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SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SR 520 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AND HOV PROGRAM

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POLICY ISSUE: The Bellevue City Council continues to play a key role in advancing planning and engineering efforts to ensure critical regional transportation projects are appropriately coordinated, funded, and built to serve Bellevue and the region. State Route (SR) 520 remains a high priority corridor of local, regional state wide significance. On March 30, 2010, Governor Gregoire signed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6392 which allowed work on the SR520 Eastside Transit and HOV project to advance toward construction. Although the Legislature has authorized tolling and other revenues toward implementing the SR520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program, and a west side preferred alternative has been identified, there remains a \$1.98 billion shortfall in funding for the program.

With passage of ESSB 6392, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is rapidly advancing engineering and permitting on the Eastside Transit and HOV project, which over the next several months will require a number of future Interlocal Agreements to be drafted and executed between the City of Bellevue and WSDOT in support of the project.

**DIRECTION
NEEDED FROM
COUNCIL:**

On May 24th WSDOT staff will provide a status report of the SR 520 Bridge and HOV Program, schedule, funding, pontoon construction status, and the Eastside Transit and HOV project design, environmental review/approvals, schedule for its implementation, project features and benefits, and identify future Interlocal Agreements that will be needed between the WSDOT and City of Bellevue over the next several months.

BACKGROUND

Between April and July 2007, the Eastside collaboration team (consisting of WSDOT and the cities along the corridor) convened numerous times, ultimately reaching

consensus on a collective set of conceptual improvements between the eastern shoreline of Lake Washington and 108th Avenue NE. The conceptual improvements retained transit stops, provided enhanced lids and a bridge crossing at Bellevue Way, preserve options for implementing future High Capacity Transit, modified interchanges to facilitate smooth traffic flow and HOV/Transit performance, implemented HOV direct access ramps to/from the west at 108th Avenue NE, and constructed substantial improvements in environmental habitat for protected fish species.

Through early 2009, WSDOT convened an Eastside Community Design Collaboration Committee to assist the department in developing draft urban design and architectural elements for the proposed lids, transit stops, walls, and pathways.

In August 2009, WSDOT conducted neighborhood meetings with interested Bellevue and Kirkland citizens to discuss the proposed improvements and receive community feedback. Area residents identified concerns with impact on access and circulation, pedestrian access to regional trails, noise impacts, and construction related impacts, and mitigation. Staff continues to support community outreach efforts and explore potential solutions to many of the concerns raised.

In September, 2009, WSDOT announced that tolling may begin as early as November 2010 or until as late as June 2011. Tolling, in addition to providing revenue, is expected to encourage changes in commuting hours or method or route, thereby improving performance and reducing congestion. WSDOT is presently implementing incentives for early completion in the implementation of tolling systems, which will only toll the bridge crossing. Bellevue staff continues to assess the degree to which Bellevue streets will be impacted by tolling on SR 520 during and after construction and are working with WSDOT to ensure proper mitigation. The WSDOT website has additional information about the SR 520 project, <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Tolling/520tolling.htm> .

Through the latter portion of 2009, staff continued reviewing various plans and documents, including providing comments on the Eastside Transit and HOV Project Environmental Assessment. Written comments submitted to the WSDOT were provided to Council in January 2010.

More recently, on April 12, 2010, the WSDOT released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), which officially begins the selection process for the best Design-Build firm or team for advancing final engineering and construction of the SR 520 Eastside Transit and HOV Project. City staff, continue working collaboratively with the WSDOT in addressing areas of interests to the city of Bellevue and its residents.

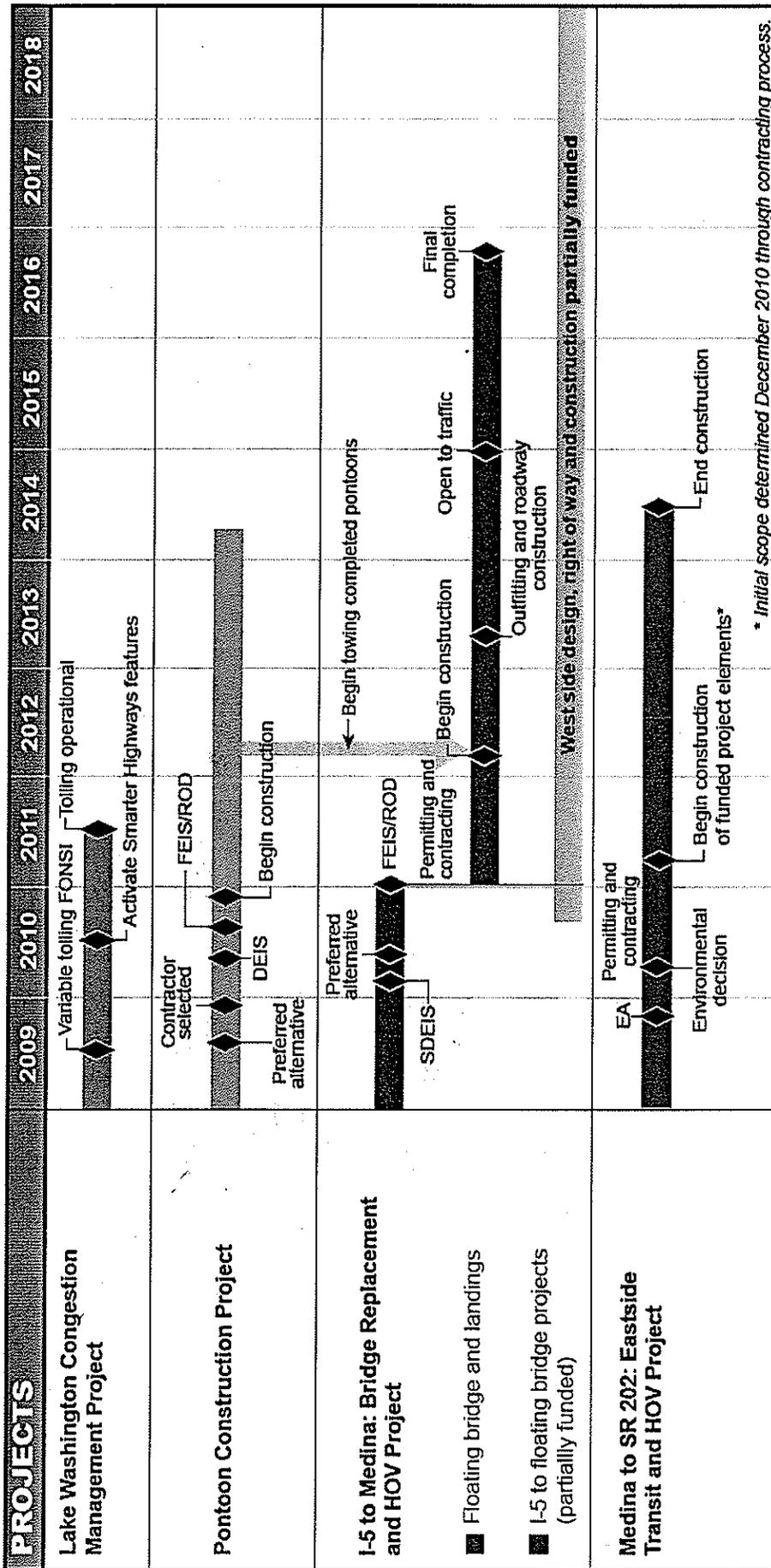
ALTERNATIVES: N/A

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

- (1) Eastside Transit and HOV Project Schedule

SR 520 program schedule



UPDATED: May 6, 2010