



DATE: March 10, 2010

TO: Chair Sheffels and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Paul Inghram, 452-4070
Mike Bergstrom, 452-6866

SUBJECT: Introduction to the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project

At your March 10 meeting, staff will provide the Planning Commission with an introduction to the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project, which was officially launched by the City Council on February 1. This project, overseen by a Citizen Advisory Committee to be appointed by Council, will develop and evaluate future land use and transportation scenarios for the Eastgate/I-90 commercial corridor, using a Year 2030 planning horizon.

At the completion of the CAC's work, the Planning Commission will help develop and review any Comprehensive Plan or Land Use Code changes needed to implement the CAC's recommendation. Staff will provide the Planning Commission with periodic updates as the project evolves.

Background

The Bellevue Comprehensive Plan identifies the Eastgate/I-90 corridor as one of the City's five major employment centers. As of March 2008 the study area (Attachment A) had an estimated 25,500 employees, approximately 18% of the City's total employment. Several large corporations are located in the corridor, including T-Mobile, Boeing, Microsoft, and Verizon. In addition, the corridor is home to Bellevue College, the third-largest institution of higher-education in the state.

The area is an important gateway for Bellevue, as it flanks a major interstate highway and contains part of the route of the Mountains to Sound Greenway that stretches from Central Washington to the Seattle waterfront. Besides its gateway role, the corridor is a vital link between the north and south parts of Bellevue, and is surrounded by well-established neighborhoods. The project scope (Attachment B) will help ensure that this area continues to attract and retain employers, provide a mix of services to surrounding neighborhoods and be a vibrant and significant contributor to Bellevue's economic health in the coming decades.

The study area is generally bounded by I-405 to the west, Southeast 26th Street to the north, 161st Avenue Southeast to the east, and Southeast 38th Street to the south, along with an extension east to the Lakemont Boulevard interchange. It includes portions of the Eastgate, Factoria and Richards Valley subareas. As shown on Attachment A, the primary study area lies adjacent to, but does not include, the Eastgate Potential Annexation Area. Discussions with residents of the PAA about future annexation will occur through a separate effort.

While acknowledging the city's limited capacity to fund major new infrastructure to support land use changes, the Council concluded that this project needs to proceed now. Reasons include: A need to plan holistically rather than piecemeal, realizing that several Eastgate property owners have a desire to redevelop their properties; a desire to stem the erosion of neighborhood services used by surrounding residents; a need to work with the state Department of Transportation to improve regional access and

improve transportation efficiency; a desire to provide more connectivity in the corridor; a desire to create a more coherent image for the area; a desire to leverage the opportunities presented by the Mountains to Sound Greenway; and a desire to improve linkages with Bellevue College and pursue partnerships that benefit both the College and the City as a whole. These and other considerations were endorsed by the City Council in a set of Council Principles (Attachment C), which will provide direction to the citizen advisory committee, staff, and commissions in their work over the course of this project.

The project will pursue substantial public involvement, as reflected in Attachment D. Community participation, especially from residents in the project area and along the affected transportation corridors, is crucial throughout the planning process. To accomplish these objectives, the public involvement plan proposes a multi-layered approach, consisting of (i) a Citizen Advisory Committee; (ii) Commission/Board engagement; (iii) community workshops/open houses; (iv) business and property owner panels; (v) media outlets; (vi) project mailings; and (vii) other measures as the project progresses to ensure appropriate engagement and participation by affected or interested parties.

Next Steps

The outreach effort is underway to inform the public about the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project and to gather input on key priorities and issues.

