

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

December 14, 2017
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioners Bishop, Chirls, Lampe, Marciante, Teh,
Woosley, Wu

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Kristi Oosterveen, Mike Ingram,
Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: Chris Breiland, Don Samdahl, Fehr & Peers

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Chair Bishop who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Woosley, who arrived at 6:34 p.m., and Commissioner Wu who arrived at 6:36 p.m.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT – None

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Lampe. Second was by Commissioner Chirls and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL,
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

6. DRAFT MINUTES REVIEW/APPROVAL

A. October 26, 2017

Commissioner Wu referred to the fourth paragraph on page 4 and said "...the fact that there are no collisions in some areas means those areas are safe..." should be revised to read "...fact that there are no collisions in some areas does not mean those areas are safe...."

Commissioner Wu called attention to the seventh paragraph on page 5 and said she should be credited for making the statement.

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Woosley. The

motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante and the motion carried unanimously.

7. STUDY SESSION

A. 2019-2030 Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) Update

Capital Facilities Planning and Programming Administrator Kristi Oosterveen presented the Commissioners with a clean copy of the TFP candidate project list. She noted that the first 12 projects on the list are already in the funded CIP and as such did not need to be evaluated or scored.

Commissioner Wu noted that there were several candidate projects that addressed 130th Avenue NE at different locations, and that the project descriptions generally involved conducting a needs assessment. She asked if it would be better to conduct a single needs assessment covering all the intersections along the corridor. Ms. Oosterveen explained that the descriptions in the attachment are those that are currently in the comprehensive transportation project list from the Comprehensive Plan. As the process moves forward, changes and amendments will be made to the descriptions.

Senior Transportation Planner Michael Ingram said staff viewed the list of candidate projects as complete but not necessarily final. As the process moves forward, additional projects may be added as they are identified. He said the list, once approved, would serve as the starting point for the scoring process. Typically, projects that make it onto the list are those that have been vetted through a long-range planning process.

Commissioner Wu pointed out that the intersection of 140th Avenue NE and Bel-Red Road there was an accident, after which the city added pedestrian crossings to the south of the intersection. The intersection itself remains substandard and should be added to the list. Ms. Oosterveen allowed that not every location where there has been an accident is on the list. She added that the city's accident reduction program seeks to address specific instances and locations, but those projects do not show up on the TFP list unless they become a larger capital project.

Chair Bishop observed that the NE 6th Street subsurface arterial project was not on the list. He noted that it was previously included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in order to eventually do some evaluation of the concept. If it is not on the TFP, it will not be a candidate for making it into the CIP. He proposed adding it to the list. Commissioners Wu and Woosley concurred. Ms. Oosterveen said she could pull the project description from the TIP and add it to the list.

Commissioner Wu observed that according to the project descriptions, some of the intersection projects will add additional turn lanes, thus increasing the size of the intersection and triggering implications for other modes.

Commissioner Wu also suggested making reference to bike "facilities" rather than bike "lanes" in the project descriptions, particularly where there has not been a thorough assessment of the appropriate type of bicycle facilities for a given location. The 108th Avenue NE bike pilot project is a perfect example of how things should be done. The project description for project TFP-230 is excellent.

Chair Bishop asked about the potential ped/bike reserve projects included on the candidate

project list. Ms. Oosterveen said the projects added were those currently in the TFP. Because they are going through a separate process, they do not need to be ranked.

Commissioner Chirls said one of the problems he has had with project descriptions is that each is unique. The descriptions do not identify the problem, the objective or what is being recommended. There should be a standard approach to the descriptions that will allow for more easily understanding the projects and making comparisons. Ms. Oosterveen said staff would take that suggestion under advisement. She pointed out that for some documents, there are space constraints associated with the project descriptions, which limits what they say.

Commissioner Woosley commented that members of the public have attended Transportation Commission meetings to call for pedestrian improvements along Kamber Road, and to address a sidewalk gap on 107th Avenue SE, and needed improvements to the 148th Avenue NE and NE 8th Street intersection. Ms. Oosterveen said the non-motorized projects on Kamber Road and in the Enatai neighborhood are being vetted through the Neighborhood Sidewalk Program. If the projects prove to be too large for that program, they will be moved into other implementation initiatives.

