



# Bellevue Transit Master Plan

**DATE:** July 9, 2012

**TO:** Mayor Lee and City Councilmembers

**FROM:** David Berg, Director, 452-6468  
Bernard Van de Kamp, Assistant Director-Long Range Planning, 452-6459  
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*Transportation Department*

**SUBJECT:** Initiation of Bellevue Transit Master Plan –  
Continued discussion of project principles and scope of work

On July 2, 2012 staff kicked off the Bellevue Transit Master Plan (an update of the City's 2003 Transit Plan) with a briefing to Council on the early public outreach efforts that informed the draft project principles and scope of work.

Staff is returning to Council on July 9 to continue the discussion of guiding project principles and the scope of work. The July 2 Council packet materials have been reprinted and are attached to this memo as reference to support the July 9 Council discussion. Council offered the following feedback on July 2 about what the Transit Master Plan should accomplish:

1. Present a bold vision of what local transit improvements are needed to support Bellevue's growth targets and economic vitality before, during, and after East Link construction.
2. Identify transit investment strategies that encourage long-term ridership growth.
3. Address capacity constraints experienced at existing transit centers and park and ride facilities.
4. Provide enhanced transit service for trips within Bellevue and between Bellevue and regional destinations.
5. Maximize personal mobility through alternatives to traditional transit service delivery.
6. Provide transportation options for people who cannot drive or do not have access to a car.
7. Ensure the active involvement of all City Boards and Commissions.
8. Position the City to effectively influence regional transit agencies to keep Bellevue moving.

Based on comments received from Council, staff is making refinements to the proposed project principles found in attachment 2 of the July 2 agenda memo. The revised draft principles will be provided to Council for consideration in their Desk Packet for Monday night.

On July 9 staff will review the major components of the draft scope of work and will again discuss the guiding project principles. The principles are particularly important at this time because they articulate the Council's primary interests and objectives for this planning effort and represent Council's first, foundational set of principles relating to transit planning.

## CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

### **SUBJECT:**

Initiation of Bellevue Transit Master Plan.

### **STAFF CONTACT:**

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### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no Fiscal Impact. The Bellevue Transit Master Plan was funded by the City Council as part of the 2011-12 budget. The Transportation Department is managing this update of the 2003 Bellevue Transit Plan with in-house staff and a project budget of \$170,000; this budget is generally in line with the \$120,000 budget associated with the 2003 plan effort.

### **POLICY ISSUES:**

Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan acknowledges that responding to anticipated growth in travel necessitates a multi-modal transportation solution that offers the public real choices about how they travel within, to, and through Bellevue. In support of this vision, the Council adopted the Bellevue Transit Plan on June 2, 2003 (Resolution No. 6859). The 2003 Bellevue Transit Plan, along with 44 transit-supportive policies in the City's Comprehensive Plan, highlight Bellevue's long-time commitment to public transportation as an important component of a more functional local and regional transportation system.

While the City doesn't operate its own transit system, it can positively influence regional transit agencies to keep Bellevue moving and maximize transit performance based upon sound planning principles and response to ongoing, timely analysis. The Bellevue Transit Master Plan (TMP) builds on the successes of the City's previous transit plan (recipient of the 2003 Honor Award from the American Planning Association and Planning Association of Washington) by helping the City preserve and enhance the existing bus system and leverage partnerships with regional transit agencies.

The TMP aims to achieve a favorable return on investment on existing and anticipated public transportation projects by coordinating with local and regional transit efforts to identify the types of service and capital features required to meet Bellevue's needs today and through 2030. This project is timely in the current environment where King County Metro's financial outlook is uncertain, and service cuts and fare hikes are a real possibility. In the near-term, the TMP ensures that the City's transit interests are effectively represented before regional committees, transit authorities, and other agencies. As Bellevue grows and matures, TMP strategies will become increasingly important, especially during peak hour travel, to supporting the transportation system and level-of-service standards in Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan.

The City is transit-supportive policy framework is consistent with the 2012 Budget Survey finding that 83 percent of Bellevue residents agree that the City should "work with regional

agencies to improve local and regional public transportation serving Bellevue.” Three out of five (61%) residents strongly agree with this strategy. In the 2012 Budget Survey, and all previous City budget survey efforts, public support for transit consistently ranks the highest across an array of transportation strategies on how to handle traffic and congestion in Bellevue.