1. Open Houses – On March 31, the public will be invited to start a conversation about the future of the Eastgate/I-90 Corridor at these locations:

Robinswood House

2430 148th Avenue SE

1:00-3:00 pm

Presentation at 1:30 pm

Eastgate Elementary School

4255 153rd Avenue SE

5:00-7:00 pm

Presentation at 5:30 pm

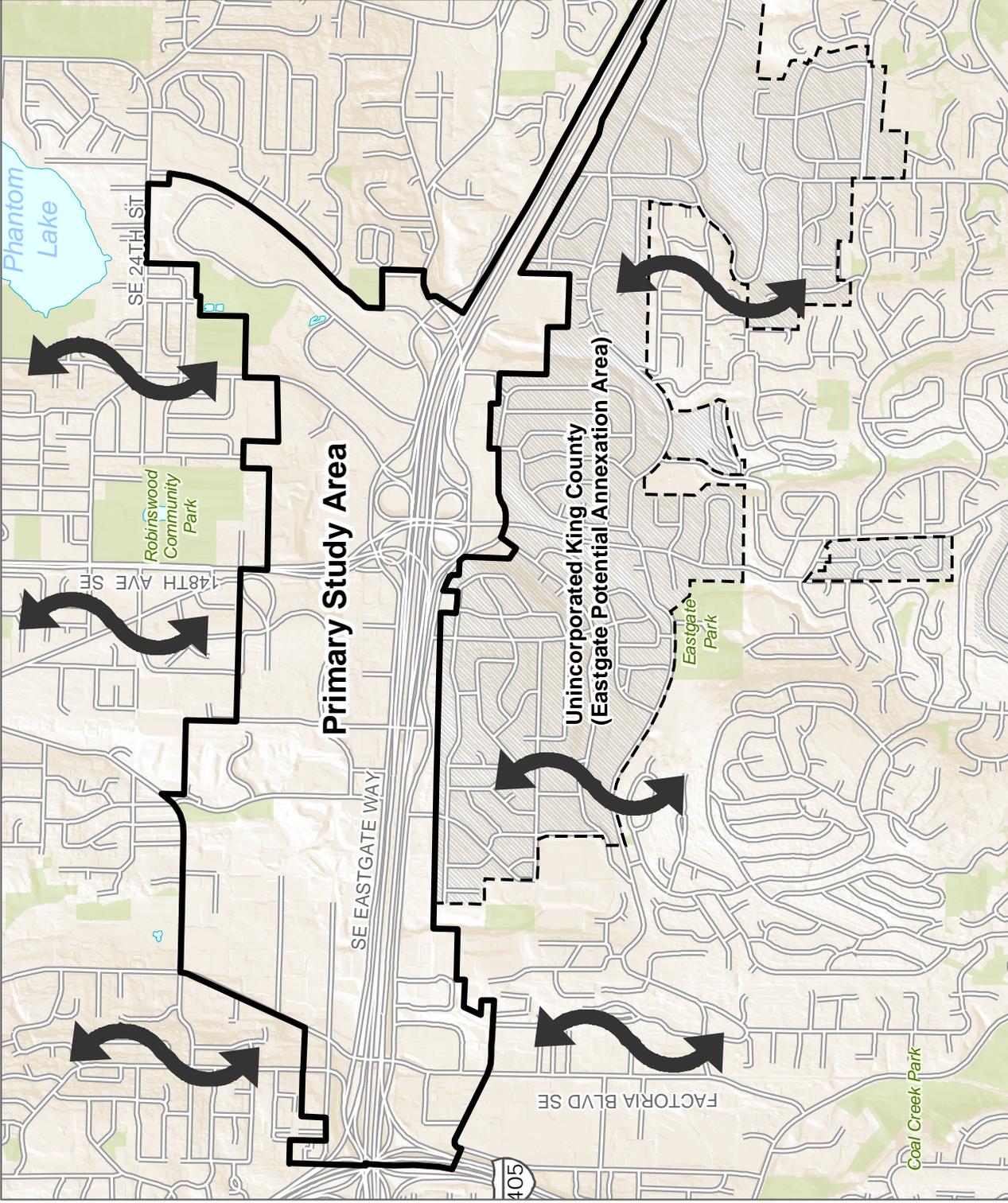
2. On-line Survey – Later this month, the project webpage <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/eastgate-corridor.htm> will include a quick and easy way to provide additional comments. The public will be encouraged to complete the confidential online survey by April 30. Staff will post the results on the webpage in early May.
3. Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) – The project will be guided by a CAC that is envisioned to be made up of members of City Boards and Commissions, and representatives from the study area and surrounding community. The mission of this group will be to advise and make recommendations to the City Council on the project. It is anticipated that the CAC will be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council in April.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Study Area Map
- B. Project Scope
- C. Council Principles
- D. Public Involvement Plan

The primary study area encompasses the commercial properties in the Eastgate/I-90 corridor and is the area within which land use changes will be considered. Outside this area no land use changes are anticipated as part of this project. In addition, the primary study area extends eastward along I-90 to and including the Lakemont Blvd Interchange area for transportation analysis only, and also includes the Mountains to Sound Greenway corridor along I-90.

