

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

April 10, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Simas, Commissioners Bishop, Jokinen, Lampe, Larrivee, Zahn

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Kristi Oosterveen, Eric Miller, Phil Harris, Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Simas who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Larrivee, who arrived at 6:48 p.m., and Commissioner Tanaka, who was excused.

3. PUBLIC HEARING

A. 2015-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Facility Planning and Programming Coordinator Kristi Oosterveen said the city is mandated by state law to conduct a public hearing before an official body before the Transportation Improvement Program can be forwarded to the City Council. Currently the issue is slated to be sent to the Council on May 19.

The TIP draws on long-range transportation plans, projects from the 12-year Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP), and from the funded seven-year Capital Investment Program (CIP), as well as from studies and regional plans. The TIP is submitted to both the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Puget Sound Regional Council.

Ms. Oosterveen said 81 projects are proposed to be included in the TIP, and she noted that the matrix of projects was color coded to indicate the source of each project.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Lampe. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bishop and it carried unanimously.

Mr. David Plummer, address not given, said the proposed 2015-2020 TIP should be revised to reduce the proposed funding for a number of projects, to delete some projects, and to transfer some projects to the transportation department's proposed 2015-2016 operating budget. He provided the Commission with a letter detailing his recommendation. The TIP is very difficult to understand, making it virtually impossible to make informed comments regarding it. There are no reasonably detailed project descriptions, nor any rationale or explanation for how the projected costs are estimated, and whether they are in current year or year of expenditure dollars. If the costs are in year of expenditure, there is no disclosure of the assumed escalation of inflation rates. There is no disclosure of previous expenditure for each project, or any indication of the years during which the expenditures occurred. There is also no schedule given for the expenditures to be made in future years, and there is no completion date given for any project. It is not clear why the document is identified as a transportation improvement plan rather than, as set forth in RCW 35.77.010, just a six-year transportation program plan. There are no qualitative or quantitative improvement metrics, and indeed the rationale for many of the items listed in the document appear to be to enhance the city's tax revenues rather than to improve the city's transportation system performance.

Mr. Steve Kasner, 1015 145th Place SE, agreed that the TIP and the TFP are very difficult to figure out. He said a couple of years ago he addressed the Commission regarding project TFP-118, a project that no longer exists. The project involved the three traffic lights along 148th Avenue NE. With Kelsey Creek Center fully operational and the vibrancy of East Bellevue, Crossroads and Microsoft, 148th Avenue NE is one of the most important streets in the city. TFP-118 acknowledged that the technology of the signals that were installed in the 1970s was outdated and was in need of replacement. The problem with traffic lights is that they are too small to serve as their own CIP project, but too big to be general maintenance. The traffic light at 148th Avenue NE and Main Street was put out to bid and the bid came in \$85,000 over the engineer's estimate; the bid was rejected and nothing has happened since. The level of pedestrian traffic along 148th Avenue NE adds a circulation problem to the transportation problem, but those problems can be solved. In Newport Hills and Lake Hills, the discussions about useful sidewalks should be informed by the fact that the sidewalks in those areas are more than 60 years old and cannot simply be fixed. A plan needs to be devised that will involve removing the sidewalks, and the replacements may need to be on just one side of the road rather than both.

Mr. Keith Swenson, 1920 109th Avenue NE, spoke as a member of the committee involved in getting the neighborhood in which he lives reorganized. He said there have been discussions about safety and environmental issues, and a wish list has been developed. There are a series of issues along Bellevue Way from the downtown to SR-520 that need to be addressed, including inadequate sidewalks, sidewalk encroachments, access to the Northtowne Shopping Center, a pedestrian crossing for the new subdivision across from the shopping center, and fewer street access points to improve safety. Traffic coming off of SR-520 onto Bellevue Way is generally traveling at excessive speeds. Most of the issues could be addressed through a corridor study. With regard to the intersection of NE 24th Street and 112th Avenue NE, he said the three-way intersection sees cars coming off the highway as fast as 60 miles per hour

before proceeding down the hill past Hidden Valley park; that corridor also needs to be looked at comprehensively to resolve the issues. NE 24th Street has issues as well, not the least of which is the lack of a decent sidewalk.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jokinen and it carried unanimously.

