Enclosed is your agenda packet for the June 16 Eastgate/I-90 CAC meeting. As you will see from the agenda, this meeting has the potential of being a short one.

The main goal of the June 16 meeting is to make sure that the draft alternatives are ready to proceed to the evaluation phase. We will first review with the CAC comments received at the June 1 open houses and in response to the followup online survey (Agenda Item 3). We will then summarize the work to be done in the evaluation phase (Agenda Item 4), and ask for your consent in moving the draft alternatives to that phase and whether there are any revisions to the alternatives you would like made as part of the evaluation process.

The draft alternatives and their descriptions can be viewed here: http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/PCD/Action_Plans(1).pdf.

The CAC is not scheduled to meet again until September 8. Note that September 8 is the second Thursday of the month. The standing meeting date of the first Thursday was changed for the month of September in order to get past the Labor Day holiday weekend.

We look forward to next Thursday’s meeting.
CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, June 16, 2011
5:30 P.M. – Room 1E-112
Bellevue City Hall – 450 110th Avenue NE

NOTE MEETING ROOM CHANGE

1. Call to order (5:30)

2. Approval of minutes (5:30-5:35) *
   a. May 5, 2011 meeting
   b. May 19, 2011 meeting

3. Summary of public comments received on draft alternatives (5:35-5:45)
   a. June 1, 2011 open houses *
   b. June 2 – 14, 2011 online questionnaire

4. Next phase – Alternatives evaluation (5:45-6:00) *

5. Public comment (6:00-6:15)

6. Other business or direction (6:15-6:30)

7. Adjourn

* = related materials included in packet

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 8, 2011, 5:30-7:30 pm

Visit our website: www.bellevuewa.gov/eastgate-corridor.htm
1. Approval of Minutes
   A. April 7, 2011

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Co-Chair Larrivee. Second was by Mr. Hummer and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Development of Draft Alternatives – Part 1
   A. No Action Description
   B. Past CAC Comments / Development Options
   C. Evaluation Criteria / Council Principles / Possible Themes

Co-Chair Hamlin said the primary focus of the meeting would be to begin the process of developing the draft land use and transportation alternatives for the study area. He said the draft will be presented to the public for feedback and evaluated against the project principles and evaluation criteria, and will be subjected to environmental considerations.

Senior Planner Mike Bergstrom recapped the discussions held to date by the Committee. He noted that the comments made by the Committee members were boiled down by staff into different development options that could go into a draft alternative. While not necessarily an exhaustive list, it does provide a starting point.

Mr. Bergstrom said the No Action alternative serves as a baseline. It represents an educated guess or prediction of what the corridor would look like 20 years out if nothing is done at all with regard to Land Use Code amendments or Comprehensive Plan amendments. All action alternatives that get developed are compared against the No Action alternative, in part to fulfill the environmental evaluation requirements. He stated
that the RV park, even under the No Action alternative, is likely to turn into something else, such as heavy retail or administrative office, both of which are permitted under the current General Commercial zoning.

Mr. Bergstrom said staff sat down to look closely at which sites in the corridor are essentially fully developed under their existing zoning. The review found that most sites are in fact fully developed. In the northern part of Factoria there is the potential for another 122,800 square feet of office. The Kenyon Center in the eastern part of the study area could have another 50,000 square feet of office.

For comparison purposes, there is just shy of five million square feet of office space in the study area. The Puget Sound Regional Council forecast for 2030 suggests another one million square feet of office in or near the study area, which is substantially more than the potential for approximately 200,000 square feet identified by staff based on current zoning and land availability.

A modified baseline for 2030 was used for the preliminary transportation screening analysis that was completed in December 2009. It was predicated on adding 1.8 million square feet of office to the Puget Sound Regional Council baseline for 2030. The intent was to be as aggressive as possible, even though the scenario is not likely to play out, especially under the No Action alternative.

The market study indicated that from a demand standpoint there might be room for an additional 1.5 million square feet of office, which is somewhat more than the Puget Sound Regional Council projection. That demand does not appear to be attainable given existing zoning and lack of available land.

On the south side of I-90, in addition to the additional office likely to happen on the RV park site, it is expected that some of the older developed sites will redevelop. The total gain in square footage, however, is not expected to be noticeable. Limited sidewalk and bicycle facility improvements are planned for the area, as are limited transit service improvements and development of the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail. Quantitative changes to Eastgate Plaza are not expected, but there are concerns about the long-term viability of the grocery store at that location.

On the north side, little change is expected in the Richards Valley; opportunistic uses like karate studios will continue to locate there for a while, but over time as the Bel-Red area changes some of those uses might move to the I-90 corridor. The King County transfer station site will redevelop. The vacant King County site on Eastgate Way is anticipated to develop with some sort of light industrial use in accord with its zoning. Bellevue College will continue to grow over time and will develop according to its master plan. The expectation is that the auto dealers in Sunset Village will continue to expand and consume some of the square footage that is currently home to other uses. There are transportation improvement projects planned north of I-90.