Public transportation ridership in Bellevue has grown steadily since the adoption of the 2003 Bellevue Transit Plan; average weekday transit ridership in Bellevue rose from 21,900 (in 2003) to 40,250 (in 2011), an 84 percent increase. Today 25 percent of Downtown Bellevue workers commute by bus (Bellevue 2011 Mode Share Survey) compared with 12 percent in 2002.

Increased usage of transit in Bellevue is correlated to numerous land use actions and transportation investments aimed at improving the operation and success of transit in Bellevue. By way of example, since the adoption of the 2003 Bellevue Transit Plan, over \$300 million in HOV access ramps, transit centers, park-and-ride lots, and transit signal priority projects were completed in Bellevue in support of transit operations. Looking to the future, these capital projects in support of transit will be augmented by the upcoming investment in the East Link light rail extension from Seattle to Bellevue.

**DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:**

- Action
- Discussion
- Information

Initiate the Bellevue Transit Master Plan and provide direction to staff on the project principles and major elements of the plan update.

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:**

The Bellevue Transit Master Plan project (an update of the 2003 Bellevue Transit Plan) will allow Bellevue to build on the successes that followed the implementation of the previous plan. While the 2003 Plan provided a useful framework for engaging with transit agencies, the plan is nearly ten years old and in need of an update. Following are some notable changes in Bellevue and the region that warrant consideration in this plan update:

- **Financial Uncertainties:** By approving a temporary \$20 vehicle license fee in August 2011 to supplement declining revenues, the King County Council prevented dramatic cuts to transit service in late 2011 and 2012 that would have been necessary to deal with operating fund shortfalls. This funding measure allowed Metro to avoid deep service cuts in 2012, but does not fully address longer-term financial challenges. Given this financial uncertainty, the TMP will develop service/capital plans that respond to various potential financial scenarios (cuts/status-quo/expansion) across different time horizons (near/mid/long-term).
- **Regional Policy Changes:** In July 2011, the King County Council eliminated the “40/40/20” formula for expending new operating dollars in three King County geographic subareas. The new policy no longer identifies specific formulas for adding, reducing and managing service, but rather emphasizes that service reduction and service expansion decisions be made based on the following priorities: (i) emphasize productivity due to its linkage to economic development, land use, financial sustainability, and environmental sustainability; (ii) ensure social equity; and, (iii) provide geographic value throughout the county. The TMP will review Bellevue’s “geographic value”, thereby aligning it with Metro’s focus on creating a

more efficient and productive transit system in accordance with its new Strategic Plan for Public Transportation (2011-2021) and associated service guidelines.

- **East Link:** The 2003 Bellevue Transit Plan did not take into account the 2008 voter-approved Sound Transit 2 (ST 2) Plan to extend light rail from Seattle, across Lake Washington on Interstate 90, through Bellevue and on to Overlake Transit Center in Redmond. Before construction begins in 2015, Sound Transit must finalize the route design, stations, construction methods and mitigation. East Link is projected to begin service in 2023. The TMP will review the sufficiency of planned bus accommodations at East Link stations and evaluate additional opportunities to enhance service delivery between the local and regional transit network.

### **Major Elements of the TMP**

At its July 2 Study Session, staff will review with Council the major elements of the TMP (see Attachment 1). The TMP comprises three major elements supported by extensive public outreach and data-driven technical research. Each of these plan elements inform and are informed by the overall process.

- **Service Element:** The service element will explore existing and future market conditions that influence transit performance in Bellevue. The outcome of this effort will be the identification of the City's transit service priorities – a refinement of the project principles adopted at the on-set of the project – including route level recommendations that are responsive to different financial scenarios (cuts/status-quo/expansion) and attune to different time horizons (near/mid/long-term).
- **Capital Element:** The capital element will identify strategies to improve access to and circulation of transit service in Bellevue. A secondary purpose is to identify facilities and amenities for passenger comfort and convenience. The capital element will be closely coordinated with Bellevue's station area planning studies and the Downtown Transportation Plan Update and will draw from other recent plans (Eastgate/I-90 Project, Bel-Red, FATS, Ped-Bike, etc.).
- **Policy Element:** The policy element will explore different strategies the City might undertake to support transit including the implementation of development guidelines that direct future land uses where more people can access and use transit. These strategies have the potential to increase Bellevue's "geographic value" thereby aligning with Metro's resource allocation decisions in its Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 and associated Service Guidelines.

