

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Extended Study Session

March 11, 2013  
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Robertson and Councilmembers Chelminiak, Davidson, Stokes, and Wallace<sup>1</sup>

ABSENT: Mayor Lee and Councilmember Balducci

1. Executive Session

Deputy Mayor Robertson called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m., and declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 15 minutes to discuss one item of property acquisition.

The meeting resumed at 6:24 p.m., with Deputy Mayor Robertson presiding.

2. Oral Communications

- (a) Ryann Child, Cascade Bicycle Club, spoke regarding the Downtown Transportation Plan and Master Transit Plan. She said that many citizens would like to bicycle more but do not due to concerns about safety. She asked the Council to ensure that the City's plans embrace infrastructure for bicycle users of all ages. She submitted her comments in writing.
- (b) Sam Bellomio, StandUP-America, commented on the security guard present and wondered if there was some threat in the community. He expressed concern about red light cameras and the revenue that is generated going primarily to King County and the camera vendor. His review of the data indicates that the cameras have not affected accident rates. He said it violates citizens' civil liberties for camera vendors to gather personal information. Mr. Bellomio expressed opposition to the proposed tolling of I-90. He is concerned that the Council does not represent the people.
- (c) Alex Zimmerman, StandUP-America, encouraged the Council to represent people and not corporations. He commented on his past traffic tickets and expressed concern about the expense related to the involvement of a judge, police officer, and others who must appear in court. He spoke against tolling and red light cameras. Mr. Zimmerman said he

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<sup>1</sup> Councilmember Wallace was absent from approximately 6:50 p.m. to 8:08 p.m.

is running for a seat on the King County Council, and Mr. Bellomio is running for the Seattle City Council.

Deputy Mayor Robertson said it is against the law to use this public forum to make a campaign speech.

- (d) Bergen Delisi, spoke in favor of the City's work on the Master Transit Plan. He said that he and a majority of his friends are disabled and rely on transit to get to work, medical appointments, school, shopping, and social activities. He asked the Council to remember that not all residents drive and citizens need options. He submitted his comments in writing.
- (e) Russ Clark, a commercial property owner on 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, expressed concern about the freedom that will be given to Sound Transit while they build the East Link light rail system. He expressed concern that the project might put local businesses out of business.
- (f) Joe Rosmann, Building a Better Bellevue, noted that representatives have appeared before the Council many times to share their concerns about the East Link light rail project. The organization continues to have two primary issues of concern: 1) property rights related to permitting authority, and 2) standards for this long-term project. He said some property owners will have no choice but to legally challenge Sound Transit's authority, and BBB is asking the City to clarify that issue. Mr. Rosmann said it is important to get the standards right for this long-term project.

### 3. Study Session

#### (a) Council Business and New Initiatives

Councilmember Davidson referred to the Sound Transit East Link permit issue. He questioned the reason for not denying permit applications until property ownership is obtained. He acknowledged that there might not be a significant difference between that and the Council's decision. However, he said the Council has not had a formal legal opinion on this issue. He would like to ask the City Manager to obtain one.

Responding to Deputy Mayor Robertson, Mr. Sarkozy confirmed that a request for staff work greater than eight hours requires a Council vote. He will get back to the Council about how long it might take to fulfill Dr. Davidson's request.

Councilmember Chelminiak observed that Dr. Davidson's request is a follow-up to legal action between Enatai residents and the Federal Transit Administration. He requested a briefing on the ruling in that case.

Councilmember Stokes said this topic has been discussed and he thought the Council had moved on from that. He supports the Council's decision on how permits will be handled as reflected in

the Light Rail Overlay Land Use Code Amendment. He observed that the decision was based in part on legal opinions and discussions internally and with Sound Transit.

Councilmember Wallace said his recollection was that Sound Transit cannot commence work until it has acquired the right-of-way. If the issue is about applying for a permit versus proceeding with work under a permit, he observed that this is splitting hairs. He noted that Sound Transit has indicated it intends to acquire property before either receiving a permit or commencing work.

Dr. Davidson acknowledged that there is not a great difference. However, he expressed concern about taking on legal liability by saying “conditioned on” rather than not giving the permit at all. He said that is his question.

Councilmember Wallace suggested that the legal question would be more appropriate for an Executive Session. Deputy Mayor Robertson concurred.

