

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BEL-RED CORRIDOR PROJECT
PROPERTY OWNER PANEL
VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

March 14, 2007
7:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
1E-109

PANELISTS: Carol Anderson, Steve Shennum, Dave Sharp, Gregory Johnson, Ellen Glann, Patricia Halpin, Jon Magnussen, Sr., Jon Magnussen, Jr., Robert Messmer, Rod Johnson, Mike Yuhl, Sami Chudgar

MODERATORS: Kevin McDonald, Diana Canzoneri

Mr. McDonald: Let's get started. We want to be able to wrap up by 9:30. I want to, again, introduce myself, Kevin McDonald from the transportation department. What we'd like to start with today is to get a feel for who's in the room. So if we could just go around the table and give us your name and your interest in the Bel-Red corridor, if you a business or own property here.

Hi, my name is Carol Anderson and I'm from the Design Center on Bel-Red Road.

Steve Shennum, Eastside Staple and Nail)) on 120th. Bought the building about two years ago, so interested to see what the future direction of the corridor's going to be.

Dave Sharp of Legacy Commercial. We own the Design Market on 116th next to Whole Foods. And we just bought the building next to you on 120th. And we own the block across the street, the Inca building and north to the old Coco's. We have an interest in the general region.

My name's Greg Johnson, I'm with Wright Runstad and we're in the process of buying the Safeway distribution facility, 36 acres between 120th and 124th.

Hi, good morning. I'm Ellen Glann and I'm a resident at Lake Bellevue condominiums.

I'm Patricia Halpin and I own a house that is zoned commercial and I lease it out on NE 20th.

I'm Jon Magnussen, Sr. We own a building on the corner of 130th and Bel-Red Road.

I'm Jon Magnussen, Jr. Ditto.

Robert Messmer, Cascade Commercial asset management.

I'm Rod Johnson. I own a building on Northup Way between 124th and 130th. Ironworks Gym, that area.

I'm Mike Yuhl. I own the building next to Rod. I'm the one with the concrete building in the trees. My business is also there.

I'm Samir Chudgar and I am probably just outside the area (inaudible [Sherwood Forest resident; have home-based engineering businesses.]

I'm Diana Canzoneri. I work for the Department of Planning and Community Development.

Mr. McDonald: Thanks everyone. I have a script because we want to be able to ask the same questions to all the panels. So we do want to ask a series of questions. We have maps around the room that represent the alternatives. And there are

(Tape 1 blank after the above comments due to tape malfunction)

During this approximately two-minute time period, Mr. McDonald introduces first question, and discussion begins. Questions from facilitator guide reads: In the first question, we'd like you to consider the land use components that are essentially *the same* across the action alternatives (for example, the area of Medical Office along 116th, or the general fact that development in each of the action alternatives is concentrated in nodes, although the location of the nodes varies).

[Are you generally supportive of including these components in the preliminary preferred alternative?](#)

(Start Tape 2)

Mr. McDonald: ...can be increased above what is there, then that's a good comment to the steering committee. But I just want to assure you that the steering committee is not intending to downzone or reduce the development potential of that area.

Panelist: Just pointing up the facts of the Leland report. Don't testify what you've done. In fact, the Leland report omits that area – they show the area, but they omit any discussion of it. But what you do in the draft EIS is you pick up the descriptor in the Leland report, which basically is Lowes, Tap Plastics and Hawkins, and what you use is that description for the entire area.

Mr. McDonald: But it's a little bit of a broad brush.

Panelist: Well it's the broadest brush you use in the whole study.

Mr. McDonald: Okay. Any other comments on the land use components, that support the nodal development pattern for instance around the train stations.

Panelist: Oh yes, I have another comment. And this is also in one of my letters. But what you say is the density is 75 to 80 dwelling units per acre, and in my March 11 letter I go through it and I pick three properties at 16th and 120th, and I went through it very detailed and figured out how much area, how much apartments you could get on that zone, and the best you can do is something less than 40, okay? Now what happens is – The problem is it's because you have such small density properties, small sizes. It eliminates what you can do. But if you put the same thing over here where they own the whole block, it's pretty easy to get that density.

Mr. McDonald: That's an important point to make. As you move toward the center of the study area around 130th, 132nd, the lot sizes are considerably smaller than they are on the west side. And that does make a difference because it has implications for how much development you can put on the site. Assuming, of course, that all the lots stay individually owned. If someone comes in and puts several lots together, then you've got a big lot and you can do something more creative.

Panelist: I agree.

Mr. McDonald: South of Bel-Red Road. There's nobody here that has a property interest south of Bel-Red Road, right?

Panelist: Well, Lake Bellevue.

Mr. McDonald: Would you point out the area we are talking about south of Bel-Red Road. That orange, that narrow strip that is right now professional offices for the most part. There's no residential in there right now at all. The steering committee proposed to retain that area as low-intensity professional office, woody walk-up kind of office development. It backs up to single family residential development south of there. The steering committee saw no compelling reason to change that. Do you agree with that?

Panelist: Except in the third alternative.

Mr. McDonald: The third alternative introduces housing, and it would be low-

density housing similar in scale to the office developments that are there now. It would allow a creative developer to integrate housing with the office development along the south side of Bel-Red Road. That's one of the variables we can get to later, but if you don't like that variable, say so. If you think low-intensity uses are appropriate south of Bel-Red Road, then we'll pass that on to the steering committee.

Panelist: Is that low-intensity, you mean like single family housing?