Development of the park area in the far eastern portion of the study area is predicted to happen in the next 20 years. Some additional office development is expected to occur on the Kenyon Center site.

Answering a question asked by Co-chair Larrivee, Mr. Bergstrom confirmed that the Washington State Department of Transportation has no plans for additional transportation projects under the No Action alternative. They have talked about shoulder-running
auxiliary lanes, but that is not assumed for the No Action alternative.

Mr. Ludtka said he would not want to see the Committee create limiters by drawing shapes and labeling them. One of the biggest challenges the area faces is the lack of integrated services. Greater flexibility of uses should be allowed for each of the identified zones, especially if the area is going to be seen as an urban center. Mr. Bergstrom said it will be up to the Committee to determine what is appropriate. As the alternatives are developed, they can be tailored to various levels of mixed use.

Mr. Bergstrom explained that if a loop were to be thrown around the heart of the study area, it would encompass about 370 acres. In order to qualify as an urban center under the King County rules, the area would need to have a certain density of jobs and households. An urban center of 370 acres would need 5500 households and 18,000 jobs, 15,000 of which would need to be within a half mile of the high-capacity transit station.

Ms. Welti said it is premature to say exactly where the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail will be sited. She said much of what has been talked about by way of future uses and enhancements in the area will certainly benefit the trail. Mr. Loewenherz clarified that no attempt was being made to locate the exact alignment of the trail. To some extent the greenway is being implemented incrementally. For purposes of the No Action alternative, it is safe to say that improvements of some sort will be realized.

4. Public Comment

Jack McCullough, 701 5th Avenue, Suite 7220, Seattle, spoke on behalf of the Lincoln Executive Center. He reminded the Committee that he had previously suggested it would be helpful to return with a more detailed concept of what could happen on that site. He said that work has been accomplished.

Pat Callahan also spoke on behalf of the Lincoln Executive Center. He shared with the Committee a schematic of the current development with its sea of parking and three- and four-story buildings. If the zoning is not changed, the current development pattern will be retained for a very long time. The as-built FAR is 0.37, and the parking ratio is over 4:1. He then shared drawings depicting what the site could look like if rezoned to allow for a higher use, particularly mixed use. By tearing down one of the single-story buildings and replacing it with a parking garage, the other buildings on the site could be retained. If the Bank of America parcel can be acquired, two 150-foot office towers could be constructed in the middle of the existing parking lot. By doing so, some 500,000 square feet could be added to the overall development while preserving open space and green space. The intent is to create a sense of place that will also build on the demand in the corridor for office space. The site should be connected in some way to the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway. As drawn, development of the site would have an FAR of only 1.0. The concentration of jobs could lead to a second phase of redevelopment that could include some retail and mixed uses. An allowed height of 150 feet will be necessary in order for the plan to make economic sense.

Neil Fujii, 201 South Jackson Street, Suite 701, Seattle, spoke representing the King County Department of Natural Resources Solid Waste Division. He said there are various alternatives for development of the 14-acre property owned by the county on Eastgate Way. A lot of effort is being spent to make sure that as the waste transfer site redevelops it will be aesthetically pleasing to surrounding properties. The county is taking great pains to make sure any impacts from the current facility will be mitigated.
Residential is probably not appropriate next to the transfer station site, whereas retail, commercial, or office uses would be compatible.

Matt Cyr, 923 Shaw Road, Puyallup, spoke representing the Champions Center. He asked the Committee to continue considering a zoning change for the church so it can operate with a coffee shop as more of a retail front. The use would fit well with the activity center being considered. The transitional overlay will also need to be considered.

Elfi Rahr, 16509 SE 18th Street, said she has been a resident on Phantom Lake for the past 55 years. She said she has seen a lot of changes over the years. She said 156th Avenue accommodates traffic from the Eastgate area going north toward the Crossroads Shopping area, which is undergoing changes that will increase density and trigger additional traffic. If uses are intensified in the Eastgate area, 156th Avenue will become a bottleneck. The roadway cannot be expanded. Even more concerning is the runoff from Eastgate into Phantom Lake, which was essentially killed following the development of the I-90 Business Center. The lake level fluctuates up to two feet due to runoff conditions, the consequence of which has been total shoreline destruction. All reconstruction in the Eastgate corridor must be done with methods that will prevent additional runoff.

James Adcock, 5005 155th Place SE, spoke as a member of the Seattle Mountaineers Conservation Committee which has had an interest in the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway for a long time. With a little work, the trail can become a world-class biking opportunity. In deciding where the route should go in the Eastgate/I-90 corridor, it should be kept in mind where bicyclists will want to ride. Good signage will be essential, as will paying attention to safety. The north side of the freeway is shaded during the summer and riders will be happier with that route. Speaking as a resident of the area, he commented that in terms of amenities the area does not work. He said he does not shop in the area except for QFC, which actually no longer meets the need. He said he chooses to shop in other parts of Bellevue or in Seattle. Traffic is terrible in the corridor and cut-through traffic is increasing.

