

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES

September 22, 2005  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Bell, Vice Chair Young, Commissioners Glass, Holler, Wendle, Yuen

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Northey

STAFF PRESENT: Franz Loewenherz, Kristi Oosterveen, Jen Benn Eric Miller, Nancy LaCombe, Department of Transportation

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Chair Bell who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Young, who arrived at 6:42 p.m., and Commissioner Northey, who was excused.

3. STAFF REPORTS

Senior Planner Franz Loewenherz provided the Commissioners with information regarding I-912 in response to a request made at the previous Commission meeting. The packet included: the language of the initiative; materials from the Washington State Department of Transportation summarizing how the initiative will impact funding for some 270 projects; and information regarding how projects in King County will be impacted if the initiative is approved by the voters, including projects in the Bellevue area. Bellevue stands to lose approximately \$479,000 annually in direct appropriations.

Mr. Loewenherz said the Parks and Community Services Department is seeking persons interested in attending an executive summit on October 18 from 10:00 a.m. to noon to look at coordinated transportation options for the elderly, the disabled and low-income King County residents.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCILS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

5. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Wendle reported that he was absent from the last Commission meeting because he was attending a conference in Salt Lake City focused on what communities do around high-capacity transit investments.

6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

7. STUDY SESSION

A. Transportation Facilities Plan Update

Kristi Oosterveen, CIP Coordinator, said she will deliver to the Commissioners the maps showing the locations of all Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) candidate projects as soon as they are available.

Ms. Oosterveen said the Transportation Commission is required to present an update of the TFP to the City Council every two years. The document was last updated in July 2004 and the updates typically occur on the off-year of the city's two-year budget cycle. The updates kick start the CIP process.

The TFP is a mid-range planning document that is built around the goals of the land use vision of the Comprehensive Plan. It draws on projects from the various long-range facility plans and results in a first-level prioritization for citywide transportation facility projects. The capacity projects included in the TFP are used as the basis for the impact fee program. An Environmental Impact Statement is prepared for the TFP which enables the city to show possible impacts over the 12-year period of the plan.

Ms. Oosterveen provided the Commissioners with a matrix listing the status of the projects in the 2004-2015 TFP. She noted that there are 73 projects in the current TFP. Of those, 14 have been completed. Of the remaining projects, 22 are in the current 2005-2011 CIP with either full or partial funding, and two others have commitments from Microsoft for funding; there are 35 unfunded projects on the TFP list totaling \$35,651,000.

The Commissioners were informed that the preliminary candidate project list contains 34 capacity projects and 59 non-capacity projects for a total of 93 projects. She offered to return to a meeting in October to review each of the candidate projects on the list with the Commission. The candidate projects include the unfunded and partially funded projects that are in the current TFP; projects identified by various long-range plans; projects identified by completed studies; and projects that have been suggested by staff.

Commissioner Young called attention to TFP-172 on Attachment B-1 and asked if the project is aimed at capacity or access. Ms. Oosterveen said TFP-172, the one-way couplet project from the Downtown Implementation Plan, is listed as a capacity project insofar as it will help with traffic flow in the Downtown. Capital Programming Manager Eric Miller allowed that there may be access issues associated with the project, but they can be addressed during the design process. The project is part of the overall package of improvements for the Downtown area; it may or may not provide benefit in and of itself. All capacity projects will be rated in part on how they impact intersection levels of service.

Referring to Attachment B-3, Commissioner Young said the issue of delaying the Bel-Red corridor project has been raised several times. Mr. Miller said a number of projects fall close to the corridor project study area. The study will look at all of the transportation issues, including light rail and other high-capacity transit scenarios along with different land use scenarios. Many of the projects on the list were recommended by an earlier study, and putting projects into the TFP when they may very well be superceded by the corridor study is something that should be discussed as the candidate projects are ranked. The timing of the corridor study will not, however, fit perfectly with the timing for updating the TFP; the TFP is scheduled to be adopted by the middle of 2006, whereas the corridor study will only have the preferred alternative identified by that then, which should allow for informing the Sound Transit vote tentatively slated for November 2006.

Commissioner Wendle suggested that because the candidate projects in the broader Bel-Red area were developed based on identified needs, it would be reasonable to assume that the projects are still needed. It is unlikely many of them will fall off the list as the study concludes. At the very least they should be considered as part of the overall needs assessment.

Chair Bell noted that a number of the projects on the list are shown for pre-design only. He questioned having such projects in the TFP given that twelve years out they may or may not have any value as things change. Ms. Oosterveen said many of the pre-design projects were included in the previous TFP because of funding level issues. The pre-design process brings projects to about the 30 percent design level, a point where it can be understood what the community wants and what the final implementation project will look like.

Commissioner Wendle commented that applying the rating criteria to pre-design projects is difficult because the dollar amounts do not represent the full cost of the projects.

Commissioner Young suggested that to some degree pre-design studies help to establish priorities for future funding. Mr. Miller agreed and added that pre-design does allow for determining how community needs can be met and what projects will cost. He said the ped/bike plan might call for sidewalks on both sides of a particular street, but the pre-design process could uncover the fact that having a sidewalk on just one side of the street could satisfy the community and cost a great deal less. The process includes community involvement.

Mr. Miller noted that there are projects in some of the long-range plans that have not been constructed and which are not on the candidate list. In most cases, they are from older plans which have since been updated with a project list that does not include the original projects. The BROTS projects are for the most part on the list, and the current recommendations from the Downtown Implementation Plan are on the list. He encouraged the Commissioners to review the candidate list and identify projects that are not on the list that should be.

Ms. Oosterveen reminded the Commissioners that the TFP is a financially constrained document. The projects on the list must balance out against the anticipated revenues. The preliminary transportation revenue forecast for 2006 to 2017 shows the total unconstrained revenues at \$74,693,000. The 35 projects that are unfunded on the 2004-2015 TFP total \$35,651,000. If that amount were to be subtracted from the projected revenues, the total available would be only \$39,042,000. The 2004-2015 TFP project cost numbers will, however, be updated and the anticipation is that the available funding will be even lower.

Mr. Miller explained that the committed projects in the CIP are inflated to the year of expenditure through 2011. The revenues and project costs in the TFP, however, are inflated to 2006 dollars.

Chair Bell asked if there are any sources of revenues in the 2006-2017 transportation revenues projections that have not appeared in previous revenue packages. Mr. Miller said the general CIP revenues are projected by taking the amount of money committed to the current transportation CIP and dividing it by the number of years the CIP covers, and then using the result to project out into the future. The CIP number, however, is much lower than it has been in years past, due in great part to the large sum of money committed to the new City Hall project. So where the annual projection for general CIP revenues is in the range of \$6 million to \$7 million, in the past it has been double that. Ms. Oosterveen added that in 2008 the city has an obligation to pay back the line of credit, and the repayment affects the general CIP dollars available. Mr. Miller said the projections do not assume the nine-and-a-half-cent gas tax increase.

With regard to the project scoring and ranking criteria, Ms. Oosterveen noted that in 2004 the criteria were revised as directed by the Commission. She said the roadway and intersection criteria are based on a matrix system that rates the benefit and/or need by category. The maximum cumulative score per project is 100, and the weighting assigned to each category is as follows: leveraging of funds, 25 percent; safety, 25 percent; level of service, 20 percent; transit, 10 percent; non-motorized, 10 percent; and regional system, 10 percent.

Commissioner Wendle suggested that the categories leveraging of funds and regional systems are redundant and add up to a total weight of 35 percent. To some degree, transit is regional in nature and is therefore also tied to those two categories. It would be easier to check the scoring if some of the categories were melded. Mr. Miller pointed out that the scoring only

offers a starting point for prioritizing the list. Ms. Oosterveen added that the staff who participate in the scoring process are generally those who serve as lead for the subject areas of the various criteria and therefore are very familiar with them.

Mr. Loewenherz observed that after the scoring criteria were changed during the last TFP update, staff came away with the view that the process was far more defensible than it had been previously.

Ms. Oosterveen said the candidate projects list and maps will be posted to the web as part of the public involvement process. There will be a way for the public to provide comments online as well. An open house is penciled in on the calendar for November 8.

Ms. Oosterveen said staff will begin the process of scoring and ranking during the month of September. Additional information will be sought from the Commission during October regarding the project scoring criteria. The open house in November will be followed by the Commission working to prioritize the candidate list. By December the Commission should finish its work to finalize the TFP update project list, and the EIS process can begin in January.

#### B. West Lake Sammamish Parkway Analysis Update

Project Manager Nancy LaCombe said the public involvement process for the project was very extensive and lasted almost two years. The objectives of the project were to address traffic, pedestrian safety, bicycle safety, and to maintain neighborhood character. The recommendations were approved by the Commission and the Council in April 2005 included a four-foot shoulder on the east side of the parkway, a ten-foot travel lane, a ten-and-a-half-foot travel lane, a separation buffer, and a ten-foot multi-use path. The recommendations also called for several different crossing locations and a signal at SE 34<sup>th</sup> Street.

Ms. LaCombe said preliminary estimate for preliminary design, which includes surveying the entire corridor and bringing the design to the 50 percent phase, is \$1.4 million. The length of the roadway has been divided into three different segments: I-90 to the Little Store for a cost of \$6.2 million; the Little Store to Northup Way for a cost of \$8.4 million; and Northup to NE 24<sup>th</sup> Street for a cost of \$5.6 million.

Ms. LaCombe said a number of potential funding options have been considered for the \$21.6 million project. A direct appropriation would require advocacy on the legislative agenda. The project is not a candidate for the WSDOT intersection and corridor safety program because the corridor does not have a high accident rate. The project is also not a candidate for the federal Scenic Byways program because the roadway lacks a federal highway designation.

A couple of options for funding under the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) were researched, but the project is not a competitive candidate for regional funding because the roadway does not serve to connect high urban centers. The project may qualify for funding

under the PSRC's countywide option, but the limit is about \$1.7 million. There are non-motorized funds for which the project may qualify; applications for those funds must be submitted in the spring of the biennial cycle and the maximum available would be about \$1 million.

The city has already applied for funding from the Transportation Enhancement Program. It will not be known until November if the application will be approved. The maximum amount is \$750,000.

The Transportation Improvement Board has an arterial improvement program that is focused primarily on major safety conditions and pavement ratings. There are parts of the parkway that could score relatively high on that list, but the project design will have to be brought to the 50 percent level to know exactly what segments fit the criteria.

The project is not a candidate for the Transportation Partnership Program, which is a program that is focused on growth and development areas. The project is also not a candidate for the Pedestrian, Safety and Mobility Program because it is focused primarily on sidewalks, not multipurpose paths. There is also the WSDOT pedestrian/bike fund, but the amounts available are quite small and the project would have to be designed to the 50 percent level. There is also the WSDOT Safe Routes to School Program which focused on crossing elements; there are some issues associated with Sunset Elementary, but they will be addressed through a different program.

The project would definitely be a candidate for a preconstruction loan from the Public Works Trust Fund to get the design to the 50 percent level. The project could be fairly competitive in the city's CIP program. It is not likely that the project would be supported through an LID. It is possible that a park bond could be floated to address some of the specific elements.

Ms. LaCombe said the CIP update will begin in mid-2006. Depending on how the project scores against the other candidate projects, additional funding and grant opportunities will be investigated at that time.

Commissioner Young said the project has been very well handled from the very start in terms of public involvement. He asked if any one of the three identified sections of the parkway needs more help than another. Ms. LaCombe said the project will need to be phased no matter what; there is no way the full five and a half miles of construction could be done at once, nor is it likely the full funding amount would be in hand in one lump sum. There are arguments that could be used in favor of having any one of the three segments go first.

Commissioner Glass asked if the \$21.6 million price tag includes the undergrounding of utilities. Ms. LaCombe said it does not, though all of the stormwater drainage improvements are included in the total. There have been conversations with some of the property owners about undergrounding, and some have contacted Puget Sound Energy to talk about forming an

LID just for the undergrounding work.

Commissioner Holler asked if the signal at SE 34<sup>th</sup> could be listed as a separate safety project. Ms. LaCombe said that could be done, but the survey work and some preliminary design would have to be done first so the lane configurations could be determined so the signal poles could be properly located.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Holler, Grants Coordinator Jen Benn explained that there is not a lot of grant money available for project design. One option is the Public Works Trust Fund, but the project would have to rank quite high in the competitive CIP process before the city would be able to commit any CIP dollars to repayment of the loan.

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### C. 145<sup>th</sup> Place SE Project Update

Ms. LaCombe said the 145<sup>th</sup> Place SE project was identified by the West Lake Hills CAC as their top capital investment project. It was funded in the 2003-2009 CIP. The first open house was held in February 2004. The original corridor study conducted in August 1999 contemplated two southbound lanes 145<sup>th</sup> Place SE from the Lake Hills Connector Street to Kamber Road. The CAC was very clear about not having two southbound lanes, and was put to the community at the first open house, only one southbound lane will be provided from the Connector to Kamber. However, a right turn only lane will be constructed at Kamber.

Continuing, Ms. LaCombe reminded the Commission that during 2004-2005 the city experienced some cash flow concerns. Some projects were put on the table for potential deferral, and 145<sup>th</sup> Place SE was one of them. In June 2005 the second open house was held to share with the community the preliminary design. The citizens touted pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity throughout the corridor as the biggest issues. Some left-turn pockets are needed to help alleviate some of the traffic bottlenecks during peak traffic.

The citizens also stressed the need to maintain the character of the neighborhood. The southern portion from SE 24<sup>th</sup> to SE 16<sup>th</sup> has a distinctive rural feel with primarily single family homes. The section from Kamber Road to the Lake Hills Connector has mixed uses, including single family, multifamily, and commercial.

Ms. LaCombe said meeting the needs of the community with the budget constraints proved to be a challenge. The project was not fully funded for the entire corridor through the Neighborhood Investment Strategy program; only \$2.3 million was set aside for construction.

Some 40 residents attended the second open house. The plans were reviewed and input was sought regarding several different elements, including landscaping features, the material to be used for the path, and construction phasing.

The proposed improvements through the residential section include a two-lane roadway section with a planter median and left turn pockets where needed. No median is called for in the section between SE 24<sup>th</sup> and 144<sup>th</sup> in order to reduce the impact to adjacent residents.

Ms. LaCombe explained that for the \$2.3 million budget, the section from 24<sup>th</sup> to Kamber Road could be completed, or the section from Kamber Road to SE 13<sup>th</sup> could be done, or the portion between SE 13<sup>th</sup> and SE 8<sup>th</sup> could be constructed. The community was very clear about wanting to see the section between SE 8<sup>th</sup> and Kamber Road done first. The consultant refined some of the cost estimates and identified a way to construct the section between SE 8<sup>th</sup> and Lake Hills Boulevard as the first phase.

The other portion of the project involves sidewalks on SE 22<sup>nd</sup>. Ms. LaCombe said the original idea was to construct sidewalks where needed, but there are significant drainage issues involved so sidewalks alone will not be possible. The CIP project from the Neighborhood Investment Strategy totals \$3.1 million. Staff is proposing to use that amount for Phase I. The preliminary design work has already been done. Final design will cost an additional \$325,000. There will need to be some right-of-way acquired as well. Future phases will require additional design work at a cost of \$450,000, right-of-way acquisition at an estimated \$250,000, and construction will cost \$2.6 million. The project could prove to be a good candidate for outside funding options depending on how high it scores.

Nancy said staff is proposing to design and construct the section between SE 24<sup>th</sup> and Lake Hills Boulevard, and to complete the SE 22<sup>nd</sup> Street sidewalk, through the CIP update to be done in 2006. Final design of Phase I will be wrapped up in October. Pending final design approval, construction could kick off in 2006 and will take a full construction season.

Commissioner Glass suggested that it would be a shame not to extend the project all the way to Kamber Road given that it is such a short block between Lake Hills Boulevard and Kamber Road. Ms. LaCombe said if it can be done it will be. However, additional right-of-way would be needed to accommodate widening the roadway for the right turn lane, and the costs go up accordingly. Neighborhood Investment Strategy projects are part of a program and therefore are not allowed to go over budget; to finish the small segment, CIP funds would have to be identified.

Chair Bell suggested the project could compete better against other projects if broken into two or three separate projects, with the sidewalk project on SE 22<sup>nd</sup> shown separately as well. Ms. LaCombe pointed out that it is possible that the sidewalk project on SE 22<sup>nd</sup> would rise to the top, but the segment connecting with Kamber Road could drop to the bottom. Chair Bell said the Commission should know how the segments rank against each other and other projects. Ms. LