Move All Seattle Sustainably (MASS)

City Budget Results

Disappointingly, the 2019-2020 city budget approved in November pits city residents’ basic needs for shelter, housing, food security, and transportation against each other and fails to adequately fund any area. The budget effectively diverts millions from red-light fines (previously slated for the Safe Routes to Schools Program) and the Seattle Transportation Benefit District rainy day fund to other uses, at a time when the city is dramatically scaling back transportation promises.

Nevertheless, the budget contains some bright spots. The following amendments were won with the support of Move All Seattle Sustainably:

**Home Zones**: The Council added $350,000 to fund an innovative “Home Zone” pilot program, which will use traffic-calming measures to divert cut-thru traffic and make walking in a neighborhood safer and more comfortable for people of all ages. 26% of Seattle’s streets lack sidewalks, a problem that will take at least 300 years to remedy at current rates of funding. Home Zones are a promising strategy that can create walkable neighborhoods quickly and efficiently. Seattle Neighborhood Greenways has been working on a DIY pilot Home Zone with a neighborhood in Licton-Springs this year, and the City of Seattle will be implementing an official pilot in 2019. Thank you to Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda for proposing this budget addition.

**Limiting Adaptive Signals**: The Council restricted funding to “adaptive signals” systems which so far have been used to prioritize moving cars at the expense of people walking, biking, or taking transit. Beyond a grant-funded pilot in the U-District, SDOT will need to demonstrate they aren’t just prioritizing cars over everyone else before spending city money on these signals. The proviso, put forward by Councilmember Mike O’Brien, reads in part “The Council’s intent is to develop signal technology that prioritizes the safe and comfortable movement of people, not just vehicles. Pedestrians and bicyclists should have frequent and ample opportunities to cross the street, and transit mobility should be prioritized over SOV traffic on key corridors. Signal policy should align with Seattle’s adopted climate, public health, safety, and mobility goals.”

**Thomas Street Greenway**: The Council took steps to ensure full funding for the Thomas Street Greenway, which will be the only safe, prioritized east-west route for people walking and biking between South Lake Union and Uptown and to the new Key Arena.

**Transit Passes for Social Workers**: The council requested a report on what it would take to provide subsidized transit passes for social workers at human service agencies funded by city contracts. This benefit would be similar to the full transit benefits offered to city employees, in line with Seattle’s transportation and climate goals.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with elected officials in 2019 to build on this progress and move rapidly to a carbon-neutral, safe, and equitable transportation system that can keep pace with the city’s growth.