### **Draft Project Principles**

To help guide the project, staff drafted a set of project principles intended to provide consistent direction over the course of the project. These draft principles are presented for Council's consideration in Attachment 2.

### **Public Involvement Approach**

Building on the outreach completed to date, Bellevue staff will embark on a planning process that includes regular briefings to the Transportation Commission and multiple engagement opportunities with community stakeholders and partner agencies.

- **City Council:** At the initial briefing to Council, staff will seek concurrence on the project principles – the underlying community values which become the foundation upon which project work is oriented. Consistent with the previous transit planning efforts, the Bellevue Council will be presented with the final Transit Master Plan report for adoption; which, upon acceptance, will inform updates to the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Code, and potential City-led transit initiatives.
- **Boards and Commissions:** There will be regular staff briefings to the Transportation Commission to ensure continuity through the plan development process. Staff will seek the Transportation Commission’s concurrence on key plan components (service, capital, and policy elements) and approval of the final report before it is forwarded to Council for adoption. Additional briefings will be scheduled to the Planning Commission and other City Boards and Commissions as needed.
- **Community Stakeholders:** A comprehensive public engagement strategy will result in meaningful input on transit from a range of stakeholders including residents, businesses, major institutions, agencies, policy makers, and others (e.g., the Network on Aging, Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, Chamber of Commerce, Bellevue Downtown Association). Special attention will be required to enlist the participation of “under-represented” communities such as immigrants and non-native English speakers.
- **Partner Agencies:** A high level of coordination will occur between partner agencies and the multiple City departments influenced by the Transit Master Plan. King County Metro Transit, Sound Transit, Puget Sound Regional Council, City of Redmond, City of Kirkland and others will be consulted throughout the plan’s development.

At its July 2 Study Session, staff will review with Council results from the preliminary outreach effort which included: an on-line community survey; stakeholder interviews with representatives from the Bellevue Downtown Association, Microsoft, and others; letters received from the Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, HopeLink, and multiple human service agencies; and targeted outreach to non-native English speakers (Spanish, Russian, Chinese).

The robust response rate to the on-line questionnaire (4,252 people responded to the survey over a six-week time period) is indicative of the significant interest in this topic among both riders and non-riders [2,241 (52.7%) currently use transit in Bellevue, 684 (16.1%) formerly used transit in Bellevue, and 1,327 (31.2%) have never used transit in Bellevue]. Feedback received from this initial round of outreach was instrumental in formulating both the proposed project principles and major elements of the scope of work.

**NEXT STEPS:**

At tonight’s meeting staff is seeking Council concurrence on the:

- Proposed project principles to guide the Bellevue Transit Master Plan.
- Proposed major elements of the Bellevue Transit Master Plan scope of work.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the Bellevue Transit Master Plan proposed project principles and major elements of the scope of work.
2. Revise the Bellevue Transit Master Plan proposed project principles and major elements of the scope of work.
3. Provide other direction to staff.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Alternative 1 - Approve the Bellevue Transit Master Plan proposed project principles and major elements of the scope of work.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment 1 – Proposed scope of work
- Attachment 2 – Proposed project principles

**AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL OFFICE FOR REVIEW:**

- 2003 Bellevue Transit Plan
- 2012 Bellevue Transit Master Plan (Phase 1 Outreach Report: Technical Appendix)

**BELLEVUE TRANSIT MASTER PLAN  
SCOPE OF WORK**

***What is the Bellevue Transit Master Plan?***

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The City Council envisions a fully integrated and user-friendly network of bus services for Bellevue and has developed the following set of project principles to direct development of the Transit Master Plan.

1. Support planned growth and development in Bellevue with a bold transit vision.
2. Engage community stakeholders in setting the priorities for transit delivery.
3. Determine where and how transit investments can deliver the greatest degree of mobility and access possible for all populations.
4. Incorporate other transit-related efforts (both bus and light rail) underway in Bellevue and within the region.
5. Identify partnership opportunities to further extend transit service and infrastructure.
6. Develop measures of effectiveness to evaluate transit investments and to track plan progress.

***Why is the City of Bellevue creating a Transit Master Plan?***

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While the City of Bellevue doesn't operate its own bus system, it needs to play a critical role in ensuring that high quality transit is available to keep Bellevue moving. Specifically, the City's authority is to:

- **Manage street rights-of-way on which transit operates.** By investing in state-of-the-art adaptive traffic signal systems with transit signal priority, Bellevue reduces transit vehicle delay, travel time, and the number of stops on city streets.
- **Develop and manage sidewalks and bicycle facilities.** By creating accessible communities that seamlessly integrate the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks Bellevue increases the market demand for public transportation.
- **Set land use policies.** By creating vibrant concentrations of retail, office, service, residential, and recreational activity, Bellevue ensures that the greatest possible number of residents and employees have access to high quality transit.
- **Use transit as a tool to support the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan.** By adopting transit supportive policies, Bellevue has clarified its commitment to public transportation as part of a balanced strategy to improve mobility and meet sustainability and economic development goals.
- **Advocate for Bellevue residents and businesses in regional forums.** By working with residents and businesses to identify the City's transit needs, Bellevue has been successful in identifying and attracting new transit investments.

**Who will be involved in developing the plan?**

Guided by a set of project principles, Bellevue staff will embark on a planning process that includes regular briefings to the Transportation Commission and multiple engagement opportunities with the community stakeholders and partner agencies.

- **City Council:** At the initial briefing to Council, staff will seek concurrence on the project principles – the underlying community values which become the foundation upon which project work is oriented. Consistent with the previous transit planning efforts, the Bellevue Council will be presented with the final Transit Master Plan report for adoption; which, upon acceptance, will inform updates to the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Code, and potential city-led transit initiatives.
- **Boards and Commissions:** There will be regular staff briefings to the Transportation Commission to ensure continuity through the plan development process. Staff will seek the Transportation Commission’s concurrence on key plan components (service, capital, and policy elements) and approval of the final report before it is forwarded to Council for adoption. Additional briefings will be scheduled to the Planning Commission and other City Boards and Commissions as needed.
- **Community Stakeholders:** A comprehensive public engagement strategy should result in meaningful input on transit services and facilities from a range of stakeholders including residents, businesses, major institutions, neighboring cities, agencies, and others (e.g., Network on Aging, Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, Chamber of Commerce, Bellevue Downtown Association). Special attention will be required to enlist the participation of “under-represented” communities such as immigrants, low-income and non-native English speakers.
- **Partner Agencies:** A high level of coordination will occur between partner agencies and the multiple City departments influenced by the Transit Master Plan. King County Metro Transit, Sound Transit, Puget Sound Regional Council, City of Redmond, City of Kirkland and others will be consulted throughout the plan development.

**Bellevue Transit Master Plan Timeline**



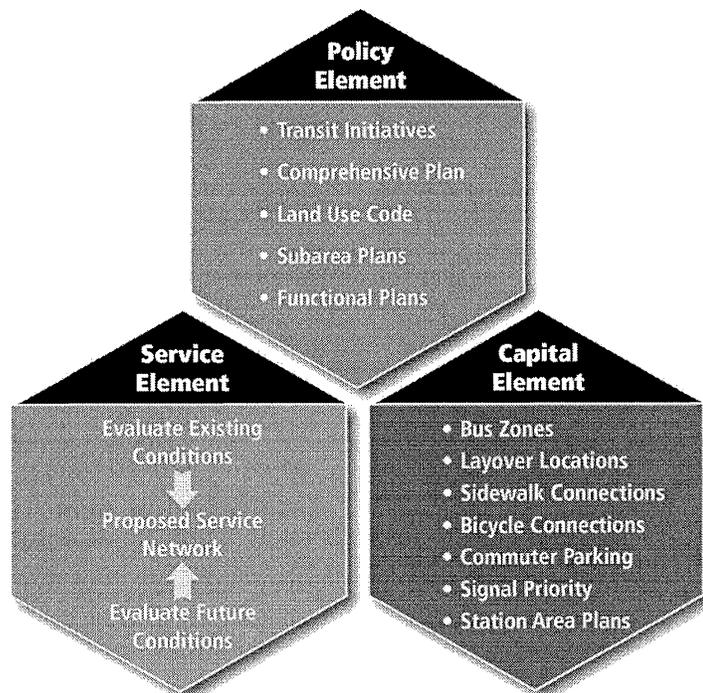
- ▼ Transportation Commission Meetings
- ★ Transportation Commission Transmittal to Council
- City Council Briefings

