

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

February 6, 2012
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Lee, Deputy Mayor Robertson, and Councilmembers Balducci, Chelminiak, Davidson, and Stokes

ABSENT: Councilmember Wallace

1. Executive Session

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m., with Mayor Lee presiding. He noted that an Executive Session would be held between the Study Session and Regular Session.

2. Study Session

(a) Report on the Findings of the 2011-2012 Human Services Needs Update

Deputy City Manager Brad Miyake opened discussion regarding the 2011-2012 Human Services Needs Update. He welcomed John Bruels, Chair of the Human Services Commission; Emily Leslie, Human Services Manager; and Alex O'Reilly, Human Services Planning Coordinator to the meeting.

Ms. Leslie began the presentation and described some of the organizations that receive support from the City including the Eastside Pathways program and providers funded by the King County Veterans and Human Services Levy. Ms. Leslie reported that there has been an increase in collaborative efforts between faith-based organizations and nonprofits. These include the Jubilee Reach program, the Eastside Winter Shelter, and Congregations for the Homeless.

Ms. Leslie said the Human Services Needs Update is used to guide the development of recommendations for the allocation of the 2013-2014 Human Services Fund and Community Development Block Grant.

John Bruels, Human Services Commission Chair, reviewed the key issues identified by the Human Services Commission. Many Bellevue youth and children are being adversely affected by the poor economy, and many safety net services are at risk of funding reductions. He

described the need for prevention services for children including health care, child care and parenting support. More veterans, including women, are returning to the community, and some are dealing with mental health issues and physical disabilities. Increasing diversity within the community presents the need for appropriate services as well.

Mr. Bruels highlighted some of the programs that benefitted from the Council's 2011 Recession Impact Funding including child care scholarships, the Spanish-speaking Cultural Navigator at Crossroads Mini City Hall, eviction prevention, and utilities assistance.

Ms. O'Reilly said the sources of data for the Needs Update included surveys, focus groups, key informant interviews, and a review of additional reports and studies.

Ms. O'Reilly commented on the key needs related to unemployment, underemployment, and the loss of health care benefits including mental health and dental care. She noted that individuals citing health care as a primary need increased from 40 percent to 55 percent during the past two years. Unemployment in Bellevue increased from 3.3 percent in 2007 to 8.3 percent in 2011. Additional key indicators of need are the increased usage of food banks, the Bellevue School District's free and reduced price lunch program, and the increase in homeless individuals, including students. Students in the homeless program increased from 55 in 2007-2008 to 145 students for the 2011-2012 school year.

Ms. O'Reilly said that the number of older adults continues to increase, representing 13.9 percent of the population according to the 2010 Census. People of all ages with disabilities have increasing needs for services. Ethnic diversity continues to increase. Nearly 33 percent of residents are foreign born, which is a 25 percent increase since 2000, and nearly 37 percent of residents speak a language other than English at home.

Ms. Leslie reviewed the next steps in the process. The Human Services Commission will issue a call for proposals from the community in March, and the Commission will complete its review by July. Recommendations for 2013-2014 funding will be forwarded to the Council this fall.

Mayor Lee commented that the needs of the community are always greater than available services. He thanked the Human Services Commission for their diligence and hard work.

Councilmember Chelminiak noted that Commissioners Michael Yantis and Stefanie Beighle were present in the audience. Mr. Chelminiak said he believes that health care will continue to be a significant need. He noted an economic trend toward jobs that do not provide health care benefits. He expressed concern about increasing homelessness. He explained that if a Bellevue School District student becomes homeless, the District is obligated to work toward getting the student back into school, even if he or she has moved to a neighboring jurisdiction.

Mr. Chelminiak commended the Human Services Commission and staff for increasing partnerships with the faith-based community. He talked about home sales and affordable housing, noting that one-third of King County home sales have been either bank, foreclosure, or short sales. This increases to nearly 50 percent in Snohomish County.

Mr. Chelminiak thanked the Human Services Commission for its extensive review.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Ms. Leslie commented on the potential impacts of the loss of State funding for human services. She explained that a group of funders have been meeting during the past year. The group recently published a document called *The State of Human Services*, and is working with groups throughout the county to discuss the report and to identify measures to mitigate the impacts of reduced funding.

Dr. Davidson expressed concern about increasing needs and decreasing revenues. Mr. Bruels said that several members of the Human Services Commission worked with King County on the Veterans and Human Services Levy. Commission members are also monitoring actions at the State level related to human services.

