford and Stevens, I fell this summer and cracked a rib and they came out and I'm told because I can't see it, told someone came out and put little splotches of paint on all the places which is of no help to a person who can't see the paint." "...California between Hanford and Stevens. Now there are several places and there's one place on the block where there's at least a two-inch all the way across the sidewalk."*
- *Response (Ross McFarland): "So I can actually speak to that location. That was myself and my colleague discuss that and I that went out and painted those when we got your complaint. And I completely understand that, yes, you are not going to see the white paint. And the intent is just while we're out there, you know, for users who can see, to install that white paint, so that's there. And we do have that sidewalk on our list to repair next year. For a good three quarters of the block it's SDOT trees that are causing uplift and then kind of at the bottom end of the block there are two private trees that are causing uplift."*
- *Comment/Question (Marci Carpenter): "You might want to go out and reexamine it because the uplift has gotten a lot worse in the last couple months. There is also another place which I know you have worked on before. It's the east side of California near the bus stop area, just south ever Admiral. There is a lot of uplift and I know you have worked before but now there's another place where there's like at least a couple of inches."*
- *Comment/Question (Anna Zivarts): "Two quick questions. You mentioned a pilot program. What's the status of when that is going to get -- like if it's going forward or when we know if it's going forward or if it's getting expanded?"*
- *Response (Ross McFarland): "I would say at the end of the year. And unfortunately a lot of it, you know, I think that as an approach to maintenance, it's working fairly well. But a lot of it has to do with our available funding. And that fluctuates far more from year to year than I would like it to. And particularly looking toward 2020, I'm not fully sure what our funding level is going to be, because in 1976, if that passes, that may impact some of our availability for funding. For those that don't know, that's kind of the car tab initiative. And even though my program is not primarily funded by car tabs, it could impact SDOT funding and lead to distribution of funding. By the end of the year we should have a good sense of whether we feel this proactive shim grid approach is working well. And then like the actual availability of funding to continue it each year, that's a little more up in the air."*
- *Comment/Question (Anna Zivarts): "How often do you actually invoice property owners?"*
- *Response (Ross McFarland): "Currently, never."*
- *Comment/Question (Anna Zivarts): "It seems like a huge untapped source of funding."*
- *Response (Ross McFarland): "On that real quick, and believe me, this is one of the things that I want to have ongoing conversations about, about how we can improve that. Seattle Municipal Code 15.72, it does give us the authority to bill property owners or to place a lien, but I would need to write up a list of every property where we have*

performed repair and then take that list and actually have it approved by council, and there just hasn't been that much appetite for that in the past."

IV. Sound Transit East Link Line (Alex Ko, Sound Transit) (11:15 am-12:00 pm)

- *Alex Ko and Cassandra Andrews, outreach specialists at Sound Transit, came to discuss Connect 2020.*
- *In 2023, Sound Transit will open the Blue Line which is over to the Eastside, with 10 new stations and 14 miles of track. To do this, substantial work is needed at the International District/Chinatown station to tie in the new tracks to the existing service. Closing the station to accommodate the work is not an option with the 80,000 daily riders.*
- *During this time, a single track of service will operate through the downtown tunnel with a timed transfer at a new Pioneer square shared center platform. Trains from UW will end at Pioneer Square and trains from Angle Lake will also end at Pioneer Square. Pioneer Square will serve as a meeting point where riders can continue their journey by changing trains across the temporary center platform. Riders should expect crowded trains and platforms during this time. Four train cars will run every 12 minutes for the first 10 weeks of 2020 during this single-track operation period.*
- *Comment/Question (Doreen Cornwell): "What are you doing to keep the elevators and escalators working when that happens?"*
- *Response (Alex Ko): "We'll talk a little bit more about that a little bit later when we talk about signage, but there is a plan in place for that."*
- *For the first five weeks, trains will cross over the tracks at SoDo and Capitol Hill before stopping at Pioneer Square. The trains will then return from the direction they came. At the five-week mark, the opposite sides will close, so riders will be boarding the trains from the opposite sides of the station.*
- *In addition, there will be 3 full weekend downtown station closures from Westlake to the stadium. At this time, a free bus bridge will be provided.*
- *Sound Transit will add lighting and textured strips on the edges of the new center platform at Pioneer Square. There will be no stairs, escalators, or elevators accessing the center platform. Riders will transfer between train cars using the center platform. Trains will not leave until all riders are off the center platform, and there will be no passengers on the platform unless two trains occupy the station.*
- *The center platform will be constructed before January. Construction will generally occur at night and will not impact weekday service. It does, however, require three weekend closures from SoDo to Capitol Hill and those are in October, two in October, just October 12 and 13, 25 and 26, and then one in November 9-10. During that time, Link will run between U-Dub and Capitol Hill and SoDo and Angle Lake just as it will during Connect 2020 and free bus shuttles will link all of the stations in between.*
- *Due to the limited space available at the new 12' wide center platform and anticipated crowded trains, bicycles will not be permitted into Pioneer Square station during Connect 2020. Riders will be required to exit the trains at the University Street station and the International District station and use surface streets.*
- *New signage and information will be provided to assist riders during this time, and information will be translated into multiple languages.*
- *Staff ambassadors will assist and will help guide riders and answer questions at this time.*
- *Comment/Question (Marcy Carpenter): "What kind of check has your Web site gone through to make sure it is accessible to blind people and deaf-blind people?"*
- *Response (Cassandra): "So, our accessibility coordinator is Donna Smith is managing the accessibility review. We are still in beta right now, so that will -- and Donna's out this week so I haven't had a chance to check with her to see where we are in that process."*
- *Comment/Question (Marcy Carpenter): "Will there be Braille and tactile signage included in the station signage?"*