There was agreement on the part of the Commissioners to use the candidate project list as presented as the starting point.

Mr. Ingram commented that past TFP cycles have utilized five criteria, namely safety, level of service, transit, non-motorized and plan consistency/outside funding. Staff in the transportation department with expertise in the different disciplines were tapped to score the projects according to the criteria.

Commissioner Lampe noted that the level of service criterion is tied to the V/C ratio. He asked how the multimodal LOS criterion comes into play. Mr. Ingram said multimodal LOS takes into account the three criteria of level of service, transit and non-motorized in a unified structure. Principal Planner Kevin McDonald added that it helps to identify the gaps between the expected levels of service and the existing conditions, and it looks to evaluate the impact or effect of projects for one mode on different modes.

Commissioner Wu called attention to the second item on the safety matrix, severely congested intersections ranging from high to low, and commented that in looking at safety problem areas it is ideal to address the one with the most impacts. It is, however double counted in terms of both safety and level of service. Mr. Ingram said that question was put to the traffic engineering staff. Their strong contention was that there is a higher level of risk taking and ultimately of unsafe practices that occur in congested locations. People take chances as they get frustrated. They weighed in strongly about the safety benefit of making intersections work better in terms of traffic flow.

Chair Bishop said the city has a program that identifies high-accident locations and low-cost safety issues. Those projects are not included in the TFP. The bigger projects are mostly on the list due to a level of service or capacity issue; they may or may not involve a safety issue. He noted that very few points are given for the low end and questioned why there were any points at all given for the low end. Any location with a low level of vehicle collisions, a level of service of A or B, does not meet signal warrants, has a low pedestrian collision concern, has convenient alternative pedestrian crossings, provides alternatives to a route with low auto or ped/bike collisions, and where alternative roadway facilities are available having a low collision concern, does not need any safety points. Mr. Ingram said he would follow up with

the traffic engineering staff on that comment and relay their answers back to the Commission.

Commissioner Marciante commented that it did appear to her the criteria are subjective rather than quantifiable. She said it is not clear what high is versus moderate or low. Commissioner Woosley suggested that the first three needs, high vehicle collision occurrence, severely congested intersections and meets signal warrants are in fact quantifiable.

Ms. Oosterveen said the topic would be on the agenda for the January 11 Commission meeting at which time the discussion will go into more detail.

Commissioner Woosley agreed that additional discussion was needed. He said the Commissioners certainly are supportive of the notion of making transportation systems as safe as possible. It might be that the construct is a bit off. One way to solve the issue would be to make sure there are enough resources available to address as quickly as possible the specific safety projects that get identified. While safety should not be removed as a weighting mechanism, since there is another distinct way of addressing safety issues in projects, any double counting should be avoided. Mr. Ingram said there is a way to do that for smaller scale projects, but there is no ongoing CIP program that addresses safety in projects above a certain scale. The reality is that among the various implications of larger projects are potential safety benefits.

Chair Bishop called attention to the level of service matrix and suggested that any arterial project involving an improvement of between 0.0 and 0.1 for an intersection with an LOS greater than 0.90 should be given more than 20 points.

Commissioner Marciante commented that that approach could involve investing a significant amount of funds for very little improvement. Chair Bishop said any improvement to a V/C ratio approaching the theoretical maximum should be considered.

Commissioner Chirls said it would seem points should be given where a project will improve the V/C ratio at a heavily congested intersection. Chair Bishop said that is in fact what the matrix offers. Commissioner Marciante said she would like to see priority given to projects that will have significant impacts.

Commissioner Chirls said if the combination of benefit and severity of the problem are added together, there should be a logarithmically increasing effect. Mr. Ingram said the matrix does in fact do that. Where there is not a significant increase in the V/C ratio, the benefit may not adequately address the need, meaning either that it is the wrong project or it is not a good use of money. Points are given in recognition of the improvement, but whether or not it is a good value for the money is the question.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Woosley, Mr. Ingram said the process will yield a numerical ranking of projects that will serve as a starting point. Other factors will be taken into account as well in determining which projects should rise to the top. He said experience has shown that over the course of the process the end result is a fairly balanced set of projects.

Commissioner Lampe called attention to the transit matrix and asked why the future transit network involved three times the number of points. He suggested that improving transit, regardless of whether it is current or future, will provide equal benefit. Mr. Ingram explained that if location is on both the current and the future, it will get all of the points. There is a basis for understanding where transit will be operating in the future.