Responding to Mr. Chelminiak, Ms. O'Reilly described the Eastside Timebank, which is a volunteerism exchange network with four participating Eastside cities. This effort is sponsored by the Eastside Human Services Forum, and is similar to other programs that are becoming popular across the country.

Councilmember Stokes noted the interconnectedness of housing, employment, and health care needs. He recognized Hopelink for its assistance to the community, and expressed support for the Eastside Pathways program. He commented on the importance of ensuring that human services providers remain viable, especially given decreased government funding.

Responding to Councilmember Balducci, Dr. Davidson noted that the State's low-income dental program is somewhat cumbersome, and he chooses to provide this type of care directly.

Councilmember Balducci said she appreciates the Human Services Commission's work in reviewing and evaluating all of the applications that are submitted for funding. While funding is limited, Ms. Balducci said she is impressed with how much agencies are doing with the funding that has been provided.

Ms. Balducci commented that public transportation is another important need to enable citizens to get to jobs, school, and other services. She commented on how the lack of mental health services contributes to more individuals ending up in jails which, she observed, is a waste of human potential and public resources.

Dr. Davidson commented on the dilemma of who should subsidize affordable housing - whether it should be the community at large or other entities.

Mayor Lee thanked staff for the report and observed that the most pressing needs tend to be shelter and food. However, human needs go beyond that to reach their fullest potential. He noted statistics related to diversity, and questioned the extent to which that correlates to human services needs.

Mr. Lee said he is pleased to see partnerships with faith-based organizations. He requested statistics on how they are helping the community and providing services. He suggested that there might be things that the faith-based community can do that the City cannot do. He said the Bellevue Network on Aging is looking into the use of volunteers to provide transportation where needed. He believes that the need for mental health services is more widespread than might be readily apparent. Mr. Lee would like to be able to more fully identify these needs, even if adequate funding is not currently available to provide additional services.

Mayor Lee welcomed the youths in the audience.

(b) Downtown Transportation Plan Update

Deputy City Manager Brad Miyake opened discussion regarding the Downtown Transportation Plan Update.

Bernard Van de Kamp, Assistant Transportation Director, explained that this process picks up from where the 2004 planning process left off. He recalled that draft Planning Principles were presented to the Council in October. The Council requested a review of the principles by the Transportation Commission, which was conducted on October 13. Mr. Van de Kamp said that the outcome of that review is provided in the meeting packet.

Kevin McDonald, Senior Transportation Planner, recalled that the Downtown Transportation Plan addresses mobility through 2030. The 2030 Downtown land use forecast estimates 70,300 employees and 19,000 residents, compared to the current 42,525 employees and 6,858 residents. Mr. McDonald said the Downtown Transportation Plan will be integrated into future overall planning within the subarea.

Mr. McDonald requested the Council's input on the draft Planning Principles and on the Transportation Commission's feedback on the principles. These will guide staff's work and help to establish expectations for the community. The objective of the principles is to identify high-impact multi-modal projects that can reasonably and realistically be funded, and that can be evaluated using measures of effectiveness.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the Draft Transportation Issues Scoping Report, which provides an overview of the Downtown Transportation Plan Update, measures of effectiveness, and the Community Involvement Summary.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the measures of effectiveness, which are intended to assist in developing and evaluating project ideas, screen out ineffective project ideas, and help to prioritize effective mobility projects. The goal is to develop a comprehensive transportation system that optimizes the benefits of multiple travel modes. The measures of effectiveness are based on person mobility rather than vehicle mobility.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the measures of effectiveness for each mobility mode, beginning with private vehicle occupant mobility. Measures include average intersection delay per vehicle occupant, average travel times, and others.

Deputy Mayor Robertson questioned how connections between the Downtown core and the vicinity will be measured. Mr. McDonald said those connections will be addressed by segment or corridor within each mobility area (i.e., Private Vehicle Occupant Mobility, Pedestrian Mobility, Bicyclist Mobility, and Transit Rider Mobility).

Responding to Ms. Balducci, Mr. McDonald said the Downtown Transportation Plan Update will analyze both peak and non-peak traffic conditions, which includes measuring average daily trips.