**What is the project approach?**

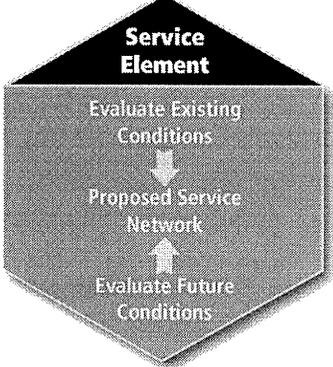
The Bellevue Transit Master Plan (TMP) project (an update of the 2003 Bellevue Transit Plan) will allow Bellevue to build on the successes that followed the adoption of the previous plan. Consistent with the 2003 Plan, the TMP comprises three major elements supported by extensive public outreach and data-driven technical research. Although presented sequentially in the scope of work, the service, capital, and policy elements are not envisioned as stand-alone work products. Each of these plan elements inform and are informed by the overall process.

1. **Service Element:** The service element will explore existing and future market conditions that influence transit performance in Bellevue. The outcome of this effort will be the identification of the city’s transit service priorities – a refinement of the project principles adopted at the on-set of the project – including route level recommendations that are responsive to different financial scenarios (cuts/status-quo/expansion) and attune to different time horizons (near/mid/long term).
2. **Capital Element:** The capital element will identify strategies to improve access to and circulation of transit service in Bellevue. A secondary purpose is to identify facilities and amenities for passenger comfort and convenience. The capital element will be closely coordinated with Bellevue’s station area planning studies and the Downtown Transportation Plan Update and will draw off of other recent plans (Eastgate/I-90 Project, Bel-Red, FATS, Ped-Bike, etc.).
3. **Policy Element:** The policy element will explore different strategies the City might undertake to support transit including the implementation of development guidelines that direct future land uses where more people can access and use transit. These strategies have the potential to increase transit ridership along these corridors, thereby aligning with Metro’s resource allocation decisions in its Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 and associated Service Guidelines.

**Bellevue Transit Master Plan Scope of Work Elements**



**What is the detailed scope of work?**



The first step in developing long-term transit recommendations is to fully understand the market that may exist. In particular, land use density and projected travel patterns will play a crucial role in assessing transit’s potential in Bellevue. The result of this analysis will be recommended transit service modifications aimed at relieving overcrowding, improving schedule dependability, extending coverage to major generators, providing more direct linkages between communities, eliminating service where no longer necessary, and reducing inconvenience to passengers by providing direct services where many transfers are now made.

**Task 1.1: Existing Transit Market**

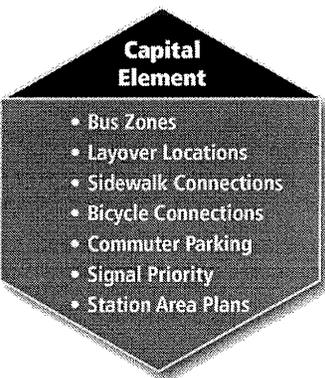
A City’s transit system is intimately woven into the existing demographic, economic, and social conditions. For instance, by understanding the major employment areas of the city, one can better determine the location and times of day when transit is required. This task involves extensive use of geographic information systems, route performance data, and market research to provide an: (i) understanding of key demographic data that influences transit performance; (ii) overview of current bus network structure and characteristics provided (in terms of miles and hours) as well as services consumed (ridership); (iii) assessment of transit service availability (in terms of service area coverage, frequency of service by day of week and time-period, proximity of bus routes to major activity centers, comparison of bus versus auto travel times); (iv) appraisal of route performance as measured by efficiency, effectiveness, and reliability; (v) estimate of social equity levels throughout the city that will benefit from improved transit services; and, (vi) appreciation of public opinion on transit service in Bellevue from: the 4,250 responses to the City’s on-line transit survey; transit agency customer comments; and, findings from other reports, including the 2011-2012 Bellevue Human Services Needs Update wherein 40% of respondents reported having difficulty “finding public transportation to get to work or other places.”