Commissioner Wu asked how the impact between different modes is captured. Mr. Ingram said those kinds of impacts are not negatively weighted. The focus is on whether or not such things as gaps in the ped/bike network are being filled in. Widening an intersection to improve the V/C ratio may also increase the pedestrian walking distance or result in a longer wait time for a crossing signal, but those competing impacts are not currently being measured. That is largely the reason behind moving to a multimodal LOS approach.

Chair Bishop added that the corridor concept takes into account the cumulative impacts of individual intersection improvements. Mr. Ingram agreed that that is part of the traffic modeling process.

Chair Bishop called attention to the transit matrix and asked if the daily bus trips column refers to numbers of buses or the number of daily riders. Mr. Ingram said it refers to the number of bus trips, not to the specific number of buses on a route.

With regard to the weights assigned to the various criteria, Mr. Ingram noted that they have been revised from time to time, including during the last TFP cycle where additional weight was given to level of service and the weight for safety was reduced.

Chair Bishop commented that the Downtown Transportation Plan update used the BKR model to come up with the 2010 and 2030 daily person trips, and the difference between them was 280,000 new person trips. He distributed a handout showing what the city's plan after three years of effort says what the modesplit will be for those new trips. He noted that 70 percent would be accounted for in the form of people in cars; the other 30 percent is divided up between walking, bicycles and transit, with the transit trips divided into the categories of rail, bus rapid transit and buses. Mr. McDonald suggested the numbers of daily person trips were not necessarily relevant to the topic at hand, adding that the numbers will be reviewed in moving forward with the evaluation of projects. The metrics for the TFP are not necessarily tied to daily person trips, which is something that needs to be kept in mind.

Chair Bishop said he had previously argued in favor of and still preferred increasing vehicle level of service weighting from 30 percent to 50 percent.

Commissioner Lampe agreed that the most common complaint heard from people relates to congestion, which would seem to argue in favor of giving more weight to level of service.

Commissioner Marciante commented that cities with mature transit systems need to give priority to transit in order to increase the capacity for most people. That is not the case in Bellevue currently, but in the future the city will have a totally different transit system, in which case prioritizing transit will make the system much more effective.

Commissioner Wu asked why the weighting for safety had previously been reduced. Mr. Ingram commented that since that decision was made, the city decided to implement Vision Zero and to give it priority. That policy framework was not adopted and in place when the action was last taken to establish the weighting percentages. The Commission will need to take that into consideration.

Commissioner Wu commented that regardless of the personal perspectives of the Commissioners, the body will ultimately have to act in accord with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Ingram pointed out that there are Comprehensive Plan policies that

speak to each of the criteria. The question is how to balance them against each other.

Mr. Ingram commented that the evaluation criteria and the associated scoring provides the starting point for the overall prioritization of projects, work the Commission will be focused on for the next four or five months. Where similar projects are evaluated, the criteria work fairly well. Where things become complicated is where different types of projects are evaluated. It is not possible to have a single list numerically scored that integrates all project types. Additional input, particularly from the public, is taken into account, as is input from the Council and the need to coordinate with projects being constructed by other agencies, such as Sound Transit.

Commissioner Chirls asked if any surveys are conducted as part of the TFP update process. Mr. Ingram said the candidate projects are posted on interactive maps and the public is invited to weigh in. An online survey is also posted. Commissioner Chirls asked if the criteria and their weighting is included in the survey. Mr. Ingram said they have not been directly referenced in the survey given that it would first be necessary to provide some framework and context. Commissioner Chirls suggested there are ways the survey could be worded, such as asking the survey respondents how they would prioritize the various criteria.

Commissioner Woosley agreed it would be worthwhile to ask the public how the criteria should be prioritized but cautioned against creating any expectation that significant changes will result. It would be an easy thing for a single group, such as a neighborhood association, to get the word out to their constituents about prioritizing the criteria in a way that would be favorable to them, and the overall results could thus be skewed.

Commissioner Teh said he favored an approach that would inform the public.