Arrows indicate a broader zone of transportation influence which is included for transportation planning.



The information on this map is a geographic representation derived from the City of Bellevue Geographic Information System. The City of Bellevue does not guarantee that the information on this map is accurate or complete. This map is provided on an "as is" basis and disclaims all warranties, express or implied, including but not limited to warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose and non-infringement. Any commercial use or sale of this map or portions thereof is prohibited. The City of Bellevue is not responsible for any damages arising from the use of information on this map. Use of this map is at user's risk. Users should verify the information before making project commitments.

Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project Map

Approved by the Bellevue City Council on February 1, 2010

City of Bellevue logo featuring a stylized blue and white emblem with the text 'CITY OF BELLEVUE' and 'MOUNTAINS TO SOUND GREENWAY'. Below the logo is a scale bar labeled '= 2,000 feet'.

Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project

Project Scope

Approved by the Bellevue City Council on February 1, 2010.

Scope of Work and Anticipated Products

The project scope will involve the following major elements:

- Economic and market analysis. With the help of consultants, the existing employment and business mix in the area will be evaluated, and long-term growth prospects for the area will be analyzed for a variety of land uses.
- Land use alternatives. Based in part on analysis of the area's constraints and opportunities, the economic/market analysis, input from community stakeholders, and other factors, land use alternatives will be generated for additional analysis.
- Transportation analysis. Any revised future land use vision for the corridor will require regional access, adequate circulation within the area, and mitigation of impacts to surrounding areas. The transportation impacts of each land use alternative will be modeled and evaluated. The results of this analysis will help identify a preferred land use alternative, with an appropriate package of multi-modal transportation strategies.
- Early consideration of ST-3 improvements for I-90 corridor. Staff is not expecting work on ST-3 to proceed during the tenure of this project, and it is currently unclear whether it is reasonable to assume that light rail extensions along this corridor could be implemented by 2030, which is the timeframe for this study. However, it is to the City's advantage to consider the impacts and benefits of potential transit corridors as part of this planning effort. Preliminary discussions will take place with the City of Issaquah, Sound Transit, and other agencies on potentially desirable high capacity transit routes and station locations in advance of the Sound Transit ST-3 study.
- Greenhouse gas and health impact analysis. In accord with Washington State greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions goals, the plan will explore means to reduce GHG emissions in the study area. In addition, grant opportunities will be explored that would allow the project to assess the health impacts that could result from land use and transportation changes.
- Selection of a preferred alternative. Based on the evaluation of alternatives and public input, a preferred alternative will be selected. The preferred potential development patterns will be refined and illustrated. In addition to land use and urban amenities, the preferred alternative will include the transportation improvements needed to accommodate the vision, and strategies to minimize impacts to surrounding areas.
- Integrated GMA planning and SEPA environmental review. This concept emphasizes beginning environmental review as early in the planning process as possible so that environmental considerations can effectively inform the development and evaluation of project alternatives, and create a more efficient SEPA process.
- Financing and implementation strategies. A financial strategy will be prepared to guide funding of the transportation, urban amenities and other improvements needed to realize the preferred alternative.

Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project

Council Principles

Approved by the Bellevue City Council on February 1, 2010.

The following Council Principles are intended to provide consistent direction over the course of this project. An over-arching consideration that cuts across all these Principles is the reality of fiscal constraints that limit the City's ability to fund major new infrastructure projects. To the extent that new infrastructure is needed to support potential land use changes, costs and ability to fund these improvements must be serious and early considerations.