**Task 1.2: Future Transit Market**

This task will look to the future and identify ways to address the challenges and opportunities of changing demographics, land use characteristics, and travel patterns affecting transit performance. Demand estimates are critical to designing the future transit network and predicting the viability of the system. The City’s Bellevue-Kirkland-Redmond (BKR) travel demand model will be used to analyze the potential passenger demand for multiple routing and financial scenarios. Production/attraction travel data between Mobility Management Areas (MMAs) in Bellevue and between these MMAs and other Eastside and Regional destinations will be used to generate flow maps between these travel districts. This information will be used to compare the existing service structure to the pattern and volumes of future travel demand and to optimize transit service delivery by identifying where route modifications might result in more efficient operations.

### Task 1.3: Transit Service Vision

This task assesses opportunities for new service, modifications to existing services, and potential reductions of service so Metro and Sound Transit can better target scarce resources more effectively. The City's BKR model will estimate ridership variations associated with service options (taking into account trade-offs such as service directness which has an inverse relationship to service coverage). This exercise will articulate which of the following service attributes should be prioritized in support of the City's transit vision: (i) service frequency; (ii) span of service; (iii) service area coverage; and, (iv) transit travel time. It is critical that the preferred service network be creative, practical, and based on a realistic appraisal of available resources. The deliverable of this effort are prioritized route level recommendations matched to current/forecasted travel patterns, responsive to a range of financial scenarios (cuts/status-quo/aspirational), and attune to different time horizons (near/mid/long term). The long term transit vision arrived at in this task prepares the City for future regional transit investments, such as the detailed Sound Transit Phase 3 planning study that will commence in 2015.

 <p><b>Capital Element</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bus Zones</li><li>• Layover Locations</li><li>• Sidewalk Connections</li><li>• Bicycle Connections</li><li>• Commuter Parking</li><li>• Signal Priority</li><li>• Station Area Plans</li></ul>	<p>The purpose of the Capital Element is to: (i) stimulate discussion on congestion problems in Bellevue that compromise transit's efficiency; (ii) evaluate the trade-offs associated with different street design decisions on mode choice, traffic delay, etc; and, (iii) assess roadway, signal system, and other rights-of-way improvements that could be made to support the transit vision outlined in the Service Element. The recommendations documented in the Capital Element will arise from conversations held with Metro, Sound Transit, and traffic operations and design staff at the City of Bellevue, site analyses, and a review of other City of Bellevue transportation studies.</p>
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### Task 2.1: Bus Stops

The City of Bellevue will use Metro's Automatic Passenger Count (APC) data to identify bus zones with the highest utilization. This GIS-based analysis will be used to identify transit stops where facility improvements might be warranted due to utilization and the objective of improving the "wait quality" for passengers. This task will also identify measures for where investments might be made in the following streetscape amenities at existing stops: bench, shelter or awning, improved lighting, and transit center. Metro's customer comment records for transit facility improvement recommendations will help inform what types of passenger amenities are beneficial in the development of existing and future stop locations throughout the City of Bellevue in support of the Service Element.

### Task 2.2: Layover Facilities

In a number of instances, the service recommendations arrived at in the Service Element will necessitate consideration of additional layover facility improvements in the City of Bellevue. Not having adequately sized or appropriately sited layover facilities in the vicinity of the end-points of bus routes can have significant operational costs on a transit network. In this task, the City will work with its transit agency partners to identify where existing and potential layover facilities might be located to minimize impact to street capacity and improve transit efficiency.

### **Task 2.3: Transit Priority Treatments**

For transit to be an attractive mobility option it must be fast and reliable. Transit priority treatments along the route enhance the speed and reliability of buses because it reduces the chance that buses will be delayed at signalized intersections and chokepoint locations. One of the key capabilities of Bellevue’s adaptive signal system is the ability to provide priority or “preference” to transit at signalized intersections. This task will define warrants necessary for transit signal priority implementation in the City; beyond those in place along the RapidRide B corridor and at the South Bellevue Park and Ride. The goal of this process is to craft a policy that will guide transit priority investments in Bellevue to those locations where installation has the greatest potential to increase transit speeds while minimizing impacts on other users of the street.