Mr. McDonald: It probably would not be single family housing. I would expect that there is not one acre in Bel-Red that will be appropriate for single family housing when we are all said and done with this. It will be multifamily housing. But it abuts single family to the south so we want to be sensitive to that transition. So how about that little wedge of land out at 156th where Angelo's is? The vision for that is to keep a lot of commercial activity going there but to introduce a housing component in sort of a stacked arrangement. So you've got commercial on the ground floor and housing above. Does that seem to make sense?

Panelist: Sure. Good thinking.

Mr. McDonald: Thank you.

Panelist: Now you mentioned the Burlington Northern railway. That's common in all three alternatives, that's being eliminated?

Mr. McDonald: As a rail corridor it's likely to not exist. It will be what we call rail banked so that the right-of-way would be retained and it would be used as a trail in the interim, always with the possibility that rail could be introduced in the future as it is needed to serve the northern area. But it would be preserved for public use in perpetuity. And as you know, the county and the port are wrangling over how to purchase that and who would have ownership of it in the long term. The City of Bellevue has a long interest, a long stated policy interest in retaining that corridor as a public right-of-way, and has also stated that they would prefer to see the short-term use of the corridor as a trail, without precluding the eventual long-term use as a rail corridor.

Panelist: Let me ask a question about that medical office along 116th and I-5. Is the city going to be introducing a new type of land use that would apply to that? Or would it be something that's existing and swapping it in for what's currently allowed?

Mr. McDonald: Pretty much what's existing is what's envisioned. The only difference would be like in Alternative 2 where you see the transit station there, wherever you have transportation capacity and a light rail system you can increase the density of the land use in the vicinity of it. So whereas medical office is in common in all three alternatives, in Alternative 2 you might have the potential to increase the intensity of that development a little bit more because you've got the transportation system to support it. But really it's the office supporting the hospitals that are existing. Similar to the way it is now. Possibly a little more intense as redevelopment occurs.

Panelist: When you say more intense, you mean you can put second and third stories on?

Mr. McDonald: I could be higher, it could cover more of the lot. The intensity is measured as the square footage of the building with respect to the square footage of the lot. And you can achieve higher density by going higher or going wider. But in either case the intensity of the development along 116th is expected to increase over time. Do you all think that's a reasonably good idea?

Panelists: Yes.

Panelist: Does that mean biomedical research or those kinds of buildings?

Mr. McDonald: I don't think it precludes anything like that, but primarily it is intended to mean small offices for doctors and dentists to support the major operations of the hospital. So if some biomedical research wanted to come in and locate at that location because it's proximate to all those other medical uses, that probably would be fine. That use would also be fine elsewhere in the corridor, in those areas where general office use might be allowed. That type of facility could easily be integrated with general office uses. Similar to what's happening in South Lake Union where there's a mix different types of offices, and research is among them.

Panelist: The research could financially generate a lot of city jobs.

Mr. McDonald: Yes. The city is anticipating that a lot of new jobs will be created in the Bel-Red corridor. And some additional housing would be developed to give opportunities for folks to live. What other item in common did we have. Do you support the concept of – Well, whether you support light rail or not is not the question, but whether you support having higher intensity land uses around light rail stations is the question. Where those stations are – Whether or

not they ever occur is not the question, but if they occur, we want to bump up the land use intensity around them, that seems to make sense?

Panelist: Let me make a comment. All of these assume the light rail stations. Now, if the light rail just doesn't get here in the long term, how would we effect all this change?

Mr. McDonald: That's a very good question. At the very beginning of this process we decided that we didn't want the presence of light rail to influence the development pattern of this area. So what we wanted to do was make sure the arrangement of spaces and the use of those spaces makes sense with or without light rail. But the thing that light rail does is allow you to increase the density of the land use around those stations. So if you took light rail out of here and you still had Alternatives 1, 2 and 3, you would still have the same color blobs in the spaces that they are. What light rail does is allow you to add more intensity is all. What we're thinking about though, as I mentioned in the presentation, is that in the long-range planning for transportation in the Puget Sound region, light rail is part of the equation. Whether it's in the next ten years or twenty years or thirty years it's probably going to happen, and it's probably going to go from downtown Bellevue to Redmond, and it's more than likely to go through the Bel-Red corridor. So we're anticipating that it will happen sometime. And we're not going to hold land use hostage to the eventuality of light rail, so what we want to do is work with Metro and Sound Transit to increase bus service in the area to support the land uses that we expect to happen in the short term. And when light rail comes, that bus service can be redeployed elsewhere. But we're definitely wanting to make sure that redevelopment can occur in the absence of light rail. And as you saw, the surface transportation options that we have on the table and all those roadway improvements, we have no funding mechanism for those yet. We have to identify where those are, what the capacity is of those roadways needed to support the land uses around them.

Mr. McDonald: Okay, Diana is suggesting that we move on. So we're still on the subject of land use components. And I think answering this question involves looking at the land use components that vary between the alternatives, such as the specific location of the development nodes around those stations, or the concept of a services core that exists in Alternative 1, or the light industrial sanctuary that exists in Alternative 2. And to answer this question you may want to look the sheet I provided that was part of the slide show that Diana will hold up for you. The question is, with respect

to those variables, is there any one of those components, those variable components, that you would like to see included in the preferred alternative? Or if you really feel strongly about any of those being included in the preferred alternative, let us know. If you absolutely don't want to see one of these happen in the preferred alternative, let us know at this time. Anything you want to see or don't want to see that's on the variables list.

Panelist: What exactly is included in the so-called services core in Alternative 1?

Mr. McDonald: That's a good question. What's envisioned in the services core is a zoning, a future vision of zoning, that precludes non-service uses from that area. For instance, there wouldn't be housing, there wouldn't be office. It would capture in time the array of uses that are occurring there now and include that into the future. It wouldn't look a lot different. There wouldn't be a lot of redevelopment over time. There wouldn't be a light rail station in the vicinity because the low-intensity uses that are there now wouldn't really support that kind of a transit investment.

