

Our Streets Shape Our Lives, and Our Mayor Shapes our Streets

The Moment & Opportunity

The next mayor of Seattle will face overlapping challenges around affordability, climate change, equity, health, safety, and more. How we shape our streets and transportation system can make a difference in all of these areas. One quarter of Seattle's total land is dedicated to streets, and the mayor has wide powers to shape how these spaces are designed to meet our goals as a city. Mayors around the world are rediscovering the public space potential of streets and moving quickly to transform their streets for people. Just last year New York converted 8,550 parking spaces, Oakland created 74 miles of Stay Healthy Streets, and Lisbon doubled its bike network. What will Seattle's next mayor do?

How these issues connect to values voters care about

- **Accessibility:** People with disabilities deserve equal access to our city (26,000 people in Seattle use a mobility aid), but right now there are too many barriers (156,000 sidewalk maintenance issues, thousands of missing crosswalks and curb ramps, and more). People with disabilities are significantly more likely to be getting around without driving, and to be killed in traffic collisions.
- **Affordability:** Transportation is the second biggest household cost after housing. Today, half of all trips in Seattle are under 3 miles, an easy walking and biking distance. We can make Seattle more affordable by making it so that everyone who wants to can accomplish half of their trips on foot or by bike.
- **Climate Change:** Transportation is Seattle's leading cause of greenhouse gas emissions, and the source we have the most power to reduce at a local level. Poor air quality and related health impacts from vehicle emissions [disproportionately affects POC and low-income communities](#).
- **Community:** Streets designed for people to interact and share space can literally bring together neighbors who have never met, and build stronger community ties.
- **Economic Prosperity:** Encouraging people to shop local by walking and biking helps keep wealth in communities and create more local jobs.
- **Equity & Justice:** Black Seattlies are most likely to die in traffic collisions and also face the brunt of an ineffective traffic enforcement system. We can fix this.
- **Health:** Incorporating more walking into our daily lives helps keep people healthy, without having to set aside separate time to go to the gym.
- **Happiness / Quality of Life:** People who get to walk and bike regularly are happier and report a higher quality of life.
- **Kids & Seniors:** Seattle's streets are not designed so that kids can easily and safely go to school, parks, and friends houses; or so that elders can age gracefully in place, but they could be.
- **Safety:** According to the CDC "motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death in the first three decades of Americans' lives." Seattle averages 150 life-altering injuries each year and 20 deaths, heavily concentrated in SE Seattle's District 2, and these numbers are increasing. We can, and must, make our streets safe to travel on for everyone.

10 Big Ideas For Seattle's Next Mayor

1. **Make Every Street Walkable:** Everyone deserves a safe place to walk and roll, but right now we're on a [300+ year timeline](#) to make that a reality. The next mayor needs to find additional funding for sidewalks on arterial streets and transit routes like [Aurora Ave](#), and implement five cost-effective [Home Zones](#) each year for non-arterial streets.
2. **Connect Every Neighborhood by Bike:** We need a network of connected, comfortable, safe, and convenient bike routes so people can bike to where they need to go. The next mayor needs to find the funding and political fortitude to make the Citywide Network of the [Bicycle Master Plan](#) a reality. [Read more.](#)
3. **Renew the Move Seattle Levy:** Seattle's next mayor must find supplemental sources of funding to deliver on the promises made to voters in the [Move Seattle Levy](#), and build towards a transformational renewal proposal in 2024.
4. **Make Seattle a 15 Minute City:** Everyone should have access to their daily needs within a short walk. The next mayor should make this a central organizing principle of the Comprehensive Master Plan update. [Read more.](#)
5. **Make Stay Healthy Streets & Keep Moving Streets Permanent:** These streets have been wildly popular by simply allowing people to safely walk, bike, roll, run, and play in the street. The next mayor should make Stay Healthy Streets the new standard for all neighborhood greenways, continue nimble project delivery, and direct SDOT to co-design permanent improvements for the Keep Moving Streets on Alki Point, Green Lake, and Lake Washington Boulevard. [Read more.](#)
6. **Boost Business via Cafe Streets:** Cafe Streets are good for public health, small businesses, and our quality of life. The next mayor should make this program permanent in an accessible, safe, collaborative, equitable, and bold way. [Read more.](#)
7. **Get Vision Zero Back on Track:** Everyone should be able to safely get to where they need to go, but every year [150 people suffer life altering injuries and 20 are killed — and the trends are getting worse](#). The next mayor should [double the Vision Zero budget through the](#) Vehicle Licensing Fee (VLF) to build more safety projects, and help SDOT evolve beyond the [antiquated and car-centric "Level Of Service"](#).
8. **Make Traffic Enforcement Equitable:** Similar to the push to remove police from mental health response calls, there is a [growing professional consensus that police traffic stops](#) are an ineffective and inequitable way to address traffic safety issues. The next mayor should remove police from traffic enforcement and redirect the resources to road redesigns, automated enforcement, and problem-solving focused enforcement by SDOT employees; and community health, safety, and resilience programs. [Read more.](#)
9. **Repair Sidewalks:** Our sidewalks should be safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities. But right now there are 156,000 known sidewalk maintenance issues, making the sidewalk network we do have increasingly inaccessible to people with disabilities, the elderly, and parents pushing strollers. The next mayor should allocate [funding from the VLF](#), and implement a [point of sale sidewalk repair](#) ordinance.
10. **Be Bold:** The next mayor has the power to boldly re-shape our streets to make our city healthier, safer, happier, more just, sustainable, and prosperous. Strong direction from the top matters to make change, especially when it's controversial. Today's [transformational challenges call for a transformational leader](#).