

# 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 7, 2020 / 5:00 – 7:00 PM

**Co-chairs:** Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Ron Posthuma

**Location:** Video Conference

**Members present on the phone:** Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Ron Posthuma, Inga Manskopf, Joseph Laubach, Samuel Ferrara, Patrick Taylor, Alex Rouse, Kevin Werner, David Seater, Joseph Laubach, Vicky Clarke, Nick Paranjpye, Hester Serebrin, Lisa Bogardus

Council member Alex Pederson

**Members Absent:** Todd Biesold, Ben Noble

**Guests:** Rachel McCaffrey, Lorelei Williams, Brian Sperry, Kevin Lo, Sam Zimbabwe, Steve Barham, Matt Donahue, Terry Martin, Carmen Rahm (all SDOT), Aaron Blumenthal (Council Budget Office), Elliot Helmbrecht (Mayor’s Office), Stephanie Pure (King County Metro)

**MEETING CALL TO ORDER:** 5:00 PM

## **Agenda item #1: Welcome and Introductions**

Each person on the call introduced themselves by stating their name, organization if applicable, and their role or position related to the Move Seattle Levy.

**Public Comment:**

None

## **Agenda item #2: Director’s Comments**

Sam Z: There is a lot of changes happening at SDOT right now that were triggered by COVID-19. Keeping workers safe, keeping our projects moving as much as we can, and taking care of infrastructure while we are now focusing on mission critical functions. We want to pause and take note of the success in 2019, but also update you on the COVID-19 response and what we are doing to address this challenge.

## **Agenda item #3: 2019 Levy Report**

Lorelei W: Presented the [2019 Levy Report](#). From the perspective of the SDOT team, it was a great year. We proved we are capable of delivering this Levy program. We made unprecedented progress on Levy deliverables in light of the Seattle Squeeze, major snowstorms and the Viaduct demolition. SDOT moved forward on many large projects like Northgate Bridge, Fairview Bridge, the Lander Overpass, and major transit corridor projects such as the Madison, Delridge and Roosevelt projects. 2019 was the first year that spending actuals aligned with planned spend. We met or exceeded 30 of the 32 annual deliverable targets. Installing leading pedestrian interval equipment and lowering the speed limit were major Vision Zero initiatives in 2019 that will continue into 2020. We made changes in the contract timeframes to expedite construction Notice to Proceed. The data between 2018 and 2019 construction contracts shows that this is working. Also, 2019 was the first year we achieved our spend plan. In 2019, we had a spend plan of \$218M and we spent \$222M. Our projects are categorized by the phase they are in which aligns with the levels of risk to schedule and expenditures so we can better understand and communicate these

risks and concerns with you all. We are working on a portfolio status update for the remaining Levy work. With the COVID-19 issue, this portfolio status update is really important to complete and share with you.

Patrick T: Does the 48 blocks of new sidewalk include both traditional and low cost sidewalks?

Lorelei W: Yes

Rachel M: Page 45 of the [2019 Levy Report](#) shows the breakdown of low cost sidewalk and traditional sidewalk that were implemented in 2019.

Joseph L: The original levy deliverable included bike facilities at about 50/50 between PBLs and neighborhood greenways. What is the expectation for the final deliverables? Is it still about 50/50?

Lorelei W: The Bicycle Master Plan Implementation plan update that we are working on now will provide the best information to answer that question.

Joseph L: OK, I can wait until the plan update comes out.

Rachel B: Has reducing the speed limit been successful?

Lorelei W: We don't have the after speed studies complete yet as we are still rolling out the speed limit changes.

Sam Z: We expect to learn more about these changes as we collect and review speed and accident data as we complete more speed sign installations. And we have completed some analyses we can share on how speed limit changes are helping to reduce accidents.

Alex R: I would like to see the analysis.

Sam Z: I can share a link to the [Vision Zero Report](#) we completed earlier this year.

Patrick T: What was the Lander contingency money spend on?

Lorelei W: We used some of the contingency funds on changes to some of the geofoam work and there were additional costs related to doing night work along the railroad.

#### **Agenda item #4: Moving the Needle Performance Report**

Sam Z: The Moving the Needle performance tools are department wide, not just focused on levy work, and help us understand the outcomes of SDOT's work.

Terry M: Provided an update on the Draft [Moving the Needle Report](#) which is still being developed and not yet ready to publish. His presentation addressed SDOT's performance management framework, how performance of the levy work is measured, examples of how the Levy is producing positive outcomes, and how the new interactive "Moving the Needle" performance reporting tool works.

Terry M: The [Capital Projects Dashboard](#) allows to get lots of information about capital projects. The [Levy Performance Dashboard](#) is focused on the status of specific levy deliverables. We are working to align the performance metrics we are using with SDOT's mission, vision, and goals to create more holistic performance reporting. We are still working on the report internally but wanted to update you on our progress. We have 50 to 60 performance metrics that form the basis of performance management framework and help us understand if we are aligned with our mission and vision.