Commissioner Marciante allowed that everyone talks about congestion, but people who walk, ride bikes, take the bus or drive all feel it and do not like it for different reasons. Simply agreeing that there is congestion will not lead to the same priorities in solving the congestion issues. It would be worthwhile to ask the public how they feel about prioritizing one criteria over another in order to address congestion.

Commissioner Wu agreed the survey should not include the criteria percentages, but she also agreed that asking the public for their perspective on how the criteria should be prioritized would inform the Commission's discussion.

Ms. Oosterveen informed the Commissioners that compliance with Title VI falls under the purview of the transportation department. Accordingly, it will be necessary to avoid focusing too many projects in certain areas and to make sure there is a good distribution of projects that will benefit the various demographics, such as older adults, those living in poverty, and those who speak a language other than English in the home.

B. Multimodal Level of Service – Project Identification and Prioritization

Chris Breiland with Fehr & Peers said multimodal LOS is a good tool to use in identifying what projects should be built to address level of service gaps. Within that framework is an understanding of project context, or how different decisions might be made given different contexts, and an acknowledgment of the tradeoffs.

Mr. Breiland noted that at the end of the previous work on multimodal LOS the Commission was presented with a complicated map of Bellevue Way in the downtown. He said the current

focus is on expanding that work and use multimodal LOS to identify the level of service for each mode in light of the recommended standards and guidelines. By way of explaining the principles, he offered two corridors: Bellevue Way between NE 24th Street and 103rd Avenue NE, and 156th Avenue NE between NE 8th Street and NE 20th Street.

For the vehicle level of service, the two previously identified metrics were the V/C ratio at system intersections and corridor travel speed. Mr. Breiland noted that for the Bellevue Way corridor, there is only one system intersection at NE 24th Street where the V/C ratio is 0.72. The standard for MMA 1 in which the intersection is located is 0.85, thus the system intersection meets the standard, as does the overall MMA.

Commissioner Woosley commented that some have voiced concerns that the geographic areas within the MMAs unfairly dilute the overall average. For example, a major arterial that has terrible congestion that lies within the same MMA where there are little neighborhood intersections that have hardly any congestion will look better than it really is because of the averaging. That should be recognized in making sure the emphasis is on intersections or segments that handle the majority of the travel throughput. Mr. Breiland pointed out that MMA averaging only looks at system intersections and weights them by volume. The concern is valid, however, which is why the additional metric of corridor travel speed is needed.

Mr. Breiland said the 156th Avenue NE corridor has two system intersections. The evening peak two-hour V/C ratio for the NE 8th Street intersection is 0.81, and for the NE 20th Street the V/C ratio is 0.72. The standard for MMA 5 is 0.9, and the average across the intersections in the MMA is 0.62. From that perspective, there is no intersection level of service gap. The travel time for the Bellevue Way corridor falls into the 90 to 110 percent of typical urban travel time category, while the 156th Avenue NE corridor travel time rating is 110 to 155 percent of typical urban travel time. The MMA difference from the V/C ratio is reflected in the corridor travel times in that there is a lower expectation of travel time in the more congested Crossroads area where there are more modal options; the Bellevue Way section, which is a much more residential area, has a higher travel time expectation.

Mr. Breiland said the numbers were run for the two corridors. For the Bellevue Way corridor, the evening peak travel speed is about 30 miles per hour, which is almost the posted speed limit. There is much less traffic and the only traffic signals are at NE 24th Street and at the mid-block crosswalk. Given that the MMLOS guideline is 13 to 15 miles per hour, there is no corridor travel speed LOS gap. With regard to the 156th Avenue NE corridor, the evening peak travel speed is 14 miles per hour and there are multiple signalized intersections with congestion occurring in pockets. The guideline is eight to nine miles per hour, so again there is no vehicle travel speed LOS gap.

Mr. McDonald explained that the LOS for each MMA is adopted, and a travel time level of service in the metrics and standards that have been recommended was extracted from that.

Mr. Breiland said by way of context he looked back at the 150th Avenue SE analysis that was previously done to see how it would fare under the proposed approach. He said the eastbound ramp at SE 37th Street has a V/C ratio of 0.94, and the standard for the MMA is 0.9, though the average for the MMA is 0.7. The travel speed for the corridor is six miles per hour. There are multiple signalized intersections and heavily congested conditions in the corridor, for which the guideline is nine miles per hour. There is a clear level of service gap and a project should be considered for the corridor.