4. STAFF REPORTS

Senior Planner Kevin McDonald provided the Commissioners with copies of a letter from Transportation Director Dave Berg endorsing the new Urban Street Design Guide from the National Association of City Transportation Officials.

Capital Programming Implementation Manager Eric Miller updated the Commission with regard to the Puget Sound Regional Council regional federal grant program competition. He said there are two steps for getting into the four-county process. Bellevue has submitted three applications during the early stage of the competition: 1) \$3 million to complete the design on the NE 15th Street corridor between 116th Avenue NE and 124th Avenue NE; 2) \$4.5 million for the 120th Avenue NE Phase III construction project; and 3) full funding for the design of the Mountains To Sound Greenway segment that passes through Bellevue. The first two of the three projects have made the first cut and are officially entered in the competition. Preliminary results should be known by June. Multiple grant applications for other projects will be submitted to various grant agencies in the coming months.

5. COMMUNICATION FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS - None

6. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Bishop reported that he attended the Puget Sound Regional Council transportation committee meeting where the focus was on autonomous vehicles. The presentation included national experts working for the military, which has an interest in autonomous vehicles. He said it was noted that design work for autonomous vehicles is moving forward at a very rapid pace.

7. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Janet Sellen, 10620 NE 28th Place, agreed with the comments made by Mr. Swenson. She said the Northtowne community is experiencing growth that is triggering safety issues on the main streets of Bellevue Way, NE 24th Street, and 112th Avenue NE. There is not much of a sidewalk between Bellevue Way and 108th Avenue NE, and people often park on it making it necessary for pedestrians to walk out into the street. A crosswalk is needed connecting the new housing development with the Northtowne Shopping Center across Bellevue Way, and another crosswalk by Chapin Park.

Mr. Patrick Detroit, 10513 NE 26th Street, said he recently retired from the military and moved back to Bellevue where he grew up. He said the Northtowne area is facing some serious safety issues. Cars travel up NE 24th Street to get to access SR-520 and most are traveling over the speed limit. The lighted speed limit sign posted by Hidden Valley is effective at slowing people down. The intersection of 112th Avenue NE and NE 24th Street is very dangerous and something must be done to prevent a disaster. The sidewalks on NE 24th Street between Bellevue Way and 109th Avenue NE are crumbling away, some are dirt and some are asphalt, and people are parking on them, preventing their use by pedestrians. There is also an encroachment on the sidewalk on NE 24th Street on the west side of Bellevue Way where a fence comes out onto the sidewalk, effectively narrowing the width of the sidewalk.

Answering a question asked by Chair Simas, Mr. McDonald said the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Services Program is responsible for placing radar signs and permanent fixes like curb bumpouts. They also work with neighborhood groups to identify and resolve issues. He added that recently transportation staff met with representatives of the Northtowne neighborhood and heard their concerns regarding safety. An effort is under way to address some of the issues.

Mr. Joe Pham, 4239 135th Place NE, spoke as president of the Monthaven Neighborhood Association, and as representative for all of the south Bellevue neighborhoods that are working together. He thanked the Commission for including TFP-255, a project to construct a missing sidewalk section. The annexation of Eastgate brought to light a number of issues, of which the missing sidewalk is one. The sidewalk is greatly needed to provide safety for pedestrians accessing the community center, the library, the church and Tyee middle school. The project should be given as high a priority as possible and the Commission should recommend that it should be done right away. The need was first heralded ten years ago, and a study was done in early 2003. Cars speed on Newport Way creating a safety issue.