- *Response (Cassandra): "The new signage I do not believe so, but I'm happy to find out and get back to you, get -- I'm trying to think of where that would be."*
- *Comment/Question (Marcy Carpenter): "Okay. How do we find out specific information about the shuttle, such as -- I have never taken one of the of the shuttles before so which side of which block south of which street, north of which street. Are you going to have that kind of granular information about where people catch the shuttles?"*
- *Response (Cassandra): "So we have developed maps for all -- for where every -- where you catch the bus when Link isn't running. All of those will be on the Web site as well."*
- *Comment/Question (Marcy Carpenter): "Maps don't do any good for blind people."*
- *Response (Cassandra): "Right and we also have ambassadors serving the bus bridge weekends at the available stations."*
- *Comment/Question (Doreen Cornwell): "Yes, this is Doreen. I want to follow up on that because I would happily invite your staff. There are several different consumer groups but I have two questions. If you are taking every Sound Transit staff person and asking them to do five half-days giving directions, are they going to get any training about how to give directions for blind people? Because I get told "go over there and over there" all the time and people have issues with left and right and there are things that it's really possible to do, but the other question I would have is there's lots of people with limited English. What provisions are you making to help make sure that those people can get the help they need."*
- *Response (Alex Ko): "Sure. Those are some great questions and for the training for staff, staff will be going through robust training at the end of this year in preparation for this and Donna Smith will be helping to coordinate that training for us so that we make sure that our wayfinding and directions are accessible for a number of different mobility needs. And then in terms of what English language learners or limited proficiency English speakers, there will be staff available that have buttons that say, "I speak in" whatever language they speak. And then in addition to that, we also have Language Link which is a program that you can access to provide in-person translation over the phone."*
- *Question/Comment (Marcy Carpenter): "A follow-up. You mentioned there is a plan for the escalators and elevators. For instance, I know last week that the Seneca Street entrance to the tunnel to University station was completely inaccessible because the elevator and the escalator were out. What's the maintenance plan?" "...entrance to University Street station that's on the west side of 3rd at Seneca. It comes onto the south part of that platform. The escalator and the elevator were out, so that was completely inaccessible. So I just wanted to know when you do this, what plans do you have to address on a pretty short term basis on short notice how quickly can you get those working."*
- *Response (Alex Ko): "Right. So, we are anticipating very high usage and as Cassandra mentioned earlier in our presentation, we will be making sure that elevators are prioritized for those that need them. In terms of maintenance of elevators and escalators, we are planning to have maintenance staff on all during this time to make sure that any issues that arise are dealt with as swiftly as possible. Are there any other questions?"*

V. Adjourn (12:00 pm)

Action Items:

- *M. Shaw to include language in the PAAC invites to encourage participants to help make the meetings a scent-free space.*
- *M. Shaw to request that presenters provide digital content (presentations, etc.) a week in advance of meetings so that participants may review prior.*