

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEF:  
PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL (PSRC)**

**TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD (TPB)**

The following is a summary from the June 14, 2012 Transportation Policy Board meeting:

- **The Transportation Policy Board recommended proceeding with the testing of the Transportation 2040 Prioritization Process.** Prioritization will be a primary part of the Transportation 2040 Update and will focus specifically on the list of projects in the Transportation 2040 plan. The testing will assess Transportation 2040 projects with the measures and evaluation approach, and report results back to the boards and the Prioritization Working Group this fall for further direction. The set of nine measures is intended to reflect the values and policies within VISION 2040. They are: support for centers, jobs, freight, travel, multimodal, safety and system security, fairness, air quality and Puget Sound air land and water.
- **The Transportation Policy Board recommended approval of updated Jobs Access Reverse Commute and New Freedom's Program Management Plans.** The Program Management Plans are documents that describe PSRC's policies and procedures for administering Job Access Reverse Commute and New Freedom funding in the Seattle-Tacoma-Everett Urbanized Area. These programs provide funding for transportation for individuals with disabilities, older adults, people with low incomes and other special needs populations.
- **The Transportation Policy Board continued its discussion on the Transportation 2040 Update focusing on congestion, mobility and the environment.** The Transportation 2040 Update will reflect changes that have occurred in the region during the last decade, particularly how fluctuations in the region's economy have affected the transportation system in terms of congestion and mobility. In addition, PSRC will be monitoring the implementation of Transportation 2040's Four-Part Greenhouse Gas Strategy, as well as other environmental aspects including air and water quality. The board received a presentation on these topics in preparation for the work ahead.
- **In other Business, the Transportation Policy Board:**
  - Recommended approval of a routine amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program including projects sponsored by Kitsap County, Lynnwood, PSRC, Sound Transit and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

**GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY BOARD (GMPB)**

At its June 14, 2012 meeting, the Growth Management Policy Board:

- **Heard a presentation on the Kent Regional Manufacturing-Industrial Center.** Charlene Anderson, Planning Manager, offered details on the center's history and development. Located in the Kent Valley, it is the second largest manufacturing and distribution center on the West Coast and is home to an estimated 15,000 jobs. The

Valley Freeway (SR-167) provides major north-south roadway access to and within the center.

- **Received an update on the Regional Open Space Strategy.** The University of Washington's Green Futures Lab is leading an effort to establish a collaborative strategy that will implement VISION 2040's call for a regional green space strategy. The work will include a full inventory of open space activities in the region, obstacles, needed actions, and outreach.
- **Received a status report on the Transportation 2040 Prioritization update.** Both the Transportation Policy Board and the Growth Management Policy Board recommended moving forward to test the prioritization process. On June 28, the Executive Board is scheduled to provide staff with direction to proceed. The prioritization method includes nine draft measures, reflecting policies in VISION 2040. Additionally, projects will be compared against other similar projects in four categories: bicycle and pedestrian, transit, arterial, and highway.

### **GROWING TRANSIT COMMUNITIES (GTC) PARTNERSHIP**

The following is a progress update for PSRC's Growing Transit Communities (GTC) program being funded through a \$5 million regional planning grant from the federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities:

- The East Corridor Task Force, which Bellevue staff is helping to lead, met on May 17. The group reviewed the work being done on regional Opportunity Mapping in conjunction with the Kirwan Institute at The Ohio State University. The mapping uses 20 indicators of existing populations and support infrastructure to help identify areas where individuals are in a position to be more likely to succeed or excel. The task force also participated in a discussion of community characteristics (e.g. activity, connectivity, affordability, equity, market, and land use mix) and how they might inform the work on station area typology. A subset of the task force selected a consultant team, being led by OTAK, to engage on specific East Corridor issues of station area connectivity/accessibility, business retention and attraction, public-private partnerships, and housing affordability.
- The GTC Oversight Committee, of which Councilmember Davidson is a member, met on May 18. The agenda included a discussion of the draft Existing Conditions Report being completed for station areas, and the schedule for the Commercial and Housing Market Analysis currently under development. Both of these reports will be reviewed in-depth at the next committee meeting on July 20. The committee was also updated on the ongoing work regarding transit station area typology, the Northgate planning efforts in Seattle, and approved 14 projects (totaling \$162,500) as part of the second round of Community Equity Grants.
- A sub-group of the Affordable Housing Steering Committee has been working on an analysis of existing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) provisions in Washington state, reviewing TIF programs in other states, and identifying ideas on how to modify existing, or develop new, legislation that might be desirable as station areas develop. A report with accompanying economic analysis is currently being completed.
- At an earlier Study Session, Council asked for additional information from City staff on the following:
  - *What is the definition of transit-oriented development (TOD)?*

- There is no universally accepted definition of TOD. A good general statement, from one transit agency, is as follows: “An environment around a transit stop or station that supports pedestrian and transit use, created by providing a mix of uses in a safe, clean, vibrant and active places.”<sup>1</sup> Some of the benefits of TOD are the ability to increase transit ridership and walkability, improve access to jobs and housing choices, reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with transportation and the built environment, and promote healthy and active lifestyles. Specific reference to a “TOD project” can refer to a single development, or to a TOD district as an area that collectively meets the characteristics above.
- *What was the rationale for how the GTC study areas were chosen, specifically two bus rapid transit stations at Crossroads?*
- PSRC’s work to date has involved compilation of background materials that will help form the foundation for future study; it is not intended to imply any conclusions about future land use actions or policy changes. The starting point for the data gathering was the planned light rail alignments for the North, South and East corridors. A half-mile radius was used for all East Link stations solely for data gathering purposes. In addition, bus rapid transit stations were included from King County Metro’s “A” and “B” lines as well as Community Transit’s Swift bus rapid transit line. For the East Corridor, there are two “B” line (Overlake to Downtown Bellevue) stations at Crossroads. The idea is that these forms of bus rapid transit may lend themselves to some form of TOD at some locations, albeit in a less intense form than in a light rail context. PSRC is gathering data as a means to better understand the characteristics of these areas and establish a baseline for potential future monitoring.
- *How has PSRC responded to feedback that some station areas such as the South Bellevue Park & Ride are not suitable for TOD/significant new development?*
- City staff has made clear to PSRC the unique characteristics and local policy direction for the South Bellevue and East Main station areas. At this point, PSRC is only in the data gathering process for 74 study areas across the region; all the data collection covers a uniform half-mile radius. The study areas and half-mile radii are not intended to imply any conclusions about suitability for land use change. The data will help inform an effort this summer and fall to develop a typology that will highlight both the similarities and differences of the areas; this typology is expected to reflect the different opportunities for change that vary among the 74 study areas.
- As the GTC program evolves with more specifics, City staff plan to keep the Council abreast of developments. We anticipate that work will have proceeded to a point by early fall that a full Study Session and progress report to Council will be productive at that time.

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<sup>1</sup> *Transit Oriented Development in the United States: Experiences, Challenges and Prospects, Transit Cooperative Research Program Report No. 102, 2004*