Mr. Phil Moser, 4420 145th Avenue SE, referenced a previous discussion that focused on policy TR-79 and how it can be used to set priorities for various projects. There are other policies that can be used for that purpose. Policy TR-28 calls for involving affected neighborhoods and other interested citizens. Policy TR-76 calls for promoting and facilitating the effective use of non-motorized transportation. Policy TR-77 says the city should consider pedestrians and bicycles along with other travel modes. Policy TR-78 calls for designing and constructing safe and connective non-motorized transportation systems. Policy TR-81 focuses on providing adequate and predictable funding to construct and maintain pedestrian and bicycle capital projects. Policy TR-83 calls for having programs to construct, maintain and repair sidewalks. Policy TR-88 recognizes the importance of walking. The Commission was thanked for its role in installing a new traffic light and turn pocket at 148th Avenue SE and Newport Way; it has made an amazing difference for traffic flow and safety.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Lampe. The motion was

seconded by Commissioner Zahn and it carried unanimously.

9. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. 2015-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Ms. Oosterveen said Attachment 1 in the Commission packet contained the list of projects which, if approved, will be forwarded to the City Council on May 19. She reminded the Commissioners that the TIP is not revenue constrained, thus the projects included are those the city would be able to do within the document timeframe were funding and resources are available. Additionally, the projects are not divided out by year; the only plan that has year of expenditure data is the CIP.

With regard to TIP-69, the NE 6th Street subsurface arterial, Ms. Oosterveen noted that while the recommendation of staff was to remove the project from the list, the Commission had asked that it be included.

Ms. Oosterveen also asked the Commission to review and approve a change to the description of the Neighborhood Sidewalks Program to include some of the top-ranked sidewalk projects on the candidate list. She explained that in competing for grants it is often helpful to show that generic programs have specific projects attached to them. The number of projects on the Neighborhood Sidewalks Program list is extensive and the intent is to show some of Transportation Element specific places being considered for sidewalk improvements. The TIP is a tool used by the city to garner grant dollars and having more detail in the descriptions can help in that regard.

With regard to the subsurface arterial, Commissioner Lampe commented that because the TIP is an unconstrained document it would do not harm to include it, even though there may be differing viewpoints regarding the viability and expense of the project. Erring on the side of more versus less makes sense.

A motion to accept the suggestion of staff relative to revising the description of TIP-27, and to include TIP-69 on the list, was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and it carried unanimously.

A motion to accept the TIP and pass it on to the Council as the recommendation of the Commission was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Larrivee.

Commissioner Bishop asked if the desired corridor study on the northern portion of Bellevue Way is embedded in a document somewhere, or if it could be done without being specifically identified. Mr. McDonald said it would not hurt to identify the project in the TIP. The corridor study is an outcome of the Downtown Transportation Plan and as such is identified on a project list. It will need to go through the budget process before allocating professional

services and staff time to it. If included on the TIP, a dollar amount would need to be identified. He said typically a project of that sort would run in the \$200,000 range.

Ms. Oosterveen said if so directed, the project would be added to the Section III projects as TIP-75.

Commissioner Bishop sought to add a friendly amendment to the motion on the floor the addition of a corridor study for Bellevue Way as TIP-75 with a cost of \$200,000. As seconder of the motion, Commissioner Larrivee agreed to the friendly amendment.

Commissioner Lampe pointed out that the TIP project list was previously vetted by the Commission and the conclusion reached was that it should go forward. The Commission has not previously heard anything about the need for a corridor study on Bellevue Way and absent input from the staff regarding a need, it should not be added to the TIP. It certainly could be added next year. He said he would appreciate some follow-up regarding the project to replace the traffic light at 148th Avenue NE and Main Street that apparently has been dropped from consideration.

Mr. Miller said one of the projects proposed for the CIP update is the major maintenance program, which is also TIP-4. Just as was done regarding the Neighborhood Sidewalks Program, the description for the major maintenance program could be revised to highlight the signals on 148th Avenue NE at SE 8th Street, Main Street, and NE 8th Street. The proposed enhancement to the program in the CIP is intended to accommodate the implementation of replacing those signals. The program is currently funded at \$900,000 per year, plus inflation and the signals are estimated to cost between \$500,000 and \$600,000 each given the associated curb ramps and the signal loops.