Panelist: So it stays the same.

Mr. McDonald: It pretty much stays the same. Whether or not it's exactly as shown in Alternative 1 is subject to future discussion, but the concept of having a services core is the big question. We'd like to know if you think that's important or not.

Panelist: It's one of those things that basically leaving it as it is is pigeonholing you into a certain way that it's going to always be. I think it's always good to have the opportunity or the possibility to do something else with it.

Mr. McDonald: The reason it exists as an alternative is because we've heard from a lot of neighborhoods that they want to be able to go down to the Bel-Red to have their tires changed and their cars serviced and their auto body dings repaired. So they are thinking probably in the short term. They want to be able to go where they've always gone. The interesting thing is we've gone to a number of other cities and looked to see in areas that are redeveloping that used to have a lot of stand-alone services what has happened to them. The demand for those services doesn't go away just because you add housing and land use intensity. They incorporate themselves into a different building type. They become part of mixed use buildings. We've got pictures from Portland and Vancouver and I've been to D.C. and San Diego where there's an auto body shop or an auto

paint shop or something mixed in with an office or tucked away in the corner of a residential building. And, you know, maybe the operations have to change a little bit to be reflective of the sensitivities of the neighbors, but it's not out of the question that that could happen. They don't have to exist as a stand-alone enclave. They can be incorporated into other types of uses.

Panelist: Yeah, I suppose that's my only worry is basically saying okay this is going to be designated as this when the current use we have now isn't – I mean it's basically all different types of uses, retail and commercial and light industrial, and having a situation where you're just going to be zoned commercial. Not having the ability to do housing or anything of that nature really devalues the property.

Panelist: I think in the earlier studies we had, Kevin, a lot of the discussion seemed to be that you were too restrictive on the land uses. What you ought to do is concentrate on the impact of the land uses, like an auto body shop if it adds fumes and this kind of thing you ought to mitigate that impact irregardless of what its neighbors are. And it would seem to me that would be a better way of approaching something other than trying to make a decision today that you're going to squeeze all those service cores into one core.

Mr. McDonald: You are supportive of eliminating a services core from the alternative and looking for opportunities to integrate those uses with other uses.

Panelist: Sure, make them more compatible with other uses. As you pointed out, in Portland you may have an auto body and office in the same building, but basically if they are compatible uses should we necessarily say the auto body can't go there?

Panelist: I think in general the zoning designations that do not preclude specific things but allow for flexibility as the corridor changes and the market demands shift will allow the property owner to choose from a variety of uses. That will in the long run serve the property owners in the whole area better.

Mr. McDonald: I think we've heard the arguments for land use flexibility throughout this process. I think that's an important consideration.

Panelist: Are we flexible already? I'm looking at medical offices over here, but there are other offices, businesses, in there that aren't medical. So that's kind of allowed for already.

Mr. McDonald: Yeah, good point. In some of the zoning districts there's a lot of flexibility built in right now. In some of them there's not. The light industrial zoning has a lot of flexibility, but not that much. You can't do housing for instance in the light industrial, and that's a relic that goes back to the dawn of zoning where you separated uses because they were incompatible with one another. In a lot of cases, that's not the situation today. And mixing regular office with medical office is just fine because the relationships are not incompatible. What tends to happen is you have aggregations of uses around each other that support one another, and the reason the medical office district exists right now on its own is because those uses want to be there together. There really isn't a medical office zone right now, it's just office. But because those adjacencies are important to those people, they will locate there. So the flexibility exists now, and the concept of the future of the medical office district is the same. It would be open to different types of uses, including maybe some smaller scale retail uses to support the daytime population of the area, but it would not preclude general office.

Panelist: Just a general question. Does retail/commercial allow any housing? You're saying flexible, and this is what I'm saying. It may be a different zone, and it may even be a down zone, but if it were dense enough housing. Like we're sitting there north of Northup Way and the freeway is a hundred feet above our heads, and yet we are going to be restricted to a low height type of construction when that could have a ten-story condominium a thousand feet long and everybody could see Mt. Rainier. So maybe it's a situation unique to the property right underneath the freeway, while on the backside there's no impact at all. And what's happening on the other side of the freeway is completely out of sight, except there might be some businesses up there already. Flexibility is I guess what I'm saying.

Mr. McDonald: Alternative 2 does not quite get to where you're at, but it's close. You see there's a brown area here which is south of Northup. That's housing. So what you're suggesting is you bump up that housing adjacent to the freeway because no one will be impacted.

Panelist: Along the same lines, your mixed use housing/commercial, does that – when that says housing/commercial, does that mean a ground floor commercial with housing above?

Mr. McDonald: Yes.

Panelist: It's not stand-alone commercial, it's not small office building?

Mr. McDonald: That's not the vision. That could be how it works out, but the vision is multistory with commercial on the ground floor and maybe a couple floors of housing.

Panelist: But really residential with ground floor retail is what we're talking about.

Mr. McDonald: Yes.

Panelist: In your draft, (inaudible) If you have housing high-density housing, along with that you'll need police stations, fire stations, schools. I see you included a civic and parks district, and you stress on the streams. But along with the height, you have to put in specific things you would need. You rezone and land will become expensive, and the school district will have to budget the land. So before you do that you have to identify will there be space for a school. If the school has to be outside your boundary then that changes your cross traffic and other things.