1. Enhance the Eastgate corridor's economic vitality without degrading mobility in other parts of the City, and ensure that it continues to contribute to the diversity of the City's economic mix.
2. Retain and enhance neighborhood-oriented services and businesses, which are important to nearby residents of Bellevue and the adjacent Eastgate potential annexation area.
3. Improve linkages with Bellevue College, which may include land use and transportation strategies, as well as a variety of partnerships that benefit both the College and the City as a whole.
4. Better integrate land use and transportation across Eastgate, which may include consideration of transit-oriented development in portions of the area. Changes in land use should be informed by transportation opportunities and impacts. For example, the large Eastgate park and ride facility may create an opportunity for a transit overlay district, with well integrated land use and transportation performance. *[Text added]*
5. Continue to evolve Eastgate's transportation infrastructure to a high performing, multi-modal system, including coordinating with service providers on increased transit service to the area.
6. Increase connectivity across the Eastgate corridor, addressing the area's numerous barriers such as its limited street and non-motorized (both pedestrian and bicycle) network, and stand-alone developments.
7. Model environmental sustainability in planning for Eastgate's future, so that future plans for the area produce measurable environmental benefits.
8. Improve the Eastgate Corridor's urban design quality and coherence, recognizing the area as a major City gateway and prominent location on the Mountain to Sound Greenway.
9. Work to improve the performance of state facilities in the area – I-90 and its access points—which today create major issues for the City's land use and arterial system.

Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project

Public Involvement Plan

Approved by the Bellevue City Council on February 1, 2010.

Public Involvement Plan Objectives

The Eastgate I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project includes a robust public involvement plan. This plan will help fulfill the following objectives:

- Include and consider a broad range of ideas and perspectives in the development and evaluation of alternatives;
- Ensure stakeholder engagement;
- Thoroughly identify opportunities, issues, and concerns, and develop creative and meaningful responses to them;
- Instill a broad perspective in alternatives to be considered;
- Ensure participation by a wide demographic range, consistent with the diverse population of the study area and nearby neighborhoods.

Public Involvement Plan Components

To accomplish these objectives, the public involvement plan proposes a multi-layered approach, consisting of the following components:

- Citizen Advisory Committee. A CAC could help bring a broad and balanced perspective to this planning process. The committee would be appointed by Council and advise the Commissions and Council. The CAC is envisioned as a 9- to 12-member body, composed of representatives from City Boards/Commissions, representatives of City-wide interests, and area stakeholders. While specific composition would be determined at a later date, the CAC could include:
 - One member each from the Planning Commission, Transportation Commission, and Parks Board
 - Community representatives with a broad City-wide perspective on matters such as: urban design, multi-modal transportation, environmental considerations, and economic development
 - Area stakeholders representing Bellevue College, business and property owners, and nearby neighborhoods north and south of the study area, and the Potential Annexation Area.
 - A potential liaison from the City Council.

In addition, participation of non-City agencies would be sought, either as non-voting members of the CAC or to serve in another advisory capacity. This could include:

- WSDOT
 - King County/METRO
 - Mountains to Sound Greenway
- Other City Boards and Commissions. Other City boards and commissions, including Arts, Human Services, and Environmental Services, may have an interest in this project and will be briefed as progress ensues.
 - Community workshops/open houses. Public workshops and/or open houses will be conducted at appropriate junctures in the planning process to increase opportunities for participation by the public at large.

- Business and property owner panels. Structured panels of business owners and property owners as used in the Bel-Red project were very effective at achieving two-way dialogue and ensuring that these key interests were well understood.
- Media. Media will be used for broad and ongoing distribution of project information. Opportunities for media communications include:
 - A project website will be established and maintained, to include project information, reports, meeting summaries, and notices of upcoming events.
 - News articles will be prepared and published in:
 - It's Your City
 - Neighborhood News
 - News Releases (to area newspapers and TV and radio stations)
- Project mailings. Mailings of project information and upcoming events will be sent to study area property owners and other stakeholders, nearby residents, and nearby neighborhood associations. A list of "interested parties" will be maintained and used for notification of project information.
- Other measures will be identified as the project progresses to ensure appropriate engagement and participation by affected or interested parties.