

Keep Accessible Mt Baker On Track For Needed Federal Grants

CIP #: TC367770

What is currently in the budget? “The Accessible Mt. Baker project was a stand-alone project in the 2016 Adopted CIP. This project has been combined with the Rainier/Jackson multimodal corridor project in the 2017-2022 Proposed CIP to achieve efficiencies. Total funding for Rainier/Jackson in 2017 is \$400,000; in 2018 the amount is \$2,300,000” (pg 177 of CIP).

Additional funding requested: \$1 million for 2017

Short Summary: The Accessible Mt. Baker project provides a major transit-oriented solution to a dangerous bottleneck that has hampered equitable development in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village. In order to effectively compete for federal grants, Accessible Mt. Baker must achieve 30% design in 2017. With this additional funding, SDOT will be in a good position to apply for a Small Starts grant in 2017, and a TIGER grant in 2018.

The Opportunity: The Accessible Mt Baker project is the keystone project to improving transportation for anyone going to or from SE Seattle. The project removes the bottleneck intersection of Rainier Ave S and MLK Jr Way S, and creates a new multimodal system of connecting streets and paths (see graphics on the next page). The Accessible Mt Baker project is critical to the success of:

1. Fixing the most dangerous street in the city - Rainier Ave S
2. The Move Seattle route 7 RapidRide+ and route 48 RapidRide+ corridors
3. Creating a walkable town center for the North Rainier Hub Urban Village to help catalyze affordable and transit-oriented development around the light rail station
4. Making the Mt Baker light rail station more accessible
5. Connecting SE Seattle more seamlessly to downtown for people who walk and bike
6. Improving freight movement

In terms of public opinion, the innovative Accessible Mt Baker project has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from residents of Mt Baker, Rainier Valley, and beyond.

The last publicly released estimate of project cost was \$24 million. The Move Seattle Levy provided \$2 million for the project. The Washington State Budget has allocated \$900,000 for the project. The Move Seattle Levy also includes funding for the route 7 RapidRide+ and route 48 RapidRide+ corridors, which intersect with the Accessible Mt Baker project. All of these projects require significant leveraging of federal funds for completion. Therefore we were excited to hear SDOT is planning to submit the route 7 RapidRide+ corridor for a Small Starts grant in 2017 and the Accessible Mt Baker project for a TIGER grant in 2018.

Accessible Mt Baker is currently at the conceptual design stage. The additional \$1 million will advance the project to the 30% design. With the project at 30% design in 2017, the City will stay on track to compete for the federal grants that are critical for project completion, giving SDOT the opportunity to further refine this innovative project in a timely manner. We hope you will support increasing funding for this transformational project. Thank you.