Mr. McDonald: The draft Environmental Impact Statement, somewhere in that 500 and some page document, addresses things like schools, fire stations. With respect to schools, what it says is even if you have 5000 housing units, the fact that they're going to be multifamily housing units doesn't allow – doesn't support the notion that they'll be a lot of kids. There will be some kids certainly, but the school district anticipates that those kids can be absorbed into the schools that have capacity around the Bel-Red corridor study area. You wouldn't be needing a new school within the study area. I can't remember what it says with respect to fire stations or police. I think that service can be provided from adjacent facilities as well. But the point is well made. When you start introducing land uses that don't exist today, you start introducing demands for services that don't exist today. That's one of the real key features of the Environmental Impact Statement that identifies what those demands are and how they can be met in the most aggressive of the land use alternatives, which is Alternative 3.

Panelist: You mentioned Redmond and Overlake, so similarly you might be having some other rezoning or other study either north or south of this corridor. If they also do not (inaudible), then you are in dilemma of who is going to provide them.

Mr. McDonald: And just so you know, we're in communication with Redmond. We know what they're doing with their land use and they know what we're doing. Both processes are still in flux so there's not a

real clear outcome for either of the processes. Redmond is thinking about a mix of office and housing similar to what we are, but we haven't gotten anything specific to them about what we're proposing, and they haven't gotten anything specific to us. It's still processing.

Anything more on the land use variables? We've spent some time on a couple of them but there's a whole page.

Panelist: The civics and art district, would that take away from the current one that already seems to be around Bellevue Square and Main Street?

Mr. McDonald: I think this would not take away from anything. It would build on existing facilities that are there in Bel-Red. There's the Northwest Ballet. They've made a big investment in their building there. The idea is to protect that investment and provide some encouragement to others to locate near there. Just like the medical office uses that want to aggregate around each other. We want to enable, if there's a need, those civic and art uses to aggregate around each other.

Panelist: I think that's an important thing to recognize. It's very hard to – very difficult for organizations like that to get a toehold somewhere and make that kind of investment. It's to the public good of the community to have that. Encouraging it is a positive. I think it's a benefit not just to Bel-Red but the whole city.

Panelist: I guess going back one more time to your version of mixed use/commercial. It would seem to me housing is something that's harder to introduce into it. You realize that these are kind of bubbles we have, but the reality is there are individual properties, some of which could change very quickly and some of which could not change for twenty years or more. It strikes me that that's a harder use to introduce over a larger area to be built around existing uses as opposed to retail or office for example. And that sort of the realities of introducing that type of use into that area is part of a lump sum rezone. It may be more challenging than some of the other options you have, unless you were to dissect that down into smaller components where you could see housing getting introduced into that area as a stand-alone use. Putting it in, just lumping it in, just saying that's what the land use is going to be there, could be a real – the reality of that could be a real challenge.

Mr. McDonald: Right. So there could be some existing uses that, by golly, they're not going to leave.

Panelist: They're vested and they're going to be there twenty, thirty years for whatever reason.

Mr. McDonald: I've seen in Ballard, for instance, there's a new housing development that has wrapped itself around a use that wasn't going to leave. And it's a tire shop. And it's a Goodyear tire shop and there's this five-story residential development wrapped around it. There isn't a big for lease on the side of the building. Every one of those units is leased. But somehow they've worked out their compatibility. But what you're suggesting is really valuable and we need to consider long-term transitions and how best to acknowledge that some uses will stay as new uses come in.

Panelist: Right. And it's taken Ballard a hundred years to get to that point.

Mr. McDonald; Right. Again, this is a long-range planning project. And 2030 is not the end, it's just the planning year. We'll be continuing to see evolution in this area in 2050 and beyond.

Panelist: There is some, I mean – Also there is along the corridor in that particular area some uses that I think would probably remain there. But there are things like right along Bel-Red Road where possibly that's something where you would have a little different use. Instead of being tucked back in there, you know, among body shops and everything. If you're along the corridor, you know, maybe zoning is opened up a little bit.

Mr. McDonald: So you've got a little bit more intense retail uses along the north side of Bel-Red Road?

Panelist: Exactly, along the road itself. Whereas if you get back into there, you know, possibly that can remain as being more of a services core. There's a lot of retail along that road as it is right now.

Mr. McDonald: Right, but as you suggest it's pretty low scale, it's set back. It's certainly functional and usable, but maybe bump up the intensity a little bit.

Panelist: Exactly.

Mr. McDonald: So we are going to have to move on to Question 2. So are there any other hot variables that you'd like to see or not see? Are we ready to move on?

We move to transportation next, so we are getting off of land use. Okay, here we go. My script says shifting to the subject of the

transportation component, the work done to date has identified an ambitious set of transportation construction projects which are, with slight variations, common to all the alternatives. And that's shown in the second-to-last – second-to-the-right map on the wall there. So this set of transportation projects is sufficient to support the land use components outlined in any of the alternatives, and they provide an acceptable level of service. But omitting any one of these projects might constrain the amount of land use growth that's possible, or increase congestion beyond what's tolerable. So in other words, what we've got there, combined with the land uses shown on the maps to the left, works from a transportation system perspective. If you eliminate any one of those connections, you either don't do as much land use as envisioned, or you tolerate more congestion than was modeled. So the question is, are there any of those transportation components that you would want to see included, or excluded, from the preferred alternative. Do you really like one of those and do you really think that this has got to be made part of any of the decisions for the preferred alternative, or do you just hate one so much that you couldn't possibly see it moving forward into the next level of study?

Panelist: Can we start with the hate first?

Mr. McDonald: Do you have a positive thing? Okay, let's do the hate.

Panelist: Well, here's the thing that really troubles me, okay. What happens is that we're talking about acquiring this right-of-way, this additional right-of-way.

Mr. McDonald: It doesn't exist now.