5. Break

6. Development of Draft Alternatives

Mr. Bergstrom said the three draft alternatives formulated as a starting point by staff and the consultant team could be themed activity center, regional employment center, and localized improvements. He said during the work session the group would be divided into three with each group reviewing one of the three drafts in conjunction with staff and consultants. He asked the participants at each table to focus solely on theme in front of them to avoid ending up with three alternatives that all look the same.

Mr. Bergstrom introduced consultants John Owen and Rachel Miller with Makers Architecture and Urban Design. He said both have been working in the background for the past few months and were responsible for the graphics.

Mr. Owen allowed that none of the draft alternatives are perfect. He said each have elements that are more or less advantageous. The focus is on having them be internally consistent with the concept or objective it pursues.

The activity center alternative builds on the mixed use, walkable, transit-oriented, smart...
growth vision. It builds on the park and ride as the hub of the area, looks to the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway as a landscaped corridor unifying the area, make the most of the Bellevue College campus, and seeks to increase residential density and related support services. Wherever possible it envisions a mix of uses. The Mountains-to-Sound Greenway would run on the south side of the freeway to the west of the transit center, and on the north side of the freeway to the east of the transit center, utilizing the flyover to connect the two. The alternative envisions additional development on the Bellevue College campus, and the auto dealerships stay pretty much as they are. Some additional retail is included which with better connections can serve the existing office areas. Residential above the retail may make sense in some areas. The bulk of the public resources would be allocated to the area around the transit station.

Commissioner Larrivee asked why the alternative showed the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail on both sides of the freeway. Mr. Owen said in the alternative the flyover bridge will be greatly improved to facilitate access for transit, bicyclists and pedestrians. For a variety of reasons it makes sense to have the trail coming from the west cross over the freeway near the transit station and then continue east on the north side of the freeway. Co-chair Larrivee suggested that if there is going to be walkable/bikeable residential constructed on the north side, it would make sense to have the entire trail located on the north side as well. Mr. Owen said the group may in fact decide that would be the best approach.

Mr. Owen explained that the regional employment center alternative builds on the notion of maximizing regional employment. Office is a predominant use in the corridor currently and in many ways the alternative builds on that trend. It builds on the assets of the area, with Bellevue College used as leverage for additional quasi-industrial uses in the Richards Valley area, possibly research and development firms. Where the first alternative focuses on the existing transit center, the regional employment center alternative focuses more on the interchange at 150th Avenue SE. The Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail winds through the area on the north side of the freeway. The King County site would convert to office, and there would be some retail uses around the transit station geared primarily toward serving the office uses. The transportation connections would be designed essentially to serve the office developments.

Mr. Owen said the third alternative is focused more on localized improvements and emphasizes the notion of adding services and facilities to the area that compliment the things being done in the downtown and in Bel-Red. The alternative does not presuppose quite as much development. Rather, it focuses on issues and needs that have been highlighted. Various types of uses are scattered throughout the corridor, with most new development related to the freeway. The neighborhoods are connected via pathways, and the streetscapes and landscaping is improved. The Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail is located entirely on the south side of the freeway.

A. Small Group Work Session

The Committee formed three groups to focus on each of the three draft alternatives.

B. Large Group Work Session

Transportation Planning Assistant Director Kevin O’Neill reported on the findings of the group that focused on the Activity Center alternative. He said the group considered the alternative to be a sound alternative thematically. The group liked the mixed use concept
linking with the redevelopment plans for Factoria Mall. They expressed concerns about the intersection of SE 36th and Factoria Boulevard, which is a known hotspot. There was discussion about whether the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail should be on the north or south side of I-90; some felt it should in fact be on both sides in recognition of the fact that a good bicycle facility is needed on both sides regardless of where the formal trail is ultimately located. There was a lot of discussion about the area to the west of the Eastgate park-and-ride and the notion of bringing the intense mixed use concept to this area (similar to the concept to the east of the of the park-and-ride) as well, though there are concerns as to whether or not it can be served from a transportation standpoint. There was general support for the general intensive mixed use concept on the Lincoln Center site. The group noted the concern about preserving view corridors and avoiding development that is so bulky that it blocks visual access to and from I-90 and Bellevue College. The group highlighted the need for visibility to the college along 142nd Avenue SE as well. There was a high level of interest in better east-west pedestrian connections throughout the corridor. There was general support for the mixed use concept tied to the Eastgate Plaza and recognition that while the Michaels Toyota area could continue to be a retail car place, it could have more of an urban look and feel rather than the current sea of asphalt.