With regard to the pedestrian level of service standards and guidelines, Mr. Breiland noted that the Activity Centers standards apply to the 156th Avenue NE corridor, while the Neighborhood Shopping Center standards apply to the Bellevue Way corridor. The analysis showed that for the Bellevue Way corridor, the sidewalk and buffer width standards are met on the west side of the street but not on the east side of the street. In front of the shopping center there is a slightly wider standard given the commercial nature of the area, and the standard is not met. The two pedestrian crossings meet the signalized intersection guidelines. The arterial crossing frequency guideline is not met, however, given that there is no crossing within 600 feet of the shopping center.

Commissioner Wu highlighted the need to be very clear about the differences between standards and guidelines.

Mr. Breiland said for the 156th Avenue NE corridor, the sidewalk and landscape buffer width standards are not met given there is no buffer and the sidewalk is only five to eight feet wide. The signalized intersection treatment guidelines are met at NE 8th Street and NE 10th Street where enhanced intersection treatments are in place, but the remaining intersections do not have those enhancements and as such do not meet the guidelines. There is a crossing about every 600 feet within the activity center, so the arterial crossing frequency guideline is met.

With regard to the bicycle LOS guidelines, the Bellevue Way corridor has a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour and there are less than 25,000 vehicles daily, while the 156th Avenue NE corridor is posted at 30 miles per hour and sees between 15,000 and 25,000 vehicles per day. The level of service for bicycles is dependent on vehicle speed, volume and the type of bicycle facility. Both corridors have an LOS 3 crossing guideline. Bellevue Way is an exempt corridor for bicycle LOS and as such does not have a bicycle level of service guideline. The exemption is in recognition of the fact that Bellevue Way is a difficult street to bike on and the fact that there are parallel alternatives that are easily accessible. However, NE 24th Street has an east-west LTS 3 intersection with Bellevue Way for which the guideline is not currently met. For 156th Avenue NE, the corridor is designated as an LTS 3 facility, though its current state is LTS 4 given that there are no bicycle accommodations. Additionally, NE 20th Street is designated as an LTS 3 intersection and the absence of crossing facilities means the guideline is not met, and NE 8th Street to the west of 156th Avenue NE is an exempt facility and as such does not require a crossing treatment.

Mr. Breiland said transit LOS guidelines are predicated on stops and stations. The Bellevue Way corridor has a local transit stop, while the 156th Avenue NE corridor is part of the Rapid Ride network. Rapid Ride stops have different expectations from local transit stops. None of the stops on Bellevue Way have weather protection, and only one has seating. The guideline is for all stops, including local stops, to include weather protection and seating. None of the Bellevue Way stops have wayfinding or bike parking, but those treatments are identified as optional for local stops. The Rapid Ride stops on 156th Avenue NE all meet the identified guidelines relative to weather protection, seating paved bus door passenger zones, wayfinding and bicycle parking.

The guideline relative to transit LOS is described as 14 miles per hour or better for all Frequent Transit Network connections between activity centers, which includes the 156th Avenue NE corridor. The Bellevue Way corridor is not on the Frequent Transit Network and as such does not have any transit speed guidelines. The actual travel speed on 156th NE is about ten miles per hour, thus the speed guideline is not met.

Mr. Breiland said projects can be identified from analyses that shows where and how the level of service standards and guidelines are not met. In the Bellevue Way example, level of service for vehicles was met, so no project is needed. The level of service for pedestrians was not met, however, given that the sidewalk is not wide enough on the east side of the street, and given that a pedestrian crossing is missing in front of the shopping center. The bicycle analysis shows the need for a treatment of the intersection with NE 24th Street, and for transit, the bus stops need to be enhanced to include weather protection and seating.

Commissioner Woosley pointed out that because there are bicycle facilities running parallel to the Bellevue Way corridor, none are needed on the corridor itself. He cautioned against being overly focused on the major corridors where a sidewalk is too narrow to meet the new guidelines while ignoring a parallel street that may have no sidewalks at all. Mr. McDonald agreed and said the notion of Complete Streets includes looking at parallel streets and avoids trying to provide for all modes on every street. Everything must be looked at in context.

Mr. Breiland shared with the Commissioners a chart showing project context from a land use perspective. He noted that the parts of the city without large commercial areas or activity centers tend to be more vehicle focused in that they have fewer other modal options and the land uses are more distributed.