Panelist: Right. So today it's in a light industrial use. You go into condemnation and basically it's the highest and best. Well what we've just said is the highest and best use of this land is much more than it is today. So you get into a condemnation case and essentially what they're going to say is show me the highest and best use and that's what you pay me for. The second thing is when you go in and condemn some of these properties, then you'll see what happened along Northup, you chop off part of a parking lot. But golly guys, what determines what you can put on that building is the parking, and if you cut off five feet from your strip of parking, most of that parking disappears, so therefore there is less you can build. So from the standpoint there, I think we really need to re-look at why we're putting a street through there and why we're putting transit through there. Because essentially if you basically took this station and this station, and this station and here,

if you moved this station over, and over here the freeway, you've got a lot of area here defined within a quarter mile, but I don't think I'm going to drive down the freeway and then walk to the station. So if you took both these stations and put them there, you combine that usage there. But if you do that, here and here, why are you putting transit through there?

Mr. McDonald: How do you propose that you get from the west to the east?

Panelist: Right through there, because you've got the right-of-way. You're probably going to take Lowe's for the transit system because essentially you're going to put tracks up the right-of-way. And if you've got tracks to here, to Lowe's, you're going to put it along the freeway because you've got the right-of-way.

Mr. McDonald: Okay.

Panelist: How much would the current transit proposal cut into properties?

Mr. McDonald: It's not really possible to say at this point. We know approximately how wide the two-way tracks would be, and it's something like forty-eight feet. So you'd have to acquire enough land for that. Plus NE 16th is envisioned as a boulevard, so you'd have to acquire enough additional land for streets and sidewalks and landscaping. And so as you're going through the light industrial/commercial land, you are acquiring parcels. And as rightfully pointed out, sometimes if you acquire only part of a parcel, the part that you need, the rest of the parcel can be rendered useless. So the agency ends up buying the entire parcel. It doesn't need all that parcel for the right-of-way but it has to acquire it because that's the proper condemnation procedure. So what happens then is there's leftovers, and those leftovers can then be sold off to another party for redevelopment or can be left in public ownership and turned into a park or urban plaza or other public amenity.

Panelist: Okay.

Mr. McDonald: But it's not determined yet, back to your question, how wide of a right-of-way we would need. Certainly enough to accommodate trains and transit, I would suspect maybe a hundred feet, plus or minus at the very least.

Panelist: I'm sorry, I didn't hear his alternative of transit, align with the freeway or 116th?

Mr. McDonald: Along the freeway.

Panelist: Okay, I kind of object to that because my property gets close to that, and the DOT is already taking the property next to mine, their land – not the house part but the land – to widen 520, the onramp to 520. If they had a light rail in there, that would pretty well wipe out the neighborhood of NE 20th where I am. So I don't like that idea.

Mr. McDonald: New infrastructure, wherever it goes, will displace someone. It's not going to go in a tunnel. It's not affordable to do that. It's not going overhead either.

How about other transportation system components that you like or don't like.

Panelist: Just a comment. In your preamble, many of the transportation improvements that are shown here serve more than just the corridor, right?

Mr. McDonald: Right.

Mr. McDonald: And even if you do nothing in the corridor, the city, just to move traffic through and around the area, is going to need to do certain things. Is there a sense of which of these improvements you've got to do no matter what?

We have a transportation system that would be needed with the no action alternative. Those are the projects that would have to occur according to the transportation modeling.

Panelist: Looking at the location of transit stops, certainly one of the three alternatives has one on 116th. It seems to be critical to have a transit stop to service Overlake and all the medical facilities that are going to come in there. I think you'll find that if you look at Pill Hill and Harborview, the number of hospital workers, medical workers, who take transit is much higher than the normal population because it's a shift-oriented business. It's predictable, people don't need cars during the day, so you get a higher than normal rider percentage out of those hospital uses than you would with other uses.

Panelist: Sound Transit in their study shows a station over the freeway on 12th, which is designed to capture that population going to the hospital. And also provides benefit for the other side of the freeway.

Panelist: Yeah, there's so much residential going in there.

Panelist: Right. I think no matter what, the preferred alternative the committee comes up with should coincide with – you know, should have station locations that coincide with Sound Transit serving the hospital. That's kind of a no brainer.

Mr. McDonald: We don't know at this point where the downtown stations will be. Sound Transit is doing its own public process to determine the alignment and station locations for downtown. We're attempting to inform that decision for Bel-Red through this process. To the extent they need to be integrated, Sound Transit will take the ball.

Panelist: And another thing on 122nd, we would embrace a Sound Transit station there with open arms. We have a land area to design a development that can really capitalize on that type of infrastructure.

Mr. McDonald: If there was a station at 122nd, it's pretty close to the hospital district – it's what, eight, six blocks. It's not walking distance because it's not currently a comfortable walk. You've got the Burlington-Northern there, you've got a dip. If NE 16th was upgraded and made a really nice boulevard nice to walk and integrated with the NE 12th crossing, might that provide some amount of service to the medical office?

Panelist: I would think six blocks for a regular user, twice a day user five days a week, that would be too far. I'm not a transportation guy, but I would say that people would say six blocks, they're not doing it.

Panelist: A quarter mile radius is kind of a standard.

Mr. McDonald: Well Sound Transit is using half a mile radius. So they expect people to be more ambitious walkers than then traditional.

Panelist: I don't know how they look at stops, but I grew up a block away from the L in Chicago and we had stops every four blocks. So you had a high user rate because you never in the middle of winter and scorching summer had to walk more than two or three blocks to get to another stop. I would say if you really want to get people to ride it, it can't be – it really has to be convenient. If the alternative is to walk a hundred feet and jump in your car as opposed walking six blocks twice a day – that's a mile and a half each day from 122nd to 116th –

Panelist: But these are healthcare workers.