Dr. Davidson reiterated his concern that issuing the permit could be taking on liability.

Deputy Mayor Robertson said the City complies with permit processes and timelines required under RCW 36.70b. She would not recommend that the City hold permits and violate that chapter. If the City Attorney can answer the question in less than eight hours, that would be great. If not, however, she would like staff to let the Council know.

- (b) Review of Construction Activities on West Lake Sammamish Parkway, 2013 Overlay, WSDOT I-405 Concrete Pavement Rehabilitation Project, and Coal Creek Parkway Culvert Replacement Project

City Manager Steve Sarkozy introduced discussion regarding current and near-term construction projects and the complexity of certain impacts.

Transportation Director Dave Berg said staff has worked hard in the design process to minimize construction impacts related to a number of projects.

Ron Kessack, Assistant Director of Transportation, reported that the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project will result in a southbound closure from March 19 to October 25. He explained that the work needs to be completed within one construction season due to the environmental sensitivity of the area. In addition to the roadway improvements, the project involves extensive stormwater runoff work to improve water quality before discharging into Lake Sammamish. Mr. Kessack noted that there are incentives for the contractor for early completion of the construction.

Mr. Kessack said public outreach regarding the detour route has involved the *Bellevue Reporter*, *It's Your City* newsletter, the City's web site, B-TV, Twitter, direct mailers, and on-site variable message signing.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Mr. Kessack said it is not possible to keep the parkway open to southbound local traffic. The project will involve replacing water alignments currently under the northbound lane.

Moving on, Mr. Kessack said the City will be completing an overlay in the Eastgate Way and I-90 interchange area. The overlay work will occur on weekends and at night to avoid further commute disruption while the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project is underway as well. Overlay work is also planned for the NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street and Northup Way area.

[Councilmember Wallace left at approximately 6:50 p.m. with the expectation that he would return later.]

Mr. Kessack noted additional projects including overlays on Factoria Boulevard during the night, pavement repairs along 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, 164<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE overlay, Lakemont Boulevard bridge deck resurfacing, and two northbound I-405 weekend closures by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

Regan Sidie described the Coal Creek Parkway Culvert Replacement and Bridge project led by the Utilities Department. The project between SE 60<sup>th</sup> Street and Forest Drive SE will provide a more natural stream bed which will allow fish passage. The project involves two Olympic pipelines (16-inch and 20-inch) and a 12-inch Puget Sound Energy (PSE) natural gas main. The bridge will be 39 feet wide and the trail will go under the bridge.

Mr. Sidie noted that this project also involves the Parks Department and the Transportation Department. Construction of Phase 1 will begin in May 2013 and continue until November. Phase 2 construction is slated for April to November 2014. During construction, there will be one lane operating in each direction. The City received a favorable bid of \$3.3 million; and the engineer's estimate was \$3.9 million.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Mr. Sidie described how the City's work will be coordinated with the Olympic pipelines and PSE gas line in terms of taking them off line and relocating and rebuilding them. He explained that the majority of work will be completed with the old culvert in place, and the new stream bed will then be put into place.

Responding to Councilmember Chelminiak, Mr. Sidie said the traffic volume on that stretch of road is 28,000 cars per day. Mr. Sidie commented on the importance of getting the word out so people can make alternate plans. The City will have at least six variable message signs on Coal Creek Parkway and nearby before the project begins. Councilmember Chelminiak concurred with the importance of public information outreach on the project and lane closures.

Councilmember Stokes expressed support for the project. Responding to Mr. Stokes, Mr. Sidie said the PSE gas line moves large volumes through the winter season. Even with the line closure, PSE will be able to provide sufficient natural gas during this lower usage period.

Deputy Mayor Robertson suggested distributing one-page fact sheets to the neighborhoods affected by major projects. Some of the neighborhood associations have their own web sites for posting.

Ms. Robertson said she wants to be sure that the 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue construction does not coincide with I-405 work. She is pleased to see the projects moving forward.

(c) Downtown Transportation Plan Update Status Report

City Manager Sarkozy opened discussion regarding the Downtown Transportation Plan Update. He recalled that the Update project was originally approved by the Council in mid-2012. He noted that the transportation plan is one of the foundational pieces for the Downtown Livability Initiative.