Mr. Breiland allowed that there are tradeoffs associated with level of service projects. For instance, adding a sidewalk can improve the environment for pedestrians, but it requires using land. Adding bus stop amenities will improve the environment for bus riders, and that can all be done in the right-of-way so there are no land use implications.

With regard to the 156th Avenue NE corridor, Mr. Breiland noted that because the vehicle level of service standards and guidelines are met, no projects are called for. However, the sidewalks need to be widened on both sides of the street, and the crosswalks are not up to par on the northern edge of the corridor. The corridor is designated LTS 3 for bicycles but there are currently no facilities for bicycles; at a minimum, a striped bike lane is needed along with enhancements through the intersections. For transit, the speed guidelines are not met so something would need to be done to improve transit speeds, such as a queue jump and ITS options. Widening the sidewalks would be good for pedestrians but would have land use implications. Intersections could be enhanced without much impact in terms of land use. Building bike lanes would be good for riders but may have land use implications. Re-channelizing the road would be good for bikes but may have negative implications for vehicle level of service and bus speeds.

Mr. Don Samdahl with Fehr & Peers pointed out that restriping the corridor to add bike lanes by taking away a lane for cars could mean the vehicle level of service standard would no longer be met. That would add another complication. Mr. Breiland said that was not analyzed but it is a likely implication. Modeling would be required to quantify the results.

Commissioner Woosley suggested it would be helpful to conduct the same type of analysis for 108th Avenue NE. The tool is excellent for transportation projects would should also be helpful for bodies dealing with land use issues.

Commissioner Teh asked if it would be too complicated to conduct the analysis for each of the candidate TFP projects. Mr. Breiland said at the current level it takes very little time to run an analysis of a corridor. Drilling down to a great depth would certainly be an option but it would take far more effort. Commissioner Teh said he would like to see the analysis run on the top

projects on the TFP list, possibly with a deeper dive for the top 10 projects.

Mr. McDonald said it would be possible to run the analysis on a few TFP project examples to see how it works. He noted, however, that for the current TFP round there is neither the time nor the resources to do the analysis for every project.

Chair Bishop said he could see having two levels of analysis, one for the TFP level and one for the project development level.

Commissioner Wu said she liked the way the analysis involves a Complete Streets approach, looks at all the tradeoffs, and is mindful of context.

C. Transportation Commission By-Laws

A motion to approve the by-laws was made by Commissioner Chirls. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wu.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Wu, Mr. McDonald explained that all email correspondence relating to the business of the Commission must be cc'd to the official Transportation Commission email address. Should there ever be a public request for information, it will be found in the official Transportation Commission folder.

Commissioner Teh said it appeared to him that in Article I there is an overlap with respect to Commissioners not speaking on behalf of the city unless authorized to do so by the City Council, or unless expressly authorized by the Commission. Mr. McDonald said there are two separate issues involved. The first involves a Commissioner speaking on behalf of the city, and the second involves a Commissioner speaking on behalf of the Commission. The former requires authorization from the Council, while the second requires authorization from the Commission.

Commissioner Woosley noted that recently the Transportation Committee of the Bellevue Downtown Association invited Commissioners to attend three of their four meetings on the proposed demonstration project and on the proposed bike share project. He asked if in such cases Commissioners would need to seek permission from the Commission. Mr. McDonald said Commissioners can be invited to attend and participate as individuals. Commissioners should avoid responding to questions regarding Commission process and the like. Commissioner Chirls added that Commissioners can identify themselves as Commissioners but should make it clear they are not attending as representatives of or speaking for the Commission.

Commissioner Woosley asked about the statement in Article I paragraph B about Commissioners not directing administrative operations. Mr. McDonald explained that Commissioners are free to seek information from the staff where it is within the context of a topic before the Commission for recommendation. The language against directing administrative operations is standard for all Boards and Commissions, and indeed even the Council cannot direct the administration of the staff except through the City Manager.