Mr. McDonald: Other transportation system components, likes or dislikes? We've heard a lot from the Bridle Trails neighborhood that the interchange at 124th with SR-520 is dead on arrival. They don't like that interchange, but our modeling shows that it's really important for the functioning of the transportation system to have a full interchange with access to and from the east on 520. I want to see what you guys think about that so the steering committee will know from your perspective whether that's important.

Panelist: Well I'd like to touch the third rail, the third rail being Bridle Trails. I would offer a suggestion. The problem I think is basically coming off and getting eastbound traffic. But basically if you moved it to 130th and then basically what you did in here was you made turns that force people coming off this thing, they couldn't go north, they had to go south on 130th. That may be an alternative for eastbound traffic.

Panelist: I just have – isn't there a vestige of resistance left over from a previous design for 124th? What's contemplated here is exactly what you're saying. You'd essentially be able to come on and off from the east, but you really only would be able to go south. And I think that's the key. It's really critical for movement through and service to this corridor, and if you are not allowing traffic to go north, I'm not sure what the problem is. There really wouldn't be a physical connection the way we've envisioned it.

Mr. McDonald: There's been no design work done at all, but the ramps would go onto and come off the freeway without touching the surface until you get to southbound 124th. No connection to the north at all. There's some concern about the volume of new traffic that might use that ramp and the resulting noise intrusion into the neighborhood, but that has not been studied. Don't know if that's a reality or not.

Panelist: My suggestion, and I hate to say it, but basically I use 24th all the time because there's no lights on it. Essentially what has to happen is you have to build in what I guess you call traffic calming nowadays to increase the time to use this. Because they should be using 20th. There's a lot of people doing the same thing because it's quicker.

Mr. McDonald: As you probably know if you use that road, there's an improvement project going on. It doesn't have a traffic calming

function –

Panelist: West of 130th.

Mr. McDonald: – but it provides better infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists that use that roadway. But it doesn't –

Panelist: But you really make time because you've only got that one stoplight at the top of the hill.

Mr. McDonald: I think that's one of the areas of concern for Bridle Trails is that if you increase the intensity of Bel-Red and you potentially increase the congestion in Bel-Red people will spill out and use some of those other alternatives. The fact is they are arterials, they aren't neighborhood streets, so the people are entitled to use those.

Panelist: But that's not acceptable to the people in Bridle Trails.

Mr. McDonald: Okay, any other transportation system improvements? On the map you can see little green dots with hands. Those are intended to imply that there would be traffic calming and traffic diversion and neighborhood protection along those access points to the neighborhoods so the traffic and parking will not spill over into those neighborhoods. We have not defined what those traffic calming measures are at this point. Oftentimes it takes a while to determine what the traffic patterns really are before you can decide a project that diverts traffic. But just to let you know that we are very aware of the sensitivities of adjacent neighborhoods and are planning to make sure there is not a lot of spillover traffic.

Okay. We should move on to Question 4. Let's see, let me read this question to myself first. Okay, this is the one where if you had a choice and you wanted to build from one of the land use alternatives, which one would it be? Does one of the alternatives stand out as a good foundation from which to build a preferred alternative? That's really the question. Which one would you build, and what specifics would you take away from it or add to it in building your preferred alternative?

Panelist: Three.

Mr. McDonald: I know that you want three. Three fits Wright's development program really well because it's got a station, it's got the right designation of land use for what you are thinking on your site.

Panelist: Yeah. Just stepping back even further, the visioning and process that's going on now, as well as all this environmental work that is required when you make this type of change, takes time and costs money. Step back and look at the original demand studies and say that when you're at the center of a region like the Puget Sound region and the intersections to the busiest freeways there's constantly going to be pressure here for future development. And our view is that there's probably more demand than is even outlined in Alternative 3, particularly when you introduce high-capacity transit. Good, smart growth principles say put your density where you have the infrastructure to capitalize on it. Because when you can offer people more choices, car, walking, transit, you'll be more efficient about the use of the investment. So that says be bolder than not bolder.

Panelist: Out of curiosity, having the retail pedestrian oriented on the south side of Bel-Red Road, is there a reason on the south side? I notice in the other one, two, it's on the north side. But I'm curious as to – the south side kind of cuts back into the trees and it has never really struck me as the place to have that. It seems on the north side you've got more of a density where you would have something like that.

Mr. McDonald: Are you talking about the retail that goes north and south from 16th?

Panelist: That goes north or south down 130th. It's south of Bel-Red Road here and north of Bel-Red Road on the other side. I'm just wondering why on this one they look at that as being the place to have it when it's kind of wooded. There's some business parks back in there but it does not really strike me as the place you'd have residential – or walking storefront.

Mr. McDonald: It was done for modeling purposes just to see what would happen. It's really a land use and urban design decision. In terms of the modeling, it makes no difference. So whether it's north or south doesn't matter. The ultimate decision on the long-term vision will certainly take into consideration the existing land use pattern, but again, we're looking twenty, thirty years out at what we want the land use pattern to be. And the vision can shape that. If we decide – If the steering committee decides that they want to have the retail corridor to the south, then we'll figure out the land use and urban design framework to make that happen. Are you suggesting that it be –

Panelist: No, either or. I'm just curious as to why that is. The other thing is

obviously having the residential portion or mixed use housing, what I'm kind of wondering is, have you heard anything from the business owners in there as far as what their input is. You know, obviously they are established in there and I'm wondering what their thought process is.

Mr. McDonald: That's what we're here for today, to hear from the business and property owners that have an interest in how this land redevelops.