Commissioner Zahn said it did not seem to her that it would be problematic to list the signal replacement as a separate line item. Mr. Miller agreed and said if added to the list separately it would appear in the Section III projects as TIP-76. However, as a separate project it would not have secured funding, whereas calling it out as part of the major maintenance program it would have secured funding.

Commissioner Bishop sought to add as a friendly amendment to the motion on the floor changing the description of TIP-4 to specifically highlight signal replacement on 148th Avenue at SE 8th Street, Main Street, and NE 8th Street was made by Commissioner Bishop. As seconder of the motion, Commissioner Larrivee did not agree to the friendly amendment, suggested that the signals are included or implied in the list of CIP projects.

Commissioner Bishop asked if the Commission had during some prior time gone through a prioritization process that resulted in the signal projects being included in the TFP. Mr. Miller said the Commission undertook both the process that resulted in putting the project on the TFP and in the process that ultimately removed the project from the TFP in 2013 in favor of including it in the major maintenance program.

Commissioner Bishop withdrew his friendly amendment.

Mr. Miller pointed out that given the funding limit on the major maintenance program; it would take about five years to get all three of the signals replaced. The budget proposal being prepared seeks a one-time bump for three years to the major maintenance program to specifically address all three signals in a shorter time frame.

Commissioner Lampe asked if there would be any downside to including the Bellevue Way corridor study as a separate project. Ms. Oosterveen said she could not see a downside but suggested one alternative would be to include it along with the other corridor studies recommended as part of the Downtown Transportation Plan.

Commissioner Bishop allowed that since the TIP is updated annually, the Northtowne corridor study could be included in the next iteration of the document. Commissioner Zahn agreed and said that could also be the answer for the neighborhood traffic safety programs.

The motion on the floor, including the amendment to include the Bellevue Way corridor study, carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the transmittal memo submitted as Attachment 3 in the packet was made by Commissioner Lampe. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Zahn and it carried unanimously.

B. 2015-2021 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Update: Transportation Capital Budget Proposal Array

Mr. Miller briefly reviewed the budget calendar and noted that the next milestone will be the first budget public hearing on May 19. He noted that there are 39 transportation investments, 13 of which are ongoing programs, all 13 of which will be re-proposed. Two of the 13 ongoing programs will include proposals for enhancements, including the major maintenance program that will include an increase of approximately \$400,000 per year for three years to accommodate the full design of the remaining two undesigned intersection improvements on 148th Avenue NE and construction of all three intersection improvements. The other enhancement proposal is to the pedestrian facilities compliance program, which is the program used primarily to address ADA issues.

Mr. Miller said 11 new investment programs will be developed for the update involving eight projects from the current Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) and three non-TFP projects identified by staff.

Mr. Miller said the first project proposed to be added is the second phase of the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project. The first phase of the project has been completed and the proposal is to start the process for the second phase to be determined in coordination with the

community.

Commissioner Bishop observed that the West Lake Sammamish Parkway community began making its voice heard 14 years ago and that resulted in a three-year exercise to come up with a plan. Seven years after the plan was completed the first phase of the five-phase project finally was included in the CIP and got built. He asked if it would take another seven years to see the second phase completed. Mr. Miller said the first phase cost much more than originally estimated, so staff believes a close look should be made at the second phase, in conjunction with the community, to identify any cost savings for the subsequent phases. The community should also weigh in on just what the second phase should be. He said any dollar number included will be nothing more than a placeholder.

Mr. Miller said the 124th Avenue NE project is part of an existing CIP project the staff are proposing to split off into separate segments. The 164th Avenue NE project is the same as was proposed two years ago for pre-design and community engagement. The 120th Avenue NE project between NE 16th Street and Northup Way is an existing CIP project; the northern portion of NE 24th Street is funded for full design as part of a longer segment to approximately NE 14th Street.