### **Task 2.4: East King County Park & Ride Demand Analysis**

The City’s Bellevue-Kirkland-Redmond (BKR) model will be used to estimate 2030 corridor-level Park & Ride demand for I-405, I-90, and SR-520. An increased share of park-and-riders is expected by 2030 due to increasing traffic congestion (as a result of regional growth), implementation of East Link that will make taking transit more desirable, and increased demand associated with tolls on SR-520 (and possible I-90/I-405 tolls/HOT lanes). The BKR model will evaluate a financially unconstrained scenario to account for commuter parking demand that exceeds “planned” projects within funded capital improvement plans. This task builds on work done in the [2001 Puget Sound Park & Ride System Update](#) and will help identify potential current and future Park & Ride lot investment needs within East King County that can be prioritized through the regional and state priority programming processes and through transit agency budget processes.

### **Task 2.5: Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections**

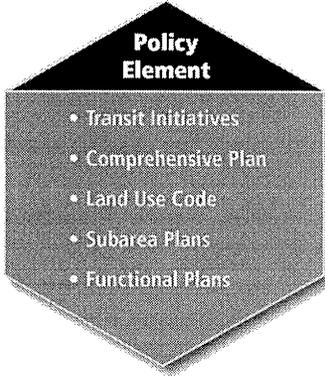
Service improvements alone are unlikely to yield ridership gains in Bellevue without efforts to improve non-motorized (pedestrian and bicycle) access from neighborhoods to transit service. This task will build on information from the City’s [2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan](#) to identify areas where improved walkway or bicycle access may eliminate barriers for increased transit use.

### **Task 2.6: Roadway Design**

The inherent congestion on many streets, particularly during peak periods, often results in substantial delays to transit operation that increases travel time and degrades on-time performance. In certain situations this can lead to the requirement for added transit vehicles (and thus added capital and operating cost) to provide the same service frequency. This task will assess current (and future) travel conditions along Bellevue’s transit priority corridors and propose roadway design improvements that would maximize the people-carrying ability of Bellevue streets. This assessment will be informed by bus routes and bus volumes; arterial traffic volume; intersection geometry, turn movement counts/capacity, and safety considerations; pedestrian and bicycle impacts; and overall scale of improvements in terms of roadway width and right-of-way. Trade-offs in the allocation of scarce roadway right-of-way will be balanced to strive for win-win results for both transit users and private vehicle users.

## Task 2.7: East Link Light Rail/Bus Integration

This task will review the sufficiency of planned bus accommodations at East Link stations; specifically, the number of bus bays, layover bays, kiss-and-ride space, para-transit van accommodation, etc. at each of these stations. This task will also evaluate additional opportunities to enhance service delivery between the local and regional transit network through speed and reliability improvements for buses accessing East Link light rail (LRT) stations.



**Policy Element**

- Transit Initiatives
- Comprehensive Plan
- Land Use Code
- Subarea Plans
- Functional Plans

The Policy Element builds on the City of Bellevue’s long-standing policy commitment to transit solutions as an increasingly important part of the local and regional transportation system. As part of any comprehensive planning process, it is vital to (i) revisit existing guiding policies to assess the applicability of those policies; (ii) reference them in development of implementation strategies; and, (iii) if necessary, propose modifications to those policies to better reflect present conditions. The Policy Element addresses the interests and changed needs of the City as it connects to the regional light rail transit system, responds to regional transit policy changes and financial uncertainties, and coordinates with related planning efforts underway in Bellevue and the region.

## Task 3.1: Comprehensive Plan

This task will review the transit-related policies in the City’s *Comprehensive Plan* to assess their continued applicability, outline current staff initiatives in support of these directions, propose modifications, and provide recommendations for additional staff-driven initiatives if appropriate. This analysis will take into account Metro’s Service Guidelines, adopted in July of 2011 in conjunction with the County’s Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021. Metro uses these standards to support regional growth plans, respond to existing ridership demand, provide productive and efficient service, ensure social equity, and provide geographic value through a network of connections between major urban and activity centers. The result of this task is a list of considerations for the pending Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Amendment process to ensure its continued relevance in directing City transit development; an example of which would be an update to the Bellevue Transit Priority Corridor Network (Figure TR.7) that identifies where transit connections are needed to connect Bellevue’s neighborhoods and commercial districts.