Panelist: I mean has there been any input from some of those businesses in there?

Mr. McDonald: Some have expressed an interest in staying for the long term. Some of them have expressed excitement about the potential for land use changes to occur around them and then to embrace that and go with it. And some don't want to change at all.

Panelist: Sure. You're going to get that anywhere.

Panelist: We've already thought about this long-term-wise, what the vision of the corridor would be in 2010, 2020, 2030. And coming here we see what is pretty much in line with what we speculated. And as a business, we do change. It's all part of the process in our mindset.

Mr. McDonald: Following up on that, are there any of these alternatives that make the most sense to you, with modifications?

Panelist: Three seems to be the best.

Panelist: What this whole exercise is about is predicting the needs of the future. I favor Alternative 1 because it's a mid-range. If we are predicting what's going to happen, it seems to me we have less chance for error in 2020 of misjudging usage if we basically pick the mid-range. The second reason for picking Alternative 1 is that, again, I think the transit station at 122nd and the one at the hospital ought to be merged on the Burlington Northern right-of-way. I think whatever occurs around that station to the west, the property Greg speaks of, I think that really ought to be high density, because essentially you're right next door to the hospital, you're essentially adjacent to downtown. If you move that over, I think that's where high density occurs. And then leave the area east of the West Tributary as a separate property unit to discuss. It wouldn't be anywhere close to that high a density. But the other reason for that is it gives you an alternative, because if essentially you find out that acquiring a transit right-of-way on 16th or the street itself is too

costly, it gives you the option of at least being able to put the transit on the old right-of-way or 520. Because I think it's important for Bellevue. It's important for all of us. We need to get to Microsoft and hopefully downtown Redmond. Because the further we put that way, I think the better the downtown area benefits.

Mr. McDonald: Any other ideas on building from one of the alternatives?

Panelist: I guess we – I felt good about Alternative 3, but we have a major concern having to do with the right-of-way on the extension of 10th. I think it's the only alternative that shows a five-lane alternative, which would cut across the south half of our property on 116th. And that's a major concern because it's not that big a property. And what type of access you would have to our property off of 10th, how big that right-of-way would be, and what impact it would have on the rest of the developable land is all something we would look at real closely. So, you know, I think we could support three with a model that maybe showed more access off of 120th, 124th coming across NE 10th to keep it down to a three-lane roadway.

Mr. McDonald: So that's one of the transportation system component variables you would like to have input on.

Panelist: Right. I love the idea of having big the office density you show on three. Well, relatively high density. But how you get to and from is a concern.

Mr. McDonald: Yes. NE 10th, especially east of 116th is problematic because there's a lot of small parcels and you end up maybe doing more acquisition than you had hoped –

Panelist: Right.

Mr. McDonald: – to push that roadway through, especially as a four-lane cross section. So that's something that's on our radar screen too.

Panelist: I have a question that I could never find an answer to in this thing. If what we are doing is promoting transit, and the transit would work to go to downtown Bellevue, why are we building 16th to do the same thing? Wouldn't it be better if we basically de-linked this thing and forced people to get on transit if they want to go to downtown Bellevue? Because they are certainly not packing groceries or hardware to and from downtown Bellevue.

- Mr. McDonald: Well, Sound Transit is part of a regional system. As we pointed out, it goes from downtown Bellevue to Redmond. It's got to go through the Bel-Red corridor.
- Panelist: I agree. But we're building 16th there through to take, presumably, more cars to downtown Bellevue. Are we competing with Sound Transit?
- Mr. McDonald: Oh I see what you're asking. I think a lot of what 16th does is provide internal circulation for the Bel-Red corridor. Because right now as you know there's only two east-west streets. We want to provide another east-west link. It provides for auto trips, it could provide for the light rail corridor, it provides for pedestrian and bicycle connections. We feel that NE 16th is an important street in and of itself. It's important for internal circulation, but it does help disperse traffic to the downtown. I'm not sure we can toggle on and off the ridership calculations with NE 16th being there or not, but I'm not sure if it makes a lot of difference because I think the people that are riding transit to those stations are coming from a larger area of the region. A lot of what 16th does is provide internal circulation.
- Mr. McDonald: Okay. So say we took Alternative 3 as a base. What about the idea of having housing up here? Alternative 3 has this as an office campus here. What if we had Alternative 3 as a base but had more housing, in fact had housing go all the way up to 520. Would that be a tweak to three that folks might be able to support?
- Panelist: I'd support that because I think it would make sense to integrate your housing. And the step above Northup, especially west of 130th, is too steep to do any commercial retail. It's too small, too.
- Panelist: So option three basically eliminates, pretty much eliminates, the light industrial from this area.
- Mr. McDonald: As a dedicated land use, yes it eliminates that as a long-term vision. Does it eliminate light industrial use, no. Just dedicated light industrial use.
- Panelist: That's fine.
- Mr. McDonald: So Alternative 2 says this is your long-term vision, you're going to have warehouse and industrial uses there for the long term. This says you can redevelop to office and have a mix of housing in it, and for as long as light industrial wants to be there it can be there. But if the market forces or other conditions change, they may

choose to leave.

Panelist: This land just seems to valuable to designate it long term for light industrial.

Mr. McDonald: Is there anything else you would add or subtract from Alternative 3? What about the housing part of Alternative 3, the housing south of Bel-Red Road, is that something you're comfortable with? Does it make any difference to you whether we throw a little housing in south of Bel-Red Road?

Panelist: Providing the flexibility allows for a mix.

Mr. McDonald: We've already talked about the civic and arts component shown in Alternative 2. Would you like to maybe have a civic and arts component in Alternative 3?

Panelist: Yes.