Mr. Bergstrom presented the report of the Regional Employment Center alternative group. He said the overarching consensus was that if the area is to be employment and office centric, the particular focus should be on the north side of the freeway: the area to the south of I-90 should not see a lot of change. The group felt the office use should include the Sunset Village site, occur on the King County site, and expand farther to the west, making the frontage of Eastgate Way more continuous with office. There was agreement that in addition to office, there is a need for amenities and services, so the land use designation should include office and allow for some other uses as well. The group felt the RV park site could potentially be right for a hotel use to serve the office business interests of the corridor. There was a question about the “big green” at the freeway interchange and how it should be graphically communicated; it is not intended to be a Mercer Island-type lid. The group concluded that the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail should be tied to amenity spots or waypoints. There was also need voiced for more connectivity in the western portion of the study area. The notion of enhancing Eastgate Plaza with multifamily residential was supported by the group, as was the idea of creating a synergy between Bellevue College, incubator spaces in Richards Valley, and the office developments. The group also recognized that with new employment will come the need for supporting services such as daycare centers.

Co-chair Larrivee pointed out that the concept of office highlighted by the group was more flexible than what currently exists, including retail but also the potential for residential units.

Ms. Solemsaas commented that the first two alternatives would both work for Bellevue College. The introduction of mixed use would be a welcome change.

Ms. Bruce shared the findings of the group that worked on the Localized Improvements alternative. She said the group concluded that the alternative is only a step or two beyond the No Action alternative. The alternative builds on the existing vision of Factoria as an urban village, which is appropriate for the western portion of the study area. The group did not agree with the notion of allowing a big-box structure on Eastgate Way close to the western entrance of I-90 for a number of reasons, and suggested that if in fact a big box use is included in the alternative it should be either where the auto dealerships are or
possibly in the area where Albertsons is. The group agreed that an improved connection would be needed at 142nd Avenue SE, both to improve visual appearance and neighborhood connectivity. To the north and west where there is currently a detention pond, the area would work with mixed use/residential. For the area immediately northwest of the P&R, the group felt it would be more appropriate as mid-density mixed use/residential. The group agreed that the east-west trail from the HCT station should be extended to the Eastgate Office Park Complex to improve overall connectivity in the corridor. There was support for establishing the green area as an entry point, possibly slowing traffic down both north and south. With regard to the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail, the group felt the connection to the existing trail on the north side would be best served by using the improved pedestrian access way through the tunnel.

Mr. Owen said the comments from the groups all will be helpful in moving forward. He asked if the draft alternatives will serve adequately as bookends or if some other construct should be considered.

Mr. Ludtka suggested the alternatives capture the sweep of how to approach making infrastructure modifications but miss two other layers, namely density and height. In going to the public to seek comments, something should be included relative to those components. Height carries with it the potential for greater open space and reduces the impacts relative to stormwater runoff; structured parking has the same benefits. From a bookends point of view, the list of uses generally capture the range. The uses outlined in the three alternatives could be presented to the public along with a range of height and density options.

Co-chair Larrivee said he would like to get from the open house some understanding of what the public feels would be an acceptable limit in terms of density in the study area. Ms. Solemsaas agreed and suggested visuals should be utilized to the greatest extent possible.

Mr. Owen said if he could get a sense of the visual and physical limits in terms of height and bulk, the amounts of development could be calculated and given to the transportation experts to review for possible impacts.

Mr. Ludtka suggested that if the public were to be shown the number of trips that could result they may not see the benefits and come down on the side of the No Action alternative. At the open house the focus should be on the benefits each alternative offers. Ms. Bruce pointed out that regardless of what face is put on it, there will be reactions on the part of the public.

From the audience, Mr. McCullough pointed out that the study area is already largely built out. It is not possible to simply add a floor or two to existing developments, or structured parking. If the height or density increase is not sufficient to justify tearing down functional buildings, no change will result.

7. Next Steps

Mr. Bergstrom said the preliminary date chosen for the public open house is May 25, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. That date presumes the Committee will be far enough along with the draft alternatives to share them with the public. He said his sense was that there was still work to be done by the Committee. He proposed holding another meeting during the month of May in advance of the open house, and suggested May 19.
Co-chair Larrivee commented that if the Committee still were not ready after a meeting on May 19, there would not be sufficient time to move ahead with the May 25 open house. He agreed a second meeting in May should be held, but proposed pushing the open house date back into June.

There was consensus to schedule the next Committee meeting for May 19 at 5:30 p.m., and to schedule the open house for the first or second week of June.

8. Adjourn

Co-chair Hamlin adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.
May 19, 2011
5:30 p.m.
Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-112

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lindy Bruce, Dave Elliott, Jay Hamlin, Jeffrey Hummer, Mark Ludtka, Tom Perea, Rob Pucher, Rachel Solemsaas, John Stokes

MEMBERS ABSENT: Carrie Courter Blanton, Tom Bohman, Francois Larrivee, Jim Stanton, David Vranizan, Cynthia Welti

STAFF PRESENT: Franz Loewenherz, Transportation; Mike Bergstrom, Dan Stroh, Planning & Community Development; John Owen, Makers Architecture and Urban Design

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:41 p.m. by Co-chair Hamlin who presided.


Senior Planner Mike Bergstrom said there were close to 300 responses to the visual preference survey. He pointed out that the respondents were not given the opportunity to explain their favorable or unfavorable reactions to the photos. However, conclusions can be drawn from what ended up on the favorable side and what ended up on the unfavorable side. The conclusions in the summary report represent the interpretations of the staff based on their observations.

