

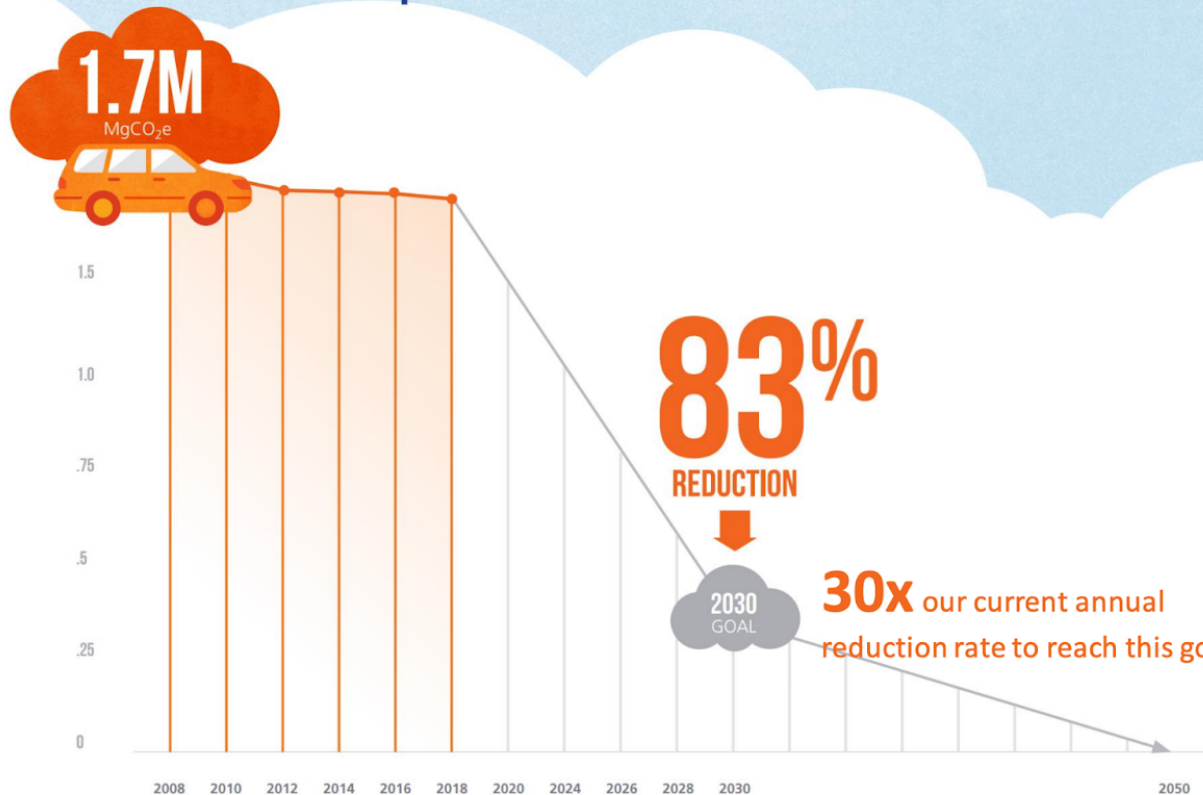
People for Climate Action - Seattle
July 12, 2021

Dear Council President González and councilmembers:

I am writing to you on behalf of People for Climate Action - Seattle. We have been following the Route 40 Multimodal Corridor Project and are **writing in favor of bus-only lanes along Westlake Ave. N**. The ridership of Route 40 has risen sharply, and these riders deserve a bus that is fast with reliable service. Efficient transit is the only sustainable answer for getting people in and out of South Lake Union; if we all give up and start driving, the congestion on this corridor will increase rather than decrease.

Increasing use of transit is essential to reaching the City's goal of reducing vehicle miles travelled and thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation. Seattle is already well behind on reaching its climate goals (see figure 1). The record-breaking temperatures we have experienced already this summer will only get increasingly worse if we don't prioritize policies that reduce vehicle miles traveled. We have to face the facts about our current climate policy failures (figure 1) and agree that prioritizing automobiles is an approach that leads to staggering heat waves and wildfires and, ultimately, to the destruction of the planet that sustains us.

Transportation Emissions Reductions Needed



3/23/2021

Office of Sustainability & Environment



Some have suggested that the bus-only lanes should allow freight traffic in addition to buses. We think this is a very bad idea for a number of reasons. First, there are many bus-only lanes in the city and for each lane to have different rules is confusing. Second, it seems ripe for abuse; how do you categorize “freight” when you are enforcing? Third, freight traffic has been growing tremendously, and delivery organizations are going to have to find a better solution for last-mile deliveries that does not involve large trucks and vans that are inevitably going to be stuck in traffic. With fast and efficient bus-only lanes in this increasingly popular commuter corridor, car traffic will decrease and freight will move efficiently in the non-bus lanes. There is no reason to give special consideration to vehicular traffic that is not transit.

It is easy to set goals for climate action — it is a lot more challenging to make real change. But we need to stick to the reasoned decisions we make based on the larger picture. Some people will be inconvenienced either way the decision is made; should it be people driving single occupancy vehicles or people riding transit? **SDOT reports that 73% of the respondents who participated in the outreach support the new bus lanes.** Let’s follow through with SDOT’s analysis and live up to our climate goals.

Sincerely,

Keith Ervin
for People for Climate Action - Seattle