With regard to Article I paragraph C Commissioner Woosley said his reading of the language was that the Council ultimately sets the agenda for the Commission. Mr. McDonald said that is true only of regional issues. Commissioner Woosley asked how the Commission can act in response to something involving the Council's approved legislative agenda. Recently

Congressman Adam Smith was asked how local communities and citizens can assist in getting federal government funding for improvements on I-405 and his response was to get local governments to get involved, something the Council has not specifically authorized the Commission to do. Mr. McDonald said the language is clear that the Commission has no authority to participate in regional issues that are not specifically assigned to the Commission by the Council. However, Commissioners can speak to Councilmembers and regional leaders as individuals so long as they do not seek to formally represent the Commission or the city.

Commissioner Woosley called attention to Article II paragraph G and suggested it would be a good idea to have a clear definition of what constitutes a conflict of interest. Mr. McDonald said the training given to new Commissioners includes information about conflicts of interest. In practice, a conflict of interest is more of a bright line than the appearance of a conflict of interest or fairness. Where there is a direct relationship between decisions made and the financial interests of individual Commissioners, the line has been crossed. The Commission, of course, does not make decisions, rather it makes recommendations, making it more difficult to prove a conflict of interest. Commissioners should follow their consciences in deciding if the role they are playing as a Commissioner will benefit them personally, members of their family or their clients.

Commissioner Marciante pointed out that in many cases it is sufficient to simply disclose any relationships or interests to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Commissioner Woosley noted that Article III paragraph B.4 calls for the Chair to state each motion before it is discussed and before it is voted upon. He said often the staff restates motions before they are voted on and he asked if that is sufficient. Mr. McDonald said either the Chair or the staff can restate the motion before it is voted on. While the responsibility is on the Chair, the Chair can always delegate responsibility.

Commissioner Woosley asked if there is any requirement for the staff to disclose any possible conflicts of interest. Mr. McDonald said as staff liaison to the Commission he is present to support the work of the Commission, and there is no conflict in doing that.

Commissioner Woosley referred to Article V paragraph E and suggested that 24-hour notice for special meetings is very short. Regardless of the legal minimum, it would be good to give more time in noticing a meeting and in making materials available to accommodate full public participation. Mr. McDonald said 24 hours is a legal minimum. The city always strives to give more than 24 hours notice, however.

With regard to Article VII paragraph A, Commissioner Woosley noted that on occasion the Commission has elected to take testimony from experts present in the audience on the subject matter. As drafted, the paragraph appears to preclude that practice. Mr. McDonald said the matter of allowing people to speak from the audience is left to the discretion of the Chair and the Commission. Additionally, under the umbrella of public comment, the Chair has the option to extend the time for providing comment beyond the three-minute limit.

Commissioner Woosley asked if the bylaws allow for limiting comment during a public hearing to ensure an equal number of speakers for and against a topic. Mr. McDonald said there is no such provision. The Commission must hear all who wish to speak during a public hearing.

Commissioner Woosley noted that under Article VIII paragraph A, no motion can be

entertained or debated until seconded and announced by the Chair. Mr. McDonald said that is another place where the Chair can elect to delegate someone else to state the motion.

The motion to approve the by-laws carried unanimously.

A motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes was made by Commissioner Woosley. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and the motion carried unanimously.

8. OLD BUSINESS – None

9. NEW BUSINESS – None

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Michelle Wannamaker, 4045 149th Avenue SE, said the LOS standards are unacceptably low to the point of triggering anger and offense. The Commission has the opportunity to change them to a higher level. For example, the LOS standard for Eastgate is yellow, which is not acceptable. The Commission should take the opportunity to change the standards. When the Eastgate MMA was created, the Eastgate single family neighborhood was not part of the city. Once it became part of the city, it was not added to the Eastgate MMA. What happens in Eastgate affects the Eastgate neighborhoods. She said she was not surprised that the people of Eastgate were angry to learn about growth, but was surprised how many said only leave their homes between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. The Commission should keep that in mind, and should consider switching Eastgate back up to green.

Chair Bishop asked if the residential area should in fact be included in the Eastgate MMA. Ms. Wannamaker said she would like to see that change made. Along with the annexation, a system intersection was removed from the MMA, which should not have happened and it should be put back. She questioned where the Eastgate comprehensive traffic study fits in with the proposed changes.