Panelist: Yeah.

Panelist: It makes it a lot more vibrant neighborhood.

Mr. McDonald: What about that services core shown in Alternative 1? We talked about that earlier and said maybe we can find a different way to accommodate services. Is that a consensus point?

Panelist: Provided the zoning is flexible enough you will get a lot of those businesses.

Panelist: Right. You don't necessarily have to push businesses out of there, but you know, allow people who want to have the flexibility to do something else to do so.

Mr. McDonald: That retail strip along NE 20th, the auto dealers, the auto-oriented retail, that seems to be a part of all the alternatives. Is that alright? Would you want to see anything different along NE 20th?

Panelist: Yes. The problem with the stuff that exists along NE 20th right now is you basically have single-story office with a lot of parking lots. I think that basically ought to redevelop. Because you can go housing over those and you can afford to tear down those buildings and stack housing above. The second reason for this – and I don't like Alternative 3 because it puts the high density on 130th. If you put the high density further to the west closer to downtown Bellevue, I think it would work a lot better than putting it right in

the middle of what is currently an industrial area.

Mr. McDonald: What if the vision for Alternative 3 included a substantial housing component at 122nd? Right now it's shown as medium-density office, but what if you said a little bit of housing, a little bit of office?

Panelist: Well I think that whatever it is, it should be higher density. Because you can basically use the West Tributary as a division line between the higher density and the area that may remain industrial, or to the north may be housing over commercial. As I say, it seems to me the wrong thing under Alternative 3 to put the high density right in the middle. Basically I would rather offer it to Greg over here and stick it closer to downtown Bellevue. Because you've got access to the freeway, better access.

Mr. McDonald: Okay. But you are also supporting housing on NE 20th?

Panelist: Yes. I think that works on both sides, housing over commercial. Not nearly the density you are projecting because I don't think 75 to 80 is going to work. Now you are looking at the biggest density in Bellevue is R-30, thirty units per acre. But you are talking something two and a half times that density. The only way I can make your numbers work is take a whole block, 330 feet square, dig the whole thing out, put parking underneath, and stack buildings above 15 feet apart. I couldn't make it work to get 80 units per acre other than that. And I couldn't make that work here because they're individual properties.

Mr. McDonald: I agree with you that the current development pattern, especially if you try to provide surface parking, isn't going to allow –

Panelist: No, I did underground parking. I even tried to figure out how to do two layers of parking, but I can't do two layers of parking on flat ground because you need a ramp to get up. You have to have a big site to make this work. And on 130th, there's 80 properties within a quarter mile radius. Think of 80 properties trying to get together to come up with a comprehensive plan land use plan.

Mr. McDonald: The steering committee is going to come up with a comprehensive land use plan. The property owners can work amongst themselves.

Panelist: I think part of it is in the details, too, of what actually comes out in your land use plan amendment. We talk about what you call retail/commercial, there's several different zoning designations you can apply to that. GC is different from CB. Part of that is just

applying the most flexible zoning that you can within each bubble. You can do residential with CB, but you can't with GC. I encourage you to go more flexible.

Mr. McDonald: I would anticipate that the zoning for this corridor is unique to this corridor. It's not going to be Community Business, it's not going to be General Commercial. It'll be very unique, a Bel-Red mix. Seattle has what they call Seattle mixed, I don't know if any of you are familiar with that, but it allows for the unique application of different land uses in a flexible pattern that respond to needs. We'll probably have a Bel-Red mix applied here in a couple of different places.

We've got a couple more questions that we're supposed to ask, but I want to make sure that we've exhausted the alternative – Say we used Alternative 3, is there anything you would add or take away from Alternative 3 that you would want the steering committee to note? Right now we've got three, that includes housing up along 520 and along the NE 20th corridor, we've got a civic/arts component, we've got housing south of Bel-Red Road, light rail on 116th, a mix of housing on 122nd as opposed to just a mix of office.

Panelist: I like putting the density west of the West Tributary.

Mr. McDonald: Okay. We've got just a couple of minutes left. The steering committee meets on the 29th. In the last three minutes I just want to open the floor to see if anyone has any comments they would like to direct to the steering committee, words of encouragement, anything at all you would like to say to them. Things where we might have consensus the steering committee may value knowing. I think there is some consensus that Alternative 3 works with modifications that have been proposed. Anything else? We are going to provide this to them before the meeting on the 29th so they can consider our input while making decisions on the alternatives.

Not even any words of encouragement?

Panelist: I have a question. Where it says parks and open space between 132nd and 136th, does that mean that the current businesses there would be gone?

Mr. McDonald: Well it depends. We've discussed allowing for those businesses to stay if they want to stay. We've discussed allowing for a mixed use development pattern where they can be incorporated into a new mixed use project. If there's any neighborhoods in the area, there will have to be parks for them. Somehow the land for those parks

would have to be made available. In some cases, that land might currently be occupied by a business. So there could be some property acquisition. There could be redevelopment where a private property owner provides land for a park as an amenity for the new residents. There is no specific site identified for parks. It's sort of an evolutionary process. As new development occurs there will be a need for more parks, and where that occurs is dependent on the private sector. The only place we've actually pinpointed where we might want to have a park is the civic/arts facility. That may be the catalyst for other arts and civic functions. It could be the centerpiece for an open space park.

Well, to be respectful of your time, I guess we'll let you go. Unless there are any last words you would like to say.

Panelist: One word: flexibility.

Mr. McDonald: I've got that written down.

Thank you for your participation. We'll assemble these notes and pass them on to the steering committee. You're more than welcome to attend the steering committee meeting on the 29th. It will be in this building on the 29th, and we'll make sure you all have a notice of that meeting.