Mr. Bergstrom said the document will be released to the public very soon.

3. Draft Alternatives – Review of Changes

Co-Chair Hamlin reminded the Committee members that at their May 5 meeting the staff and consultants presented draft alternatives for review. Three working groups were formed, one to focus on each of the three alternatives. The feedback provided by the CAC was used by staff and the consultants to modify and further develop the alternatives.

Mr. Bergstrom said a fair amount of work had to be done following the May 5 meeting to dimensionalize the alternatives. The revisions made to the alternatives were framed by the CAC input, the market realities, transportation issues, the existing land uses on the ground and the realities of redevelopment economics, environmental characteristics, and community vision.
The conclusions reached were that there is a market demand for between 1.2 million and 1.5 million square feet of office, 1800 housing units, and 200 new hotel rooms; there are opportunities for start-up and research and development uses, along with partnerships with Bellevue College, in Richards Valley; there is potential for residential and retail development on the campus of Bellevue College; and redevelopment of the Factoria mall would help to keep the corridor strong. Primary challenges identified were the environmental characteristics of the area; the current land use patterns; and the limited road capacity.

The existing conditions inventory highlighted the fact that most of the buildings in the corridor were constructed within the last 20 to 30 years and are still in good condition. As such, they can be expected to remain usable for many years.

The city’s approach to improving traffic flow and overall mobility has traditionally been focused on strategically adding capacity, operating roadways more efficiently, and managing demand and providing choices.

Planning Director Dan Stroh noted that the Committee on May 5 expressed an interest in how the ideas on the alternatives maps might be expressed in terms of form and building density. He stressed that in thinking about those issues, however, the Committee should refrain from reaching any conclusions about floor area ratios (FAR) or specific densities; that will be the topic for a future meeting.

Mr. Stroh explained that outside of the downtown, the city has for many years had a maximum FAR of 0.5, with few exceptions. For example, the newly adopted Bel-Red subarea plan allows for a significant departure from that historical stance. The area in Factoria where T-Mobile is located was developed with an FAR in excess of 0.5 prior to incorporation into the city. The 0.5 limitation was intended to focus the higher intensity growth in the downtown, thus creating a well-defined city center. The highest FAR in the downtown is 8.0 and the lowest is 3.0. For the downtown, and under the new Bel-Red subarea plan, there is a base FAR and a maximum FAR; to exceed the base FAR, developers must contribute to the bonus system. The maximum FAR in the Bel-Red corridor is 4.0, which can only be achieved through providing certain amenities.

There is no direct correlation between FAR and building height. A parcel containing 40,000 square feet of land area, and having an FAR of 2.0, could support a building containing 80,000 square feet. That building size could be accommodated in a number of ways, including four floors at 20,000 square feet each, or eight floors at 10,000 square feet each. The latter, of course, would require a building that is twice as tall. The average height of the T-Mobile buildings is 75 feet; they appear taller because they are constructed on a steep slope. The FAR for that development works out to 1.26. The FAR for the five-story Sunset Corporate Campus is 0.48. The Advanta development buildings are 70 feet tall and, based on the entire original site area, the FAR is 0.5. The Plaza Center West building in the downtown is a nine-story structure but has an FAR of only 1.75, whereas the 112th @ 12th building is only six stories tall but has an FAR of 2.7.

Height is always a sensitive issue; the public often equates building height to increased density. From an urban design perspective, height should be used judiciously in select locations where it fits with community character. Taller buildings have direct impacts relative to views, light and glare, shadows, and wind effect. The perceptions of people about place are strongly influenced by building height. Good urban planning takes into account the topography of an area and makes it possible to discern the rise and fall of the
land; sometimes highrise buildings can accentuate the natural topography. Planning sensitively for taller buildings is important to avoid having them appear to be randomly and arbitrarily situated.

Ms. Bruce asked to what extent the city has the tools to say that for a particular site the FAR should be one number, and for another site the FAR should be another number, all with an eye on limiting building height. Mr. Stroh said the city acts to define a zoning pattern across contiguous areas, with clear and predictable parameters. Property owners know up front what they can do with their properties.

Mr. Stokes said giving consideration to community character is intriguing but asked how it would be determined. Mr. Stroh agreed that community character is somewhat of an amorphous concept in many ways, yet people will express strong opinions regarding it. He said it can be thought of as community vision which tends to be steeped in history and existing context. Of course, over time areas evolve. It is unlikely that taller buildings and more density would have been acceptable in the Bel-Red corridor 20 years ago. Mr. Ludtka suggested that fastest and best way to effect change will be to increase land values beyond where they are currently. That will encourage a new cycle of development and redevelopment. Change should come holistically and create an environment that has desirable characteristics and amenities. The Eastgate area in its current configuration lacks the elements needed to make it a holistic neighborhood. He added that if taller buildings were permitted, there could potentially be more land area opened to other uses that would benefit the area.

Mr. Stokes agreed. He suggested that community character should refer to more than just building height, such as the type of buildings, density, and community amenities.