Mr. McDonald next commented on pedestrian mobility, which includes intersection crosswalk ratings, walkway quality ratings, average travel times for pedestrians per mile, and the number of internal Downtown walking trips. Bicycle mobility measures of effectiveness include bicycle facility/corridor ratings and percent of arterial streets served by preferred bicycle facilities.

With regard to transit rider mobility, Mr. McDonald acknowledged that while the City does not provide transit services, it does control the use of the right-of-way. Measures of effectiveness include the availability of transit stations/stops and travel times.

Mr. McDonald said there are measures of effectiveness for sustainability outcomes including the percent of non-SOV daily work trips, percent of non-SOV total daily trips, and vehicle hours of delay. He noted that the use of non-SOV modes continues to increase.

Councilmember Davidson noted that the Downtown Circulator is not mentioned in this presentation. Mr. McDonald said that staff has not identified project solutions at this point. He acknowledged that the Downtown Circulator has been discussed and studied in the past, and it will be considered within the context of this update as well. Dr. Davidson expressed concern about losing general lane capacity to bus transit operations, and he questioned how to justify this for citizens.

Mr. McDonald said the intent is that the measures of effectiveness will demonstrate how planning and implementation decisions will be based on which mode is most effective for enhancing person mobility in specific locations.

Mayor Lee suggested the consideration of pedestrian tunnels in the Downtown. Mr. McDonald said those are one of many possible solutions.

Mr. McDonald described the community involvement process. Stakeholder meetings were held in the fall, and an open house was held in November. Bicycle tours were held in September, which were co-sponsored by the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA) and Cascade Bicycle Club. Mr. McDonald reported that walking audits were conducted in December with the help of Feet First, a pedestrian advocacy organization, to evaluate weekday and weekend conditions.

Community outreach activities have utilized the City's web site, press releases, social media, blogs, and printed materials. Top Pot Doughnuts has supported some downtown events involved in this effort. Mr. McDonald noted that stakeholder organizations include the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA), Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, Eastside Transportation Association, BOMA (Building Owners and Managers Association), and the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative.

Mr. McDonald reported that, at each public meeting, participants have been asked to identify the highest priority needs related to downtown mobility and transportation. Comments regarding pedestrian mobility mention intersections and crosswalks, walkways, sidewalks, mid-block crossings, and through-block connections. He noted that some of these involve measures that can be implemented relatively easily (e.g., signage). Comments on bicycle mobility address on-street bicycle facilities, bike parking, wayfinding (signage), education, enforcement, and the proper maintenance of streets and bike facilities.

Mr. McDonald said the City did not conduct specific outreach to transit users. However, general comments were solicited and received. Citizens cited priorities related to transit speed and reliability, pedestrian and bike access to transit services, and Downtown access. Mr. McDonald said the latter relates to Dr. Davidson's earlier comment about the Downtown Circulator. Staff understands that all areas of the Downtown are not necessarily well served by transit services. One potential outcome of the update process might be to advocate for changes in bus routing to better serve Downtown residents. With regard to roadways, participants in public meetings have highlighted the importance of effective connections across the Downtown, maintaining traffic flow, and on-street parking and loading options.

Mr. McDonald said the Downtown Transportation Plan Update process will compile the comments on all mobility areas. He reviewed the Plan Update timeline, noting that the process began in mid-2011. Staff will work with the Transportation Commission on an ongoing basis to develop preliminary recommendations, which will be the subject of a major public meeting during the third quarter of the year.

Final recommendations are targeted for completion by the end of the year, to be followed by a major public meeting in early 2013. The Transportation Commission anticipates forwarding its recommendations to the City Council later in the first quarter of 2013. Mr. McDonald noted the objective of ensuring the ability to integrate the future direction of Downtown land use and livability into the transportation plan.

Deputy Mayor Robertson commented on the 2030 planning horizon, which differs from the planning horizon of 2040 used by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). Mr. McDonald said the City utilizes a shorter planning horizon with the objective of a more accurate and detailed planning process.

Ms. Robertson questioned how the Downtown Transportation Plan will integrate with a potential future Land Use Code update or Livability Plan update for the Downtown. Mr. McDonald

explained that the Downtown Transportation Plan process had conducted extensive community outreach to understand mobility needs. The project ideas that are being generated from that community outreach are consistent with a livability strategy that provides a higher quality of life.