Transportation Director Berg said it has been approximately eight months since the last report to the Council on the Downtown Transportation Plan. Staff has been discussing the Plan with the Transportation Commission on a monthly basis, and work will continue through the year to link this work to the Downtown Livability Initiative work.

Kevin McDonald, Senior Planner, recalled that the project was initiated in 2011 with the idea of updating the 2004 Downtown Subarea Plan to the 2030 planning horizon. The update addresses employment and population growth, revised local and regional transportation system plans, new land use assumptions, progress on Downtown Subarea Plan projects, and trends in daily traffic volumes and trip generation rates.

Mr. McDonald noted previous Council direction to provide multimodal mobility within the Downtown, within the City as a whole, and within the region. He said the Transportation Department is working with the Department of Planning and Community Development (PCD) and the Development Services Department (DSD) on the Downtown Transportation Plan update.

Mr. McDonald noted that measures of effectiveness will help to prioritize and track projects within the areas of private vehicle occupant mobility, pedestrian mobility, bicycle mobility, transit rider mobility, and sustainability outcomes. He presented statistics on employment and population growth through the 2030 horizon.

Mr. McDonald described the Bellevue Kirkland Redmond (BKR) travel demand model and compared daily person trips and trips by specific travel modes in 2010 and 2030. He explained how walking trip projections are calculated and how these will increase the demand for adequate pedestrian facilities and amenities.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Mr. McDonald said the 2030 projections are based on actual data from 2010.

Continuing, Mr. McDonald described the 2030 Baseline No Build scenario, which is comprised of projects identified in the Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan for completion before 2030. These include key arterial extensions and freeway improvements on I-405.

The 2030 Build scenario includes projects that have been considered to some extent but are not fully developed in terms of design and funding. These relate to the I-405 interchange at SR 520 and 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and the NE 15<sup>th</sup> Street project in the Bel-Red corridor.

Mr. McDonald described level of service (LOS) estimates for the 2030 Build and No Build scenarios. LOS is the ability of traffic to move through an intersection and the level of delay. The 2030 No Build scenario (currently identified CIP projects) in the Downtown is not gridlock, but the 2030 Build scenario would improve Downtown traffic flow.

Mr. McDonald said that major roadway capacity projects beyond the 2030 Build scenario are not needed within Downtown Bellevue to accommodate 2030 projected growth. Other measures, such as adaptive signal technology, can continue to improve traffic flow as well.

Responding to Dr. Davidson, Mr. McDonald said light rail service is embedded in the travel demand modeling and LOS projections.

Mr. McDonald commented on Downtown bicycle and pedestrian mobility. A group of individuals, including Councilmember Chelminiak, rode bikes around the Downtown to gain a sense of how it was to get around and to interface with buses. Staff and the Transportation Commission have identified preliminary recommendations regarding wayfinding, on-street facilities (e.g., sharrows for bicycles), public off-street facilities, and private off-street facilities. The City would like to encourage private developers to include bike facilities with their buildings.

Mr. McDonald described issues related to pedestrian mobility and the study of crosswalks, sidewalks, mid-block crossings, and through-block connections. Staff took a walking field trip with Downtown residents to see how well these features work and to identify improvements. Mr. McDonald described and displayed examples of enhanced and exceptional sidewalk and crosswalk features (e.g., wider sidewalks, distinctive paving, curb bump-outs to shorten the walking distance at crosswalks).

Mr. McDonald said staff proposes that recommendations for sidewalk dimensional standards and urban design components (e.g., benches, sidewalk textures, weather protection) be referred to the Downtown Livability Initiative, because these fall within the jurisdiction of the Land Use Code.

Mr. McDonald described the ideal components of through-block connections, including standard public access wayfinding, commonly recognizable paving material, and universal accessibility.

Deputy Mayor Robertson commented on the importance of designing for public safety as well as the feeling for users that the walkways are safe areas. Mr. McDonald noted an example of a well-designed, open, and adequately lighted facility.

Mr. McDonald described increased transit ridership in the Downtown and projections for 2030. He noted that traffic volumes have not increased significantly; however, pedestrian activity and higher vehicle occupancy have increased.