Mr. Elliott remarked that the development community is likely to be very cautious about doing anything for the next five to ten years. Things are still trending downward in terms of vacancies and companies going out of business. Unless they see an absolutely benefit, it is unlikely amenities such as underground parking at $35,000 per stall will be brought online. That is especially true given that most of the buildings in the corridor have a lot of economic life left in them.

Mr. Stroh agreed that the Eastgate/I-90 corridor is not the same as the Bel-Red corridor where extensive demolition of existing buildings can be expected and sites completely redeveloped. Most of the Eastgate/I-90 study area is covered with recent development that has 20 to 30 years of useful life left. There will be some redevelopment of sites, but primarily new development will take the form of infill. It will take carefully sculpted moves to encourage the kind of reinvestment desired in the area, the feasibility of which will be influenced by macroeconomic factors facing the city.

Mr. Bergstrom briefly reviewed the No Action alternative with the Committee. He noted that site on which the RV park is currently situated was previously highlighted as converting to a heavy retail use. The owner, however, has stated that for various reasons that use is not realistic for the property, so the alternative will show administrative office instead, more as a placeholder than anything else. He also commented that staff had gone round and round trying to forecast the potential for new office square footage in the study area under the No Action alternative. On May 5 the figure of 200,000 square feet was stated; after carefully reviewing the data, staff believes that number is fairly accurate.

John Owen with Makers Architecture and Urban Design then described the changes that
had been made to Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 following the May 5 CAC meeting. Mr. Owen reminded the Committee that the focus of Alternative 1 is the core area around the transit station. The alternative emphasizes a walkable and highly livable mix of uses, including residential. The group that reviewed the alternative indicated it would like to see bike lanes and a sidewalk added on Eastgate Way. The scheme embraces more intensity, but Bellevue College expressed a desire to retain some visibility from the freeway and to improve trail access to and from the campus for those students who would work in the mixed use area where the development will be at its densest. The group also envisioned areas with a moderately intense mix of uses, largely residential over commercial, and in the northwest corner moderate-intensity housing featuring sustainable development and restoration of the stream corridor. The Richards Valley area would retain its industrial character.

Mr. Owen said some changes were suggested for Alternative 2 as well. The group felt the office focus area should be spread linearly along the corridor, including the auto dealership site. The group wanted the office uses to include commercial uses along with them to accommodate services and ancillary facilities. A green connection should be created to serve the office areas and connect with the Factoria area. The group saw benefit to upgrading the industrial area, functionally tying it to Bellevue College, and enhancing the stream corridors and wetlands. They encouraged the inclusion of retail services around the transit center and near the office area along 150th Avenue SE; a green connection should be created to serve the office areas and connect with the Factoria area; and utilizing the 150th Avenue SE interchange as a gateway with landscaping that would support the office campus character.

Alternative 3 has a much more modest scale of change. It focuses on the features the community is most interested in and adds functionality to the area to make it a better place to live and work. It includes a greater mix of uses. The group stressed the need for good connections. Some concern was expressed about showing big box retail in the area to the west of the transit center; their preference was to show it on the Albertsons site or the auto dealership site. There was agreement to retain the concept in the alternative so it can be modeled. The alternative was envisioned as being more naturalistic with natural habitat in the freeway cloverleaf areas.

Mr. Bergstrom shared with the CAC a chart comparing the square footage of office, retail, institutional and industrial uses, and the number of housing units and hotel rooms for the different alternatives with the existing conditions. He noted that each of the three action alternatives emphasizes something different; Alternative 1 has the most new residential, Alternative 2 has the highest level of new office square footage, and Alternative 3 has the most retail. Because of where the residential is shown to occur, Alternative 1 actually results in a reduction in the amount of industrial square footage. All three action alternatives and the No Action alternative all show 280,000 square feet of institutional use, a figure taken directly from the Bellevue College master plan.

Mr. Ludtka suggested that one of the action alternatives should show an increase beyond 280,000 square feet for institutional use just so it can be modeled. Ms. Solemsaas said the problem is that the college campus simply cannot handle more square footage than that.

Co-Chair Hamlin suggested that Alternative 2, which focuses primarily on business in the corridor, should include more hotel rooms. Alternative 3 should include some hotel rooms as well.
4. Public Comment

Mr. Jack McCullough, 701 5th Avenue, Seattle, suggested that the market report actually understates the 20-year demand for office in the corridor. He proposed avoiding designing a result to the market report. The I-90 market has been one of the strongest office markets in the Puget Sound region for a long time. In order to trigger changes in the study area, it will be absolutely necessary to increase land values, and the way to increase land value is to increase the allowed FAR. Once that decision is made, the question becomes how the increased density should be arranged in terms of height and bulk. Taller buildings tend to free up space at the ground level, and that is what can result in very attractive high-quality places to live and work. Shorter buildings avoid the impacts of height, but they are massive in terms of human scale and far less openness at the ground level. Buildings with very large floor plates attract a different kind of employer; they have less light and air and a much different overall character. The quality that taller buildings bring with them will be far more desirable.