Dan Stroh, Planning Division Director, said that staff has discussed conducting a Study Session on the Downtown Livability Strategy in the new future. The focus of that effort, as presented in the Budget One proposal which was not funded in recent years, was on issues related to the Downtown experience and character. It is not designed to affect the overall zoning outlook of the Downtown. It could affect building features, but not the amount of overall development that would occur.

Mr. Stroh said that Planning and Transportation staff worked on the Downtown forecast update at the onset of the Downtown Transportation Plan Update process. Staff does not anticipate that the forecast would change when the land use work is initiated. Rather, the livability component addresses items such as the incentive system, design guidelines, and other influences on character and quality of life. He acknowledged that, ideally, the planning efforts could be fully synchronized. However, finding the resources 18 months ago to do so was an issue.

Deputy Mayor Robertson stated her interest in a Study Session in the near future to discuss the coordination of planning efforts. With regard to the draft Project Principles [Page 2-11 of meeting packet], she supports the use of measures of effectiveness. She appreciates that Attachment B in the meeting packet shows that the plan update will look at connections to and from the Downtown as well.

Ms. Robertson questioned whether the City will be looking at the southbound Bellevue Way HOV lane potential project, which was mentioned in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sound Transit related to the East Link light rail project.

Mr. McDonald said the proposed southbound HOV lane on Bellevue Way will likely be addressed separately. Mr. Van de Kamp said staff anticipates working on the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) and Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan soon, and a review of the proposed Bellevue Way HOV lane will be included in that effort.

Ms. Robertson noted references to the Downtown and Bel-Red Subarea Plans in Project/Planning Principle #4, and suggested adding a reference to the Wilburton Plan update as well. Mr. McDonald said staff will make that revision.

Councilmember Stokes observed that the draft Project Principles anticipate the coordination of both transportation and land use planning. He suggested adding a reference to the I-90/Eastgate area planning effort under Principle #4, which refers to regional and local transportation and land use.

Councilmember Chelminiak encouraged a perspective that looks at providing complete streets with elements beyond the roadway (e.g., Bicycle facilities). He suggested adding taxis to Project Principle #8, noting that they are becoming more prevalent in Bellevue.

Mr. Chelminiak said he would like to discuss some of the measures of effectiveness in greater detail with staff. He observed that the issue is not about only effectiveness, but also the probability that someone will utilize a specific mode.

Mr. Chelminiak noted language referring to trips by various modes. He observed that all trips ultimately end with people being on foot, once they disembark from the primary mode of travel. He noted recent statistics that one of five downtown Bellevue workers arrives by transit, compared to one of two in downtown Seattle. He believes that this speaks to the need for improved transit services in Bellevue.

Councilmember Balducci recalled that, years ago, there was some opposition to grade-separated pedestrian facilities. However, she observed that the Downtown sky bridges have been effective in enhancing mobility and do not detract from street-level pedestrian activity as some feared.

Turning to the Pedestrian and Bike Plan, Ms. Balducci said it includes plans for at least one north-south and one east-west bike route through the Downtown. She would not favor the use of NE 6th Street for bicycle facilities because she believes this conflicts with its designation as a Pedestrian Corridor.

Ms. Balducci suggested setting goals or targets to correspond with the measures of effectiveness. She thanked staff for revising the draft planning principles to focus on people and places.

→ Councilmember Balducci moved to approve the Downtown Transportation Plan Update Draft Revised Project Principles [Attachment A on pages 2-11 and 2-12 of the meeting packet], revised as suggested during tonight's discussion. Dr. Davidson seconded the motion.

Dr. Davidson noted the need to address the disabled and the elderly when considering mobility modes.

Mayor Lee suggested considering the use of minivans for a Downtown Circulator system. He encouraged exploring innovative ideas throughout the Downtown Transportation Plan. He suggested that parking should be addressed as a possible mobility solution.

Dr. Davidson said that many disabled and elderly citizens utilize transit. However, he believes improvements are needed once travelers arrive at a destination.

Ms. Balducci reviewed the list of amendments to the Draft Revised Project Principles which are included in her motion:

- Ms. Robertson's suggestion to add a reference to the Wilburton Plan Update under Principle #4.
- Mr. Chelminiak's suggestion to add a reference to taxis under Principle #8.
- Mayor Lee's suggestion to add a reference to parking.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

At 7:50 p.m., Mayor Lee declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 10 minutes to discuss one item of potential litigation. He noted that the Regular Session would reconvene at 8:00 p.m.

Myrna L. Basich, MMC
City Clerk

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