Commissioner Bishop observed that the northern portion of 124th Avenue NE is not required to be constructed along with the portion that will cross the light rail tracks. He said he understands the need to do the design work for everything that will cross the tracks and to have the money available for construction when Sound Transit is working in the corridor. However, there is no justifiable need to move the full project development to completion by the end of the next CIP; there is room to delay some of the pieces and keep them in the TFP. Mr. Miller said the two segments of 124th Avenue NE are currently funded for full design in the CIP. The proposal is to split them out without adding any additional funding. The intention is to have the design work in hand to provide to the development when and if it comes. The projects are already close to the 60 percent design mark and as such there is not much money that could be freed up.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Zahn, Mr. Miller said under the best case scenario the two projects would not be implemented for several years. The idea is to have the design work done so any private development can implement and build the frontages according to the design. Commissioner Zahn agreed that moving the project to 100 percent design when it is not going to be constructed for many years to come does not make sense. She agreed with Commissioner Bishop that the final design work should be put off and the money saved put into some other project. The work done to date should be sufficient to inform any development that comes along.

Mr. Miller said the projects proposed to be added to the CIP include the Bellevue Way HOV lane for full design and construction. The project cost estimate is currently being refined, but it will undoubtedly be in the \$20-plus million range. He reminded the Commissioners that the HOV lane on Bellevue Way between I-90 and the park and ride is going forward funded by

Sound Transit as mitigation for the light rail alignment, so the proposed project involves only the stretch between the park and ride and the Y of Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue SE.

Commissioner Bishop asked if the project needs to be in the CIP timeframe in order to match the Sound Transit design schedule. Mr. Miller said the conversations to date between Sound Transit, the city and community representatives have been extensive. If the city were going to build the project simultaneous to the light rail work, the project would already be funded in the CIP. Sound Transit's design work is quickly moving toward 100 percent without anticipating any further westward expansion of Bellevue Way to incorporate the HOV lane. Commissioner Bishop pointed out that a lane will be lost on Bellevue Way while Sound Transit is constructing the light rail line. The Commission should be suggesting to the Council that if they want the HOV lane, it should be done in the early years so it can be available for use during the light rail construction process. Mr. Miller said that conversation with the Council did occur and the decision was made not to move ahead immediately with the HOV lane.

Mr. Miller said the Burlington Northern/Sante Fe project in the TFP is now being called the Eastside Rail corridor. The proposal is to include in the CIP a project to develop a plan for what Bellevue would like to see on its segment of the corridor. The 150th Avenue SE/Newport Way project was jointly funded in the 1990s. Improvements have been made up to the city limit line but the county did not follow through on its segment. The plans are still in hand and the current estimate shows as much as \$6 million to construct the ultimate project. The proposal will be to include in the CIP a project to refresh the design study, looking for less expensive options while still addressing the sidewalk and traffic needs along the corridor. The CIP update will also include a proposal to include the Newport Way project for full design and community engagement.

The three non-TFP proposals identified by staff include the Bel-Red corridor local street network identification; pre-design and community engagement around 164th Avenue SE, the last gravel road in Bellevue; and a proposal for placeholder funding to implement station area improvements around all of the East Link stations.

Mr. Miller said the 164th Avenue SE gravel road connects to the north off of Cougar Mountain Way. It runs for about four blocks as gravel and the city spends a lot of maintenance dollars every year filling potholes and leveling the road surface. The proposal is to include as a project identification of the roadway cross section or to reach the conclusion the roadway should simply be closed. The roadway is used by local residents, many of whom complain about the dust during the dry summer months.

Commissioner Zahn asked what would be lost by closing the road. Mr. Miller said the properties immediately to the east connect down to Cougar Mountain Way, and the parcels to the north of where the gravel road starts do have access through the subdivision to Lakemont Boulevard.

Commissioner Bishop called attention to project TFP-222, Bellevue Way/NE 4th Street and

asked if it is part of the mitigation for the Lincoln Square II project. Mr. Miller said some of the project will be implemented by the Lincoln Square II project. The primary reason the project, along with some others, is in the TFP is so they will be counted as impact fee projects. Implementation of elements of the project by Lincoln Square II could make them eligible for an impact fee credit.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Larrivee, Mr. Miller said it would cost millions to bring the last gravel road up to full city standards with curbs and gutters. The proposal is to study the options.