Mr. Neil Fujii with King County Solid Waste Division, 201 South Jackson Street, Suite 700, Seattle, stated that the county, as part of redevelopment of the transfer station, will be exploring the possible construction of a pedestrian trail along the Olympic pipeline easement. The opportunity exists to connect it to SE 30th Street, thus improving connectivity within the corridor.

5. Draft Alternatives – Further Discussion/Revisions

Mr. Stokes suggested that on Alternative 2 the location shown as a hotel should be shown as mixed use instead, possibly a grocery store.

Ms. Bruce asked if the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail is necessarily going to serve as the primary bicycle trail through the study area, or if there could be a way to have a bike route on both sides of the freeway, one of which would be on the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway. Mr. Loewenherz responded that the 2009 ped-bike plan includes a comprehensive look at gaps throughout the city. There are over 400 projects referenced in the document, and it depicts the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway trail as being located on the south side of I-90. The plan includes bike lanes on Eastgate Way.

Ms. Solemsaas suggested that while the Bellevue College campus itself might be constrained, if the college is intended to serve as the business incubator it might make sense to include more institutional use square footage to one of the alternatives. It could be that the additional square footage could be achieved by allowing more building height on the site. There was consensus to add a little to Alternative 1 but far more to Alternative 2.

Mr. Pucher referenced the bridge at 142nd Avenue SE and the need to increase accessibility from both sides of the freeway. He asked what could be done to the bridge to improve access. Mr. Bergstrom said Alternative 1 assumes some expansion of the bridge. Mr. Loewenherz added that some modest improvements could be made to make it more user friendly, such as installing a canopy over the sidewalk. Retrofitting the bridge would be expensive but certainly is doable.

Transportation Planning Manager Kevin O’Neill pointed out that Alternative 1 depends on major improvements to the bridge. It connects major land uses, but it also serves as
the crossover point for the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway.

Mr. Stokes said he would welcome seeing an alternative at the extreme opposite end from the No Action alternative, one that would in essence add everything together from the three action alternatives. Mr. Bergstrom commented that ultimately the CAC likely will pick and choose elements from each of the alternatives when formulating the preferred alternative.

Mr. Perea said he would like more information regarding building height. He asked how high the city would allow a building to be in the corridor and what transitions might be required. Co-Chair Hamlin said the options presented by staff represent what could conceptually happen in the study area. At the open house the public will be able to comment on the height issue, and then the CAC will begin the process of refining the alternatives.

Mr. Bergstrom said there are a number of factors that influence height and density, including the market, the topography, environmental factors, the transportation network, and community acceptance. The Council did not give specific policy direction on specific heights or building styles. As certain levels of square footage or employment are assumed, they will need to be translated into bulk and mass.

Ms. Solemsaas proposed adding to Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 visual access to Bellevue College from I-90. Mr. Ludtka pointed out that each alternative was deliberately designed differently in order to generate public comment.

Mr. Stokes commented that the changes made to each of the alternatives tended to make them all more similar. He said he would prefer going to the open house with the three alternatives as originally drawn.

There was agreement to retain the big box retail scenario in Alternative 3 but to move it to Sunset Village.

6. **Next Steps – June Open Houses, CAC Meeting**

Mr. Bergstrom said there will be two open house events on June 1: One at the Robinswood House Cabana and the other at Eastgate Elementary School cafeteria. The public will be asked to indicate their preference for the alternatives, but an attempt will also be made to extract what it is they like or dislike about the alternatives.

The CAC agreed to schedule its next meeting for June 16. It was further agreed that there would be no meetings in July or August and to meet again on September 8.

7. **Adjourn**

Co-Chair Hamlin adjourned the meeting at 7:19 p.m.
TO: Eastgate/I-90 Citizen Advisory Committee

FROM: Mike Bergstrom, Planning & Community Development
       Franz Loewenherz, Transportation Department

SUBJECT: June 16, 2011 Eastgate/I-90 CAC Meeting
       Agenda Item No. 3 – Public Comments on Draft Alternatives

DATE: June 9, 2011

Action requested of CAC
No action is necessary. This is provided for information and discussion.

Background
On June 1, the draft alternatives for the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use & Transportation Project were available for public viewing, question, and comment at two open houses. The open houses were held from 1:00 – 3:00 in the Robinswood House Cabana and from 5:00 – 7:00 in the Eastgate Elementary School cafeteria.

Open house public input
Though the open houses were lightly attended, the alternatives were generally well-received. Attendees seemed pleased that some attention is being given to improving the corridor. Written comments were collected on post-it notes and on pre-printed comment forms. No clear preference for any one alternative emerged (in fact, participants were asked to not “vote” for a preference), but it is clear that there existing issues that the public wants to see addressed. Comments received at the open houses are attached.

Online Questionnaire
The day following the open houses, June 2, the alternatives and an online questionnaire were posted on the project website. This questionnaire will run through June 14. Online comments will be provided to the CAC at your June 16 meeting.