He defined the concept of the frequent transit network in Downtown Bellevue which is 15-minute or better transit frequency over 18-20 hours daily. He noted that approximately 86.4 percent of Downtown residents and employees were within a reasonable walking distance of the frequent transit network in 2010. An estimated 97 percent will be living and/or working within a reasonable walking distance of this network, including light rail, in 2030.

Mr. McDonald described Priority 1 and Priority 2 transit corridors and intersection treatments, which are scheduled to be discussed by the Transportation Commission on March 14 and May 11. The objective is to identify ways for buses to be faster and more reliable as they move through Downtown Bellevue, which is anticipated to improve travel for autos and bicycles as well.

Mr. McDonald said the Plan update is studying ways to improve the efficiency of the Bellevue Transit Center, which handled 80 buses per hour during the evening peak period in 2010. In 2030, 125 buses are estimated per hour.

Responding to Councilmember Chelminiak, Mr. McDonald said the NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street extension project is not reflected as a priority transit corridor because the City's project does not include funding for the I-405 freeway ramps. However, Main Street provides access to the light rail station and the 271 bus crosses I-405 using the Main Street overpass.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Mr. McDonald said the data does not get to the level of detail of identifying trips specifically for shopping. Dr. Davidson suggested that package delivery within the Downtown of shoppers' purchases could change the dynamics of transit usage for shopping.

Mr. McDonald said that one issue yet to be considered relates to freight mobility and taxi/package delivery pick up and drop off locations at businesses and residences in the Downtown.

Deputy Mayor Robertson recalled the recent Environmental Stewardship Initiative presentation to the Council, which described efforts among Downtown employers to increase transit usage.

Mr. McDonald said the Transportation Commission will review staff's ideas on March 14 and May 11 regarding transit priority corridors and transit stop typologies (i.e., local transit stop, primary transit stop, frequent transit/RapidRide stop, and Downtown Multimodal Center). A Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA) briefing is scheduled for March 13, and a

SpringForward Transportation Expo is scheduled for April 24. The Transportation Commission will continue its work through the summer and the planning process will be integrated with the Downtown Livability Study process.

[Councilmember Wallace rejoined the meeting at 8:08 p.m.]

Councilmember Chelminiak questioned why the LOS gets worse at some locations and better at others under the Build scenario versus the No Build (currently planned projects) scenario.

Mr. McDonald said the model redistributes traffic based on certain expectations of what a driver is likely to do.

Mr. Berg said one example is the I-405 southbound braid and NE 10<sup>th</sup> Street off-ramp project, which is not in the current CIP Plan or No Build scenario but will significantly redistribute traffic.

Councilmember Chelminiak questioned whether scramble/all walk intersections improve traffic mobility.

Bernard Van de Kamp, Assistant Director of Transportation, said they can have relatively significant effects on the system and intersections. He said staff has been contemplating a scramble outside City Hall at 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street, especially with the implementation of light rail.

Responding to Deputy Mayor Robertson, Mr. McDonald said the Downtown Transportation Plan Update process is ultimately building a project list for future CIP projects. It will inform the update of the Downtown Livability Plan as well. In continued response, Mr. McDonald said the Transit Master Plan applies citywide and must mesh with the Downtown transit network. The Pedestrian/Bicycle plan is also citywide, and staff is working on refining the Downtown portion of that plan.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Mr. McDonald said the Transportation Commission is currently working through the issue of Downtown bus layover spaces and candidate locations. They have identified the need for approximately six to eight additional layover spaces in or around the Downtown to serve increases in transit ridership.

Councilmember Stokes thanked staff for the thorough presentation. He is pleased to see a coordinated and comprehensive effort to address Downtown issues - transportation, mobility, and overall livability. He said he commuted by bus for many years and he carried a number of packages as needed. He observed that others did as well and opined that riders become accustomed to doing so and still see the benefits of using transit.

Councilmember Chelminiak observed that residents in an urban environment tend to modify their habits when walking or busing, as opposed to driving a car, by matching their shopping to what they can reasonably carry. With regard to layover zones, he acknowledged that traffic can



get caught behind buses lined up in layover spaces. However, these local buses can be helpful by providing a short-distance connection to the Transit Center to catch another bus to a more distant destination. He suggested there might be a feasible strategy to identify some layover spaces that could be advantageous in this way.

