

Costco cancels Kelsey Creek rezone

By James E. Bell, East Bellevue Community Council Chair

In September 2007 Costco applied to rezone Kelsey Creek Center and build a 140,000-square-foot store. Since then Costco twice asked the city to suspend review of the application. The latest hold happened in August.

In late September Costco cancelled its applications for rezoning and clearing and grading the site.

Slow redevelopment for Lake Hills Shopping Center

At the February East Bellevue Community Council meeting, Oscar Del Moro, COSMO development vice-president reviewed the current plans for the center.

The bank wants to remain open during construction, which will necessitate a three-phase construction plan. The first phase could be the corner development for the library. The second phase would develop the new section for the bank and retail space. The third phase would complete the retail, office and residential areas.

At the EBCC's September meeting, Wendy Pender, site manager for the Lake Hills Library, said that the library had signed a letter of intent to locate the library on the corner of 156th Avenue Southeast and Lake Hills Boulevard.

The start of construction would be the spring of 2009, with the library moving in 2010. The larger space – 10,000 square feet – would allow more services than the present small location.

145th Pl SE and SE 22nd transportation projects in design stage

At the July EEBC meeting, Marina Arakelyan, senior project manager, described the two projects being designed. The West Lake Hills Citizen Advisory Committee through the Neighborhood Investment Strategy program identified improvements to the 145th Place Southeast corridor and Southeast 22nd Street sidewalks as high priority recommendations in 2002.

A first phase of improvements – to 145th Place, Southeast Eighth and Southeast 16th streets – was completed in 2005.

The design for 145th Place Southeast will include two-way left turn lanes from Southeast 16th Street to Southeast 22nd Street, a left-turn pocket at 145th Place Southeast and 144th Avenue, left-turn pockets at the intersection of 145th Place and Southeast 22nd, curb gutter and sidewalks throughout and striped bike lanes. A meandering path feature will be maintained on the north side of 145th Place. Construction should begin in 2009.

The design for Southeast 22nd Street from 145th Place to 156th Avenue Southeast includes curb, gutter and sidewalks on the north side of the street. Curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements on the south side were deleted from the project scope per City Council direction. Construction should begin in 2009.

Traffic impacts to East Bellevue focus of updated study

At the June EBCC meeting, Nicholas Matz, senior planner for the city, presented an introductory briefing on the Bellevue Redmond Overlake Transportation Study successor agreement.

The 1999 agreement with Redmond identified transportation projects in Bellevue and Redmond to manage the congestion generated by rapid office growth in Redmond. Each city paid for their share of the capital improvements. The agreement runs through 2012.

The successor agreement to be adopted late this year would run through 2030 and recognize changes in land use assumptions and the need to update transportation improvements for the critical growth expected in this area. Light rail would also be an element of the plan.

What is new and different about the successor agreement is that the study will include the East Bellevue area from Bel-Red Road on the north to I-90 on the south and from 140th Avenue on the west to West Lake Sammamish Parkway on the east.

The north-south arterials, 140th, 148th and 156th avenues and West Lake Sammamish Parkway are already impacted by the trips that leave the Bel-Red and Overlake areas to go to regional destinations via I-90 as well as other parts of Bellevue. These arterials will receive further impacts as growth in Bel-Red and Overlake areas increases.

In July, the EBCC documented its views on an updated transportation agreement. There were four objectives and five strategies proposed.