Commissioner Lampe asked if the cost estimates for the 120th Avenue NE project and the NE 4th Street extension project are still valid. Mr. Miller said \$34 million is still the right number for the NE 4th Street extension, but staff believes the 120th Avenue NE cost of \$31 million will need to be increased.

C. Comprehensive Plan Update: Transportation Element - Maps and Tables

Senior planner Philip Harris explained that the maps and tables included in the Transportation Element provide additional data to support the policies, and they provide an inventory for each of the transportation modes. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) requires consistency with their certification requirements in order for the Transportation Element to gain the certification that is essential for projects to be eligible for grant dollars. The policies and plans must be consistent with Vision 2040 and the relevant planning provisions in the Growth Management Act.

Commissioner Bishop commented that Vision 2040 and the companion Transportation 2040 plan have some very onerous requirements. The transportation plan says every freeway in the region and every arterial will be tolled, and that would include Bellevue Way, NE 8th Street, and 148th Avenue. He asked how far the city has to go in order to be deemed consistent with the PSRC. Mr. McDonald said the PSRC has a checklist for certification. In order for cities to qualify for grant programs, the items on the certification checklist must be met. That checklist does not require local policies to paraphrase the Vision 2040 or Transportation 2040 policies.

Mr. Harris shared with the Commission a slide showing a portion of the transportation checklist. He noted that the checklist calls for including inventories for each transportation system, including roadways, transit, cycling, walking, freight, airports and ferries. While some transportation systems are not applicable to Bellevue, for those that are there must be an associated map or table.

The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2004. Since that time a lot has happened in the city, including natural growth, annexation growth, updating the Bel-Red subarea plan, planning for light rail, and updating the Transit Master Plan. All of the maps will need to be updated to incorporate the new boundary changes. With regard to highways of statewide significance, which for Bellevue means I-405, I-90 and SR-520, the

tables indicating their traffic inventory will need to be updated and consolidated. The current Transportation Element includes several transit maps describing various facilities in the city; those maps are outdated and need to be revised to include the latest transportation and land use data.

Commissioner Larrivee asked if there is a deadline for getting the maps and charts updated in order to be certified. Mr. McDonald said the recommendation of the Commission regarding the Transportation Element will include proposed amendments to policies, maps and charts. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Planning Commission which will consolidate the Transportation Element with all of the other elements and transmit the full package to the Council in the spring of 2015. There is a provision in the Growth Management Act that cities can only make changes to their Comprehensive Plans once per year, except in cases of emergency. Studies in the pipeline, including the Downtown Transportation Plan and the Downtown Livability Initiative, may require revisions to the Comprehensive Plan, and the Council will want to consider everything together and adopt them all at once, so the anticipation is that the Council will adopt the Comprehensive Plan in mid-2015 ahead of the Growth Management Act deadline.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Lampe, Mr. McDonald said there likely will be some transition between the metrics, maps and standards in the current Transportation Element toward a fully multimodal metric for corridors and Mobility Management Areas. The policy direction to do so will be embedded in the Transportation Element, and a work program item will be formed to implement it.

Commissioner Zahn asked if the PSRC has targets for each of the checklist items. Mr. Harris said eventually there will be targets, but there are none for the first stage of the transition. Mr. McDonald added that embedded in the current Transportation Element are system completion targets, though the understanding is that within the timeframe of the Comprehensive Plan it will not be possible to get to the ultimate. The system completion targets are not tied to level of service. The work to update the Transportation Element could include updating the system completion targets with current information, though they likely will be developed and adopted in subsequent updates.

D. Comprehensive Plan Update: Transportation Element - Policies and Policy Amendments

Mr. McDonald said the proposed policy amendments included in the packet represented the recommendations of the interdepartmental staff team working on the Comprehensive Plan. He said the format used is the same as that used for the Downtown Transportation Plan policies and the language revisions express changed circumstances from the 2004 Transportation Element, as well as new policies that address new initiatives. Staff recommends repealing some policies either because they are outdated or redundant, and moving or consolidating other policies to reduce redundancy and to make the element read better.