Councilmember Wallace said he would like a table comparing the different travel modes in 2010, the 2030 No Build scenario, and the 2030 Build scenario. He expressed concern about the No Build scenario and commented that it highlights the need for the State's continued improvements to I-405. He observed that a delay of 104 seconds at NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is very much a concern.

Mr. Wallace said he would be interested in any data available on a scenario in which certain projects in the No Build scenario (current CIP projects) are not actually completed. Mr. Berg said staff has not completed modeling that considers that possible scenario.

Councilmember Wallace reiterated his concern about the need for I-405 improvements to be completed. Mr. Berg said the City works with the State to promote Bellevue's priorities. Mr. Wallace commented that the State takes in sales tax revenue of \$7 for every \$1 returned to the City.

Mr. Wallace referred to the spreadsheet on page 3-34 of the meeting packet and questioned the significance of the data from staff's perspective. He observed that, under the Build scenario, mobility improves on arterial corridors. However, 13 of 35 intersections experience reduced performance. Mr. Berg said staff will provide more details on that data during a future briefing.

Deputy Mayor Robertson thanked staff for their work and the presentation. She asked staff to thank the Transportation Commission as well.

At 8:30 p.m., Deputy Mayor Robertson declared a short break.

The meeting resumed at 8:41 p.m.

(d) Bellevue Transit Master Plan Status Report

Mr. Sarkozy opened staff's update on the Bellevue Transit Master Plan.

Bernard Van de Kamp, Assistant Director of Transportation, recalled a discussion last summer and Council's establishment of project principles to guide the update of the Transit Master Plan. He said a primary focus of tonight's agenda item would be market-driven strategies to be presented by a consultant, which will help to form the basis of the service element going forward.

Mr. Van de Kamp commented on the economic, environmental, community, individual and overall quality of life benefits related to transit. Transit ridership has grown significantly since the last update of the Transit Master Plan, most of which is in key activity centers (i.e.,

Downtown, Eastgate, Factoria, and Crossroads). Similar ridership is anticipated as part of the redevelopment of the Bel-Red corridor as well.

Franz Loewenherz, Senior Planner, noted the three primary elements of the Transit Master Plan (TMP) scope of work: Service, Capital, and Policy. A TMP final report will be presented to the Council by the end of 2013, which will be used to inform the region's transit providers of Bellevue's priorities.

Mr. Loewenherz recalled Council's principle directing staff to engage community stakeholders in setting the priorities for transit delivery. He described the extensive outreach process involved with updating the Transit Master Plan including businesses, nonprofits, transit riders, former riders, non-riders, and Bellevue Boards and Commissions. The recurring message from the public is that transit is supported by the community as an important element for overall quality of life.

Mr. Loewenherz noted Council guiding principles to: 1) Support planned growth and development in Bellevue with a bold transit vision that encourages long-term ridership growth; 2) Develop measures of effectiveness to evaluate transit investments and to track plan progress; and 3) Determine where and how transit investments can deliver the greatest degree of mobility and access possible for all populations. He presented key figures on current and projected transit usage including both bus and light rail service. Mr. Loewenherz said that tonight's presentation focuses on the third principle of how transit investments can deliver the greatest degree of mobility and access.

Mr. Loewenherz said the outcome of this work is to arrive at a definition of Bellevue's transit vision and priorities and a refinement of Council's principles, including route level recommendations. The instability of bus funding complicates this task. He described three bus service funding scenarios – reduced funding, stable funding, and growing resources. He noted that this data refers to buses only and does not include additional light rail transit service.

Responding to Councilmember Wallace, Mr. Loewenherz said there are a number of ways for defining the service hours on the street with regard to buses. A platform hour includes both revenue service, or the amount of time the bus is picking up paying customers, as well as the amount of time involved in getting the bus to that first trip and back to the base. A platform hour is the total time of service for a given bus and is a good indicator for determining the appropriate future investment level.

Mr. Wallace questioned the criteria of ridership. Mr. Loewenherz said the planning tool kit is intended to define the parameters within which staff can develop the service vision. There is a great deal of financial uncertainty, and the consultant will describe the market-driven strategies applied to a number of scenarios.