Kevin W: Noted that the Capital Project Explorer link is not working.

Terry M: Ok, I'll look into that.

Rachel B: Where did the performance framework come from?

Terry M: It comes from the Balance Scorecard methodology.

Terry M: It's great that we are building sidewalks etc. but what does it mean? We noticed in our customer satisfaction survey that the number of people that said the transit system was better doubled between 2016 and 2018. This is very significant given the short duration between surveys. A second example is the school safety investments. 117 projects have been completed in the first four years of the levy. Another example is the 18% increase between 2016 and 2018 of people that they felt it was safer to walk to school. And the percentages of biking and walking transit are all increasing even with factoring in the growth of the City.

Inga M: Has perception of safety increased? And is there any information about the number of kids biking and walking to school?

Terry M: That information comes directly from the schools and that data is pretty spotty.

Terry M: The Moving the Needle Tool elements including the Splash page, Values, Outcomes, Metrics, and Data stories. We have about a dozen outcomes per goal and hopefully we will be able to show that outcomes are achieving goals. The tool is interactive so if you hover over some of the features you will see additional information. Examples of data stories we have now are 3rd Ave transit volumes, inventory of tree species, size and location, and biking volumes. We have a data story that is entirely focused on the Levy portfolio, 32 deliverables divided into the 3 levy categories (Safe Routes, Maintenance and Repair, and Congestion Relief).

Hester S: Have these outcomes been vetted by the equity team?

Terry M: The equity team has provided some input, but we still need feedback from other groups internally.

Alex R: In addition to Hester's question, who, if anybody, has provided input to the metrics and outcomes?

Terry M: First off, subject matter experts to make sure the data is correct. Then SDOT's upper management to make sure we have the right metrics. And we are open to external ideas too.

Rachel B: What are the dots next to the deliverables?

Terry M: Those dots represent the total accomplishment for that item for the first 4 years of the levy.

Kevin W: The asset management link at SDOT doesn't work either.

Terry M: OK, I'll look into that.

Kevin W: When that link is working will it link to the tool?

Terry M: Yes, it will.

Rachel M: On page 9 of the [2019 Levy Report](#) there is a link to the Moving the Needle tool as well, once it's launched.

#### **Agenda item #5: West Seattle High Bridge Update**

Lorelei W: We have been keeping a watchful eye on the [West Seattle High Bridge](#) for many years and have been monitoring the bridge for cracking and last year we installed some sealing to keep water out of the bridge steel. Cracking is not always a bad thing. It's more about where and how it cracks that matters. During our bridge load rating process last year, we hired consultant engineers to do a more detailed analysis and we noticed the cracking was growing much faster than before and we needed to

close the bridge on March 23 at 7pm. We are accelerating major maintenance and repairs. This bridge should have had another 20 to 30 years of life in it. But this design is no longer used due to these types of issues. The issues we have on this bridge are different than the issues we are facing on the bridge projects included in the levy like bridges in the seismic and bridge planning and design levy programs. Matt Donahue, SDOT's Structures Director is here if there are any questions or comments.

Sam F: Has any work been done by the engineering firm on the fix?

Lorelei W: We have some ideas on what is needed but we haven't gotten to the place where we are certain what the fix will be.

Matt D: It's still early days, but we think it's likely to be some combination of exterior and interior wrapping and post tensioning.

Joseph L: Is Heather still the lead for something like this?

Lorelei W: Yes, until we are able to open the bridge to traffic.

Sam Z: This is a big complicated response effort. The structures, traffic management, and communications are all being pulled to together by Heather from the subject matter experts.

Patrick T: Is this a repair and then a replacement needed?

Sam Z: We are still looking into these issues. We don't have an answer for that now. This emergency and COVID-19 means we will have a lot of budget discussions. This is a key priority for SDOT and the city to address. There will be some cost implications, so we'll need to determine how to address this.

Vicky C: I may have missed this, but is there a cost estimate? Thoughts on funding sources? Might you pull funding from other places (projects/ programs) given this is an emergency?

Hester S: Yes, I am concerned about how this will be funded in light of I-976, the West Seattle Ballard link, and other funding challenges the City is facing now.

Lorelei W: We are looking at grant opportunities for West Seattle High Bridge. The challenge now is we have more questions than answers and we don't want to share information prematurely that will cause an unnecessary reaction. You are all right to be concerned. We all know we have significant challenges with resources to address.