Conclusion
The public input received will be helpful during the alternatives evaluation phase we are about to enter, and later as the CAC develops a preferred alternative. It will help identify issues that are of concern to the public, as well as help us determine what types of uses, development intensities, urban character, and transportation improvements might be acceptable to the community at large.

Attachments
1. Public comments from June 1, 2011 open houses
June 16, 2011 Eastgate/I-90 CAC Meeting
Agenda Item No. 3.a
Attachment 1

Public comments received on Draft Alternatives presented at June 1, 2011 open houses
Robinswood House Cabana 1:00 – 3:00 PM
Eastgate Elementary School 5:00 – 7:00 PM

No Action
• Likes:
  o It doesn’t affect the environment
  o Simplicity
  o Action “must” occur!
• Don’t likes:
  o Problems would sustain
  o Noise
• Are we missing anything?
  o Nope
  o Keep the area cleaner!!

Alternative 1
• Likes:
  o The dorms are a good idea for students
  o New walkway
  o Connected to Bellevue College
  o Increasing the tax base
• Don’t likes:
  o Nothing
  o Too big!!! More noise
  o Keep parks
  o Minimum industrial square footage
• Are we missing anything?
  o Nope
• Other:
  o Remedy present “choke points”:
    ▪ Add left turn lane at 156th
    ▪ Eastgate access to I-90/east (by Pizza Hut)

Alternative 2
• Likes:
  o It creates many jobs which we need
  o New walkway
• Increase of office square footage

• **Don't likes:**
  o Takes a lot of space
  o Still too big
  o No expansion of housing units

• **Are we missing anything?**
  o Nope

• **Other:**
  o Suggest you add to these information boxes:
    ▪ Approximate # of cars projected
    o Keep park “simple”
    o Feasibility of I-90 improvements?
    o Consider sound walls (along I-90)?
    o 156th – (Plans to):
      ▪ widen road?
      ▪ propose more lanes?
    o No egress onto 161st from Boeing complex please

**Alternative 3**

• **Likes:**
  o The roundabout concept
  o It doesn’t destroy too much environment
  o Best arrangement to keep integrity
  o Mix of office and housing
  o Increase in retail

• **Don’t likes:**
  o Builders wouldn’t develop
  o Still too much – noise
  o Keep the parks
  o No expansion of industrial space

• **Are we missing anything?**
  o Nope

• **Other:**
  o Until I-90 congestion and noise is reduced by guaranteed funding only the Functional Improvements should be done

**General comments:**

• Good job with all the planning
• Greening up all areas & Eastgate interchange
• Clean tunnel
• Build roundabout at 156th & Eastgate Way
• Remedy present traffic “choke points”, including: Left turn lane at 156th and Eastgate access to I-90/East (by Pizza Hut)
TO: Eastgate/I-90 Citizen Advisory Committee

FROM: Mike Bergstrom, Planning & Community Development
Franz Loewenherz, Transportation Department

SUBJECT: June 16, 2011 Eastgate/I-90 CAC Meeting
Agenda Item No. 4 – Alternatives Evaluation

DATE: June 9, 2011

Action requested of CAC
1. Identify any final revisions to the draft alternatives.
2. Determine that the draft alternatives are ready to proceed to the evaluation phase.

Background
At your May 5 and 19, 2011 meetings, the CAC worked on the development of a “No Action” alternative and three draft “action” alternatives emphasizing different “themes”: Jobs/Housing Mix, Regional Employment Center, and Functional Improvements. Together, these alternatives are intended to present a range of land use and transportation opportunities to consider for the continued evolution of the Eastgate/I-90 corridor.

Following your May meetings, the alternatives were presented at public open houses (June 1) and posted on the project webpage (June 2-14). Input received through those avenues was discussed under Agenda Item 3.

Later this year, these draft alternatives will help inform the development of a preferred alternative. Before then, it is important to more fully evaluate the alternatives to gain a more complete understanding of the opportunities illustrated as well as their potential impacts.

Evaluation Phase
The project team (City staff and consultants) is prepared to begin evaluation of the alternatives. This is proposed to occur over the summer months. During this period, there would be no CAC meetings; the CAC would reconvene on Thursday, September 8 (the 2nd Thursday of September).

Evaluation will consist of several tasks, including:
- Transportation modeling
- Greenhouse gas (GHG) emission modeling
- Relation to the CAC-approved evaluation criteria
- Relation to the Council-approved project principles
• Qualitative environmental analysis
• Economics modeling of select redevelopment scenarios

At the end of the evaluation phase, we will report back to the CAC our conclusions. The report will include a table allowing side-by-side comparison of the alternatives

**Direction sought**
If the CAC feels that the draft alternatives are ready in their current form to proceed to the evaluation phase, you should so indicate. Alternatively, if there are minor revisions that you would like made based on public feedback received to date, you can direct the project team to proceed to the evaluation phase with the understanding that those revisions are to be included (you would need to specify the changes). If more significant changes are desired, it may be necessary to return for an additional meeting with the CAC before proceeding with the evaluation.