Mr. Loewenherz moved to discuss the next Council principle: Incorporate other transit-related efforts, both bus and light rail, underway in Bellevue and within the region. Light rail will be accessed by walking, biking, shuttle bus and a number of methods. The Bellevue-Kirkland-

Redmond travel demand model projects that 20 percent of all East Link usage will occur in conjunction with bus transfers. Mr. Loewenherz described a graph showing the influence of light rail service beginning in 2022, noting that Sound Transit's reduced funding scenario anticipates reducing bus service hours and reinvesting them in light rail service. The stable funding and growing resources scenarios envision that the resources replaced by East Link are available for redeployment to other regional bus service connecting to Bellevue.

Deputy Mayor Robertson observed that the graph indicates this might be a good area for policy making and lobbying.

Mr. Loewenherz concurred and noted that this relates to an additional Council principle to: Identify partnership opportunities to further extend transit service and infrastructure.

Mr. Loewenherz introduced Jarrett Walker, Principal Consultant of JWA, to provide a presentation on market-driven strategies to design a transit network. Mr. Loewenherz said that he and Mr. Walker facilitated a network design workshop involving Board and Commission members, regional elected officials, transit agencies, schools and businesses to gather input on how alternative courses of action might address the interests of the community. They also participated in a mapping exercise to identify where they would like service investments to be allocated.

Referring to Councilmember Wallace's earlier question, Mr. Walker clarified that the financial scenarios refer to measures of the quantity of the transit product. Platform hours track closely with actual operating costs.

Mr. Walker described the topics and priorities addressed by the workshop participants including peak service versus all-day service, avoiding transfers or facilitating/encouraging transfers, premium service versus abundant service, walking distance to transit, and the appropriate target percentage of the population that should be served. He commented on areas in Bellevue that are not conducive to transit service based on the type of development, layout of streets, and low-density land use development. Bellevue is currently not serving approximately 30 percent of the population at all. He said the City can help residents understand where transit is and is not focused and available, and people can make their own choices about where to live and/or work accordingly.

Mr. Walker explained that these questions are value judgments. A market-driven strategy will maximize ridership but it involves leaning one way or another on service choices:

- Diversity or specialization? (Services for the broadest spectrum of users and purposes versus specialized services for target users and purposes.)
- Civilized or luxurious? (The latter is generally left to the private sector.)
- Connections or complexity? (More connections require transfers but keep high-frequency service moving. Focusing on direct service becomes a complex network with infrequent service.)
- Peak-first or all-day service?

- Coverage or ridership?
- How far can people walk? (Generally 1/4 mile is considered walkable. However, people will walk farther for faster and/or more frequent service.)

Mr. Loewenherz said the Service Element work is due to be completed by the end of April. The study will include near-, mid-, and long-term route-level recommendations that are responsive to a range of potential financial scenarios (i.e., reduced funding, stable funding, and growing resources). Work on the Capital and Policy Elements will begin in May, and the Transit Master Plan update is scheduled for completion by the end of 2013.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Mr. Loewenherz explained that Route 925 in Newport Hills was cancelled last June. It was carrying one boarding per platform hour and costing Metro Transit \$135 per boarding. Route 240 through the same area links Renton and Downtown Bellevue and carries in excess of 20 boardings per platform hour, for a cost of \$5.50 per boarding. Route 240 provides service every 15 minutes during peak times and every 30 minutes during other times. Mr. Loewenherz noted that that route will be scaled back again this June, along with the 245, because Metro lost some State grant funds.

Responding to Councilmember Wallace, Mr. Loewenherz said the online survey engaged more than 4,200 participants including riders, non-riders and former riders. He noted that page 53 of the February 2013 Transit Master Plan report provides information on current riders. Approximately half of current transit riders use the service for shopping trips, and approximately 70 percent of all survey respondents use transit for going to and from work.

Mr. Wallace questioned where to take the bound report from here. Mr. Loewenherz said staff is at the point of determining which strategies should be recommended. Having worked with the community, staff is at the point of defining the priority core networks. One use of the information might be to better exert the City's priorities before the King County Council in requesting services.

Mr. Walker said the Council will be presented in the future with nine maps reflecting combinations of three different funding levels and three different time horizons.

Mr. Wallace questioned how certain information will be used, for example, the finding that one-third of respondents value peak service and two-thirds want all-day service.