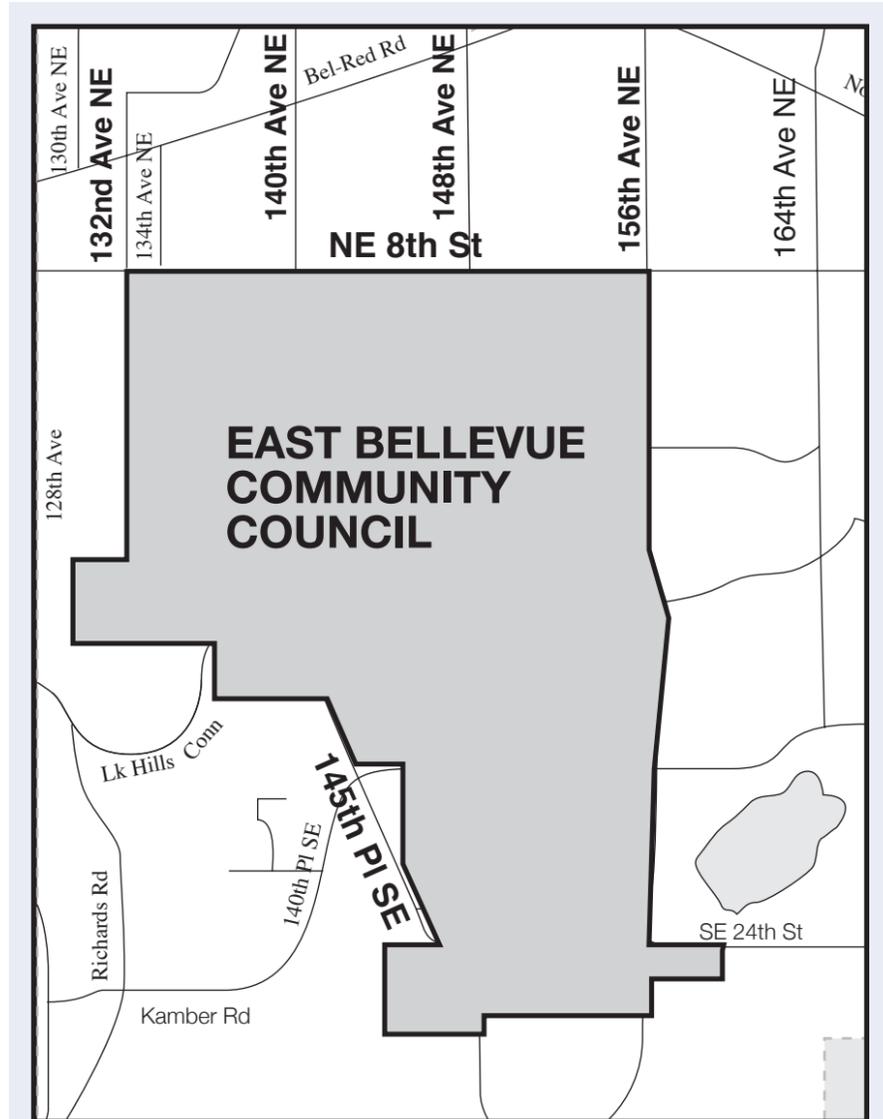
The four objectives were:

- 1) Minimize "peak hour" trips by single-occupancy vehicles on north-south arterials in East Bellevue
- 2) Avoid general purpose lane widening on north-south arterials serving East Bellevue
- 3) Direct "regional" trips that do not have a destination in either Bellevue or Redmond to the regional transportation system
- 4) Identify strategies to minimize cut-through traffic in neighborhoods

EBCC agreed with 3) and 4).

There was some agreement with 2); however there were questions about what is meant by lane widening and which arterials serve the residents of East Bellevue. We completely agreed that 148th should not be widened to three lanes. 140th and 156th appear to be arterials that serve East Bellevue.

There was no agreement on 1). The "peak hour" trips seem vague and hardly achievable. No one in East Bellevue would agree to limit peak hour travel to HOV's during the several hours of regional travel through the area each weekday.



For information about the city's Community Council, call Deputy City Clerk Michelle Murphy, 425-452-6466, or contact the East Bellevue Community Council Chairperson, James Bell.

East Bellevue Community Council meets the first Tuesday each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Lake Hills Clubhouse, 15230 Lake Hills Blvd.

Members

James E. Bell, Michael Elwin, Ross Gooding, Steven Kasner, Ken Seal

We welcome comments about the East Bellevue area. You can share your views with the Community Council via e-mail at EBCC@bellevuewa.gov. To find out more about the agendas and decisions of EBCC go to the website, http://www.bellevuewa.gov/EBCC_Homepage.htm and look under city government.

The five transportation improvement strategies proposed were:

- 1) Transit: comprehensive and reliable transit service between I-90 and Overlake
- 2) Transportation Demand Management: reducing commuter trips
- 3) Non-motorized improvements: improving sidewalks and bicycle facilities
- 4) Channelization/Operations: spot improvements and technology to help roadways function more efficiently
- 5) Neighborhood Livability: improving neighborhood amenities

We disagreed with 5) and the statement: Neighborhood Livability implementation strategies will focus less on enhancing mobility and more on reducing impacts and improving neighborhood amenities, such as enhanced traffic calming, streetscape and gateway improvements, sidewalk improvements and other projects.

This strategy concedes that nothing will be considered to mitigate or minimize the impact of greater regional traffic throughout the East Bellevue area. It also seems more concerned with the north-south traffic than the east-west traffic that may be part of the local area mobility and will surely be impacted by greatly increased regional traffic.

Finally, we had two recommendations.

We recommend adding an objective for East Bellevue that says "Identify strategies to improve safety and minimize the impact of regional traffic throughout the East Bellevue area."

We also recommended that the traffic impact studies include schools and churches in the area as stakeholders. Their operational issues can have a great deal of effect on traffic flow.