## Task 3.2: Land Use Code

Urban structure (the spatial layout of a metropolitan area), density (in terms of residential and employment), and design (which are the characteristics of the urban structure on a small scale), each affect the performance of transit in a community. This task will analyze the City of Bellevue’s Land Use Code to assess its commitment to transit and to identify refinements consistent with other transit-related planning efforts underway in the region. A notable effort to better link transit and land use planning decision-making is the Puget Sound Regional Council’s Transit Service Overlay Zone Approach that will be used in part to update King County Metro’s Service Guidelines, particularly how Metro will respond to future development.

### Task 3.3: Transit Initiatives

The development of transit-supportive communities requires investment. While transit infrastructure itself is often funded through large capital funding programs, other less traditional funding mechanisms can be utilized to pay for improvements vital to the creation of transit-supportive communities. The City of Bellevue's speed and reliability partnership with both Redmond and King County Metro in implementing the RapidRide B line is an example of this type of public sector leadership. Jurisdictions elsewhere in the region (e.g., Seattle and Redmond) are also using direct financial partnerships to secure additional transit service in their communities. The purpose of this task is to undertake an analysis of partnership opportunities that the City might want to consider with other government organizations (e.g., Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, Metro, Sound Transit), human service agencies, and private corporations, to improve transit service delivery in Bellevue.

**Project Principles**  
**Bellevue Transit Master Plan**  
**(July 2, 2012)**

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The City Council envisions a fully integrated and user-friendly network of bus services for Bellevue and has developed the following set of project principles to direct development of the Transit Master Plan.

1. **Support planned growth and development in Bellevue with a bold transit vision.** The dynamic nature of Bellevue’s economic expansion requires a bold transit vision supported by practical, achievable strategies in the near term that set a solid foundation for longer term improvements through 2030. The Transit Master Plan should identify, evaluate, and prioritize transit investments that are responsive to a range of financial scenarios (cuts/status-quo/aspirational) and attune to different time horizons (near/mid/long term).
2. **Engage community stakeholders in setting the priorities for transit delivery.** A comprehensive public engagement strategy should result in meaningful input on transit services and facilities from a range of stakeholders including residents, businesses, major institutions, neighboring cities, transportation agencies, and others (e.g., Network on Aging, Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, Chamber of Commerce, Bellevue Downtown Association). Special attention will be required to enlist the participation of “under-represented” communities such as immigrants, low-income and non-native English speakers.
3. **Determine where and how transit investments can deliver the greatest degree of mobility and access possible for all populations.** The Transit Master Plan should look to the future and identify ways to address the challenges and opportunities of changing demographics, land use characteristics, and travel patterns. Following consultations with the community, demand forecasting, and a review of industry best practices and emerging technologies, this initiative will identify the steps required to create a public transportation system that is easy to use by all people in Bellevue.
4. **Incorporate other transit-related efforts (both bus and light rail) underway in Bellevue and within the region.** The Transit Master Plan should incorporate local and regional transportation projects and plans that have been approved and/or implemented since the Bellevue Transit Plan was adopted in 2003. Transportation system changes include East Link, SR 520 expansion and tolling, and improvements to I-90 and I-405. Planning changes include the updated Bel-Red Subarea Plan, the Wilburton Subarea Plan and the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project. Through coordination with local and regional transportation plans, the Transit Master Plan should outline a strategy to leverage the investment in public transportation projects to the benefit of Bellevue residents and businesses.
5. **Identify partnership opportunities to further extend transit service and infrastructure.** While transit infrastructure is typically funded through large capital funding programs, other less traditional funding mechanisms can be utilized to pay for improvements vital to support transit communities and/or achieve higher transit ridership. The Transit Master Plan should undertake an analysis of partnership opportunities that the City might want to consider with other government organizations (e.g., Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, Metro, Sound Transit), human service agencies, and private corporations, to improve transit service delivery in Bellevue.
6. **Develop measures of effectiveness to evaluate transit investments and to track plan progress.** The Bellevue Comprehensive Plan presently includes the following metrics/benchmarks related to transit: (i) mode split targets within each of the City’s Mobility Management Areas [Table TR.1 – Area Mobility Targets]; (2) transit service frequency improvement targets between Downtown, Overlake, Crossroads, Eastgate, and Factoria [TR.8 – 10 Year Transit Vision]; and, (3) guidance found in 44 transit-supportive policies. The Transit Master Plan will revisit these metrics, and where necessary, propose modifications to better reflect present and future conditions.