Mr. Walker said that, as cities grow more dense in the way that Bellevue anticipates growth, all-day transit demand always increases faster than peak demand. This is because enhanced non-peak travel makes transit more attractive to more people. Mr. Walker observed that it is a matter of managing a transition that is more or less inevitable in the direction of midday demand rising faster than peak demand.

Councilmember Wallace questioned whether the polling responses might actually indicate that respondents perceive that peak service is currently better but that non-peak service needs

improvement. Mr. Walker said that is possible, but the question was phrased to get an idea of individuals' priorities and preferences for the future.

In further response, Mr. Walker said he is interpreting the response to that question to say that Bellevue's land use decisions and vision for growth will already have that consequence. However, there is the issue of whether the City goes faster or slower into investing in all-day service.

Councilmember Wallace said his view is that transit service must include both peak and all-day service.

Mr. Walker said the poll refers to peak-only service. As the all-day service grows, it overlaps and adds to peak periods as well. The question is then how much to add to the peak periods. One issue about peak service that is important to understand is that regional peak service for longer distances might only be needed in one direction during a peak period. However, there is a cost associated with the driver coming back to the point of origin. Therefore, those routes are only about half as efficient as they are perceived by passengers who are traveling on crowded buses.

Mr. Walker said that is one of the tradeoffs of running one-way peak service buses. However, he observed that Bellevue's land use planning, with an emphasis on increasing core density, is effectively making many of those one-way peak markets more two-way. He said that many citizens will have an expectation that transit is about peak service. However, the reality is that all-day demand will grow faster than peak demand as the community takes on density.

Deputy Mayor Robertson stated her understanding on the status of this process. Staff has gathered and analyzed data regarding current service and future service demand. Staff will come back to discuss the Capital and Policy Elements, which will ultimately result in updating the Council's interest statement or multiple interest statements that address transit services. This information can presumably be used in advocating for funding through King County Metro, Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and others. She envisions the information will also feed into the 10-year Comprehensive Plan Update as the Planning Commission updates the Transit Element of that plan. Mr. Loewenherz nodded in agreement with the recap.

Deputy Mayor Robertson thanked Mr. Loewenherz and Mr. Walker for the informative and helpful presentation.

Councilmember Chelminiak questioned how effectively this information can be used when the City does not operate its own transit service.

Mr. Walker said he worked on the Seattle Transit Plan approximately six years ago and Seattle also does not operate a transit system. However, the net effect has been much better coordination between the City of Seattle and transit agencies. The City's Transit Master Plan actually provided a mechanism for both agencies to discover all of the items for which there is agreement. Mr. Walker said he works with Sound Transit and Metro as well, and he knows that they understand these market-driven principles.

Mr. Loewenherz said that the work underway builds on a language that started to develop with Metro's Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines. The policy tradeoff decisions described tonight are consistent with Metro's approach. The agency has moved away from subarea equity to a broader concept of defining the best regional network and system. The intent is to articulate the Council's priorities so staff can accurately represent Bellevue in regional discussions.

Mr. Walker said he believes this work puts Bellevue in a good position for negotiating with transit agencies in anticipation of service reductions, rather than simply asking for items without understanding the financial realities and the community's strategic priorities.

Councilmember Stokes thanked staff for the presentation. He said that Councilmember Wallace raises a good question about what steps the City can take now to make the best use of this information. Mr. Stokes stated the issue as: How can the City maximize new information for effectively addressing an ongoing challenge?

Mr. Stokes said it would be helpful, as part of extensive presentations to the Council, to have recommendations from staff about what the next step might or should be. He observed that would help to focus the Council's discussion. He said the City's collaborative efforts with Sound Transit have been effective in working through light rail planning, and there is no reason the City cannot do the same with King County Metro. He suggested coordinating with other cities as well because transit is a regional system.

Councilmember Davidson recalled Mr. Walker's comment that Bellevue's land use plan will lead to higher densities. Dr. Davidson clarified, for the public, that this refers to higher density in selected areas and not throughout the community.

(e) Retail Auto Sales in the Office/Limited Business District (OLB)

[Item postponed.]

At 9:46 p.m., Deputy Mayor Robertson declared the meeting adjourned.

Myrna L. Basich, MMC  
City Clerk

/kaw