Mr. David Allen, a resident of the Woodridge neighborhood on SE 21st Street, noted that he previously came to a Commission meeting to talk about the bike lane on 108th Avenue SE. He said he has several vehicles and drives often into the downtown; owns several bicycles and also rides into the downtown; and chooses on occasion to walk around the downtown. Bicyclists have found that the biggest danger is not being seen by drivers, and the best way to be seen is to ride in the middle of car lanes, which is the action called for by a movement called Take the Lane. If the intent is to keep bicyclists safe while making sure cars do not have to slow down to accommodate riders, the city should create lanes just for bicyclists. For decades bicyclists have chosen to avoid riding in Bellevue, particularly in the downtown, but attitudes are changing and people want to be able to ride to work. It will be much better to provide separate facilities for riders and cars. The Commission is faced with huge issues, but it does not pass the straight face test to put level of service at 30 percent and safety at 20 percent in making decisions about infrastructure.

11. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Woosley reported that he attended the recent Wilburton CAC meeting to request that they recommend keeping the site purchased with transportation money available for sale and to return the revenues back into the transportation fund. With the expansion of 120th Avenue NE, the city had to purchase an entire parcel, the former Barrier Motors site.

That land is no longer needed now that the project is complete. The site should be sold and the revenues should go back into the transportation fund. A recommendation was made at the meeting to have the CAC recommend turning the site over for the construction of affordable housing, but that approach would take transportation revenues and use them for a non-transportation function. The CAC elected to look at all possible uses for the site.

Commissioner Wu said the Wilburton CAC is helping the city plan the land uses, transportation and other needs in the study area. At the most recent meeting the CAC members were informed as to the city's affordable housing programs. One of those policies proposes looking at city owned properties for affordable housing opportunities and mentions specifically the property highlighted by Commissioner Woosley. The CAC chose to draft policy language that does not mention any specific site. The CAC is a few meetings away from completing its task.

Commissioner Lampe noted that he attended the recent Bellevue Downtown Association presentation on bike lanes.

Chair Bishop reported that he attended the Eastside Transportation Partnership meeting on December 8 where the agenda included the report on the Eastside Rail Corridor regional trail. He noted that the planning exercise under way is being done by the King County parks department and addresses the entire rail corridor from Woodinville to Renton. The work has been under way for three years. A master plan for the corridor has been adopted and they are moving ahead with implementation in phases, one of which includes having a consultant work on the design for the NE 8th Street overpass in conjunction with Sound Transit. He said prior to the meeting he did not know things had moved along that far in terms of planning the facility. Additionally, the Washington State Department of Transportation is working to design the extra lanes on I-405 between Bellevue and Renton and in that package there is \$5 million to put the bike trail across the freeway and reconnect where the Wilburton tunnel was removed, another critical piece of the Eastside Rail Corridor trail.

Commissioner Woosley pointed out that King County is moving forward on the entire length of the Eastside Rail Corridor. In Renton they are pulling up tracks and putting down interim surfaces like the ones in Kirkland. The section between I-90 and SR-520 is the most urbanized and will be even more urbanized as Wilburton develops. It is possible that about the same time light rail becomes operational that the trail facility will connect between I-90 and SR-520.

12. STAFF REPORTS

Mr. McDonald said the city put out an RFQ for the Eastgate transportation study. The scope of the project was defined by the Council and includes looking at the intersections in the Eastgate area parallel to I-90 between Factoria and Eastgate that may be good candidates for neighborhood congestion reduction projects. Hopefully a consultant will be on board by February. The exercise will be largely technical and will involve the level of service metrics and looking for gaps. The study will be funded with levy dollars. Grant opportunities and partnerships will be looked for once projects are identified.

Commissioner Woosley said it was his understanding that the mobility study would yield a SEPA update to the old transportation plan in support of the recently approved Land Use Code update. Mr. McDonald said that will not be a specific outcome of the study. The study will generate information that can be used by others for various purposes.

Mr. McDonald informed the Commission that the Council took action on December 11 with respect to the Comprehensive Plan amendments recommended by the Commission. On a unanimous vote, the Council adopted the Complete Streets policies and the downtown subarea plan policies.

13. COMMISSION CALENDAR

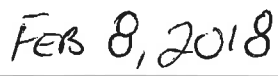
Mr. McDonald briefly reviewed with the Commissioners the calendar of upcoming agenda items.

14. ADJOURN

Chair Bishop adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.



Secretary to the Transportation Commission



Date

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

Date