#### **Agenda item #6: COVID-19 and Levy Project Delivery Discussion**

Lorelei W: We are still uncertain as to the impact COVID-19 will have on our city finances. We will continue to share information with the LOC as we learn more. We are making progress to figure out what our recommendations will be. We have crews that are staying home but some are still out doing critical work. We are moving ahead with essential capital projects. The health and safety of our workers and the public is our top priority. Our staff know they can stop work if the contractor is not adhering to social distance and other health and safety protocols. We have a 2-day stop work break this Thursday and Friday so contractors and project teams can review their health and safety plans to make sure we can proceed with work and meet all safety protocols. The Ballard Multi-modal project has had some minor delays related to King County Metro trolley wire crews' availability. We are also pausing the NE Pacific paving project as it adjacent to the University of Washington hospital. And we are reviewing the project to determine if there is work that can proceed with while not impacting hospital operations.

Alex R: I appreciate the concern for health and safety.

Sam F: The Thursday and Friday halt on all construction is a really good idea.

Lorelei W: At this time, we are continuing to advertise construction contracts. The last couple bids we have received have been below the engineer's estimates like the Delridge Rapid Ride project. Also, we

have kicked off an effort with our program owners and teams to rank all projects within the levy program and we will be looking for feedback from you all on that.

Hester S: Agencies are grappling with emergent scenarios and decision making. Wondering how you are using the RET and RSJI in decision making during this time?

Lorelei W: RSJI is one of the key criteria we are using in the levy projects prioritization process that we have initiated.

Hester S: Are you translating into different languages?

Lorelei W: We will continue to use all our standard communication tools. We do offer translations and we will do the same when we share information about changes to projects.

Patrick T: You mentioned the possibility of pausing projects. Can you talk more about what projects are in danger of being paused?

Lorelei W: Our levy funds cannot be used for other things. We are concerned about the funds that we use for match like commercial parking tax, real estate excise tax, etc. Grants from the state and other sources may be at risk too. If we have issues or reduction in local fund sources, then we would be looking at how we would reallocate levy funds. Active construction projects are a top priority as it can sometimes cost more to stop a project than if you had finished it. The next priority level is safety and maintenance. Also, maintaining grant or partnership commitments is a priority. And then advancement or improvement projects are generally lower on the priority ranking.

Hester S: Can I get a clarification on what constitutes an advancement or improvement project?

Lorelei W: Projects that improve efficiency or enhance user comfort and are not focused on safety are examples of advancement or improvement projects. We will solicit feedback from you on these priority rankings.

Kevin W: Do you have any specific thoughts about how you are approaching these kinds of decisions? How can this Committee support that work?

Rachel B: We could establish a subcommittee to support SDOT's prioritization process. A subcommittee is a more responsive tool.

Lorelei W: We have discussed that idea, a subcommittee, three people or so that could work with us. Things are moving fast, and we don't have a timeline for this current situation. We are going to take the first step of a comprehensive priority ranking. We are probably going to have to make some quick decisions for 2020 but we can use the prioritization to help for longer-term issues.

#### **Agenda item #7: Committee Business**

Rachel B: Is there any new business?

Alex R: Nick and I were going to write a letter to the multi-modal corridor program, but Nick and I haven't done that yet and I question if it's needed given the COVID-19 situation?

Lorelei W: The thought process at SDOT is that we still feel there is value in documenting the committee's thoughts prior to COVID-19.

Ron P: I like the idea of pausing the letter because of the West Seattle Bridge, and COVID-19 triggered revenue decline.

Lorelei W: We are still moving ahead on the transit corridor projects.

#### **Agenda item #8: Upcoming Agenda Topics, Announcements, and/or New Business**

Rachel B: Is there other new business? Like having a subcommittee work with SDOT on priority ranking of the levy projects.

Ron P: I think that's a good idea, but it may be hard to put a three person subcommittee together that represents the entire committee.

Rachel B: Rachel, can you look into how a committee can support SDOT?

Rachel M: Yes, we can look into that and circle back with you.

Vicky C: Can you clarify what the subcommittee would do?

Rachel B: It can be used to have a faster turn-around than the full committee would provide on SDOT's prioritization effort.

Vicky C: That feels like something the entire committee should be involved in.

Samuel F: I agree with Vicky that the full committee should be involved in SDOT's prioritization exercise.

Alex R: I agree with Sam and Vicky too.

### Approval of Meeting Minutes

Alex R: Moved to approve the March 3, 2020 minutes.

Patrick T: Seconded the motion.

Rachel B: Al right, the minutes are approved.

**Adjourn: 7:00 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
Identify topics and questions for follow-up Vision Zero presentation	May 7, 2019	LOC		Tracking
Develop guiding principles for the next levy	June 7, 2018	LOC		TBD: LOC to determine
Keep committee informed on Fautleroy progress	May 24, 2018	SDOT	Rachel to keep the committee updated as the Mayor and CM Herbold continue community process to identify near-term safety improvements	Tracking
Summarize the construction cost of the 2020 TNC tax funded projects	February 4, 2020	SDOT		TBD