Commissioner Bishop asked why the fuzzy word "mobility" was being used and why steps were being taken away from using the phrase "transportation master plan." Mr. McDonald said the concept of a transportation master plan has not been erased. The abbreviation for "transportation master plan" is TMP, and there are several other things referred to as TMP and the desire of the staff was to avoid creating confusion. Commissioner Bishop disagreed with that philosophy. He said to change from the global idea of a transportation master plan because the abbreviation does not work is absurd.

With regard to policy TR-11 in Attachment 2, Commissioner Bishop asked if the language in the right column is all new. Mr. McDonald said only the underlined language is new. Commissioner Bishop asked if the policy is focused on the downtown only or if the intent is to establish parking fees all over the city. Mr. McDonald said the policy language will have citywide application. Commissioner Bishop pointed out that 90 percent of all transportation in Bellevue occurs by car, yet the language appears to be saying that cars are evil and things should be done so people will not want to use them. Similar language has been used over the last 40 years, yet it has not moved the needle one little bit.

Commissioner Zahn pointed out that policy TR-11 fits with policy TR-9 which calls for developing and implementing transportation demand management strategies that are consistent with the state Commute Trip Reduction Act. Mr. McDonald responded by saying the Commute Trip Reduction Act applies only to companies having 100 or more employees. The recommendation of staff is to strike from policy TR-9 all references to the Act because a lot of smaller employers are stepping up and wanting to participate in transportation demand management programs. The needle has in fact moved relative to commute trips to the extent that in downtown Bellevue there is non-SOV modeshare of about 45 percent. The change to the language of policy TR-9 is consistent with current city practice in offering transportation demand management tools to any employer wanting to participate.

Commissioner Zahn asked why policy TR-9 talks about alternative work schedules but not telecommuting. She allowed that policy TR-12 does reference telework as a means of reducing peak hour commute trips and suggested combining policies TR-9 and TR-12 could eliminate the redundancy.

Commissioner Lampe observed that much of the language uses the stick rather than the carrot. Bicycles and motorcycles are in fact vehicles that most often carry only a single occupant, yet they are encouraged as modes of travel. As framed, some of the policies appear to be somewhat dated. Commissioner Bishop suggested no one will mistake a bicycle for a single-occupant vehicle as referenced in the policies.

Commissioner Zahn called attention to policy TR-75.12 in Attachment 3 and asked for clarification regarding item 3. Mr. McDonald said the reference is to the materials used for light rail stations and the guideway. The policy calls for using high-quality and durable materials that fit the context of the city. Commissioner Zahn suggested adding a reference to the city's standards would help to clarify the meaning of item 3.

With regard to policy TR-75.15, Commissioner Zahn suggested the language of item 2 is clumsy and not easily understandable. Mr. McDonald agreed to take another look at it.

Commissioner Lampe suggested the subsection title of Attachment 3 should read "High-Capacity Transit" rather than simply "Light Rail Transit." Commissioner Bishop questioned the wording change as well; pointing out that high-capacity transit includes bus rapid transit, commuter rail and light rail. Mr. McDonald said Attachment 3 is an effort to consolidate the high-capacity transit policies under a single heading. The intent is to apply to the implementation of East Link and to help the city prepare for Sound Transit III, the next high-capacity transit initiative without being limited to only one mode of high-capacity transit.

Commissioner Bishop observed that most of the policies in Attachment 3 reflect the best practices for light rail concept that is embedded in the Comprehensive Plan. Many of the policies could just as easily be applied to bus rapid transit as to light rail, but not all of them. As drafted, the light rail best practices are being applied to bus rapid transit equally even though they are not necessarily compatible. For instance, the policies talk about high-capacity transit operating in its own rights-of-way, yet the Rapid Ride system is a bus rapid transit that does not operate in its own right-of-way. Mr. McDonald pointed out that the Rapid Ride does not fit the strict definition of bus rapid transit because it does not operate in its own right-of-way. Commissioner Bishop did not agree that bus rapid transit has to operate in its own right-of-way. He said it would be appropriate to separate light rail policies from bus rapid transit policies, and to include in each the issues that apply equally to both.

Commissioner Lampe said he would like to see included in the light rail transit construction and mitigation section additional verbiage related to noise and visual operational concerns. Mr. McDonald pointed out that the section in question relates to mitigation during construction. He said there is language in policy 75.12 that addresses protecting the neighborhoods by minimizing and mitigating environmental, traffic and noise impacts.

Commissioner Bishop called attention to item 3 in policy TR-75.8 and questioned use of the term "promoting superior urban design." He said the term cannot easily be defined and suggested that in fact what constitutes superior design is in the eye of the beholder. Mr. McDonald said the language is used in the current Transportation Element, though it is coupled with some language that provides context; the context language could be retained. Chair Simas said the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC recently were given a presentation by the Bellevue Downtown Association on the topic of superior design, and the presentation included pictures of what it looks like and the elements that are involved. He suggested that in addition to just policy language, there should be picture examples included in an attachment.

Commissioner Zahn suggested that policies TR-8 and TR-12 could be combined without losing anything.

Commissioner Zahn proposed that the intent of policy TR-75.24 could be made clear if the

language were to read "Ensure that the agreements with transit providers include elements to ensure the long-term safety and security, operation and maintenance of stations."

Stepping back to an earlier part of the discussion, Commissioner Larrivee agreed with the point made by staff that high-capacity transit should be distinguished from other forms of transit. He said bus rapid transit does not fall into the category of high-capacity transit. He said the first section of Attachment 3 should include the policies that specifically call out high-capacity transit that does travel in its own right-of-way. He said he would keep the policies pretty much as they are, with a slight edit to policy TR-75.5 to reference "...reliability for high-capacity transit..." rather than "...reliability for transit...."

Building on that comment, Commissioner Zahn suggested including some definitions of terms would be helpful. Mr. McDonald said there is a glossary section of the Comprehensive Plan where the terms could be defined.

Commissioner Bishop called attention to policy TR-29 in Attachment 1 and voiced concern with the notion of developing the transportation system in accord with Vision 2040 and Transportation 2040 as well as the Countywide Planning Policies of King County. He said as worded the policy makes it sound as though the city is taking direction from the county. He said he did not want the city to be taking direction from King County or from the PSRC.

Commissioner Larrivee noted that the same reference is made in the current policy and the only change proposed relates to plan names. Mr. McDonald said Vision 2040 and Transportation 2040 represent regional policy that has been endorsed and voted on by the PSRC board, which includes representation by all of the cities and King County. It is not like taking direction from the county or the PSRC given that the city has in fact endorsed the long-range planning documents.

Chair Simas suggested the policy could substitute the word "leverages" for "supports" and yield the notion that the city will use the pieces it likes from the adopted plans to fill out its own transportation vision. Clearly the Council has already voted to endorse the PSRC and King County plans, so that is the policy of the city. Mr. McDonald said he would check with the legal planners to see what language would be acceptable and meet the intent.

10. OLD BUSINESS - None

11. NEW BUSINESS - None

12. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Steve Kasner, 1015 145th Place SE, suggested that in moving forward with the CIP it would be helpful for some of the projects to carry a date started so it can be known how long some neighborhoods have been waiting for their projects to come online. There should also be some indication of bang for the buck for each project. Some less expensive projects may in

fact offer bigger benefits.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. February 13, 2014
- B. February 27, 2014
- C. March 13, 2014

A motion to approve all three sets of minutes was made by Commissioner Zahn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and it carried unanimously.

14. REVIEW COMMISSION CALENDAR AND AGENDA

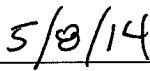
The Commission reviewed the calendar of upcoming events and agenda items.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Simas adjourned the meeting at 9:40 p.m.



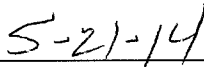
Secretary to the Transportation Commission



Date



Chairperson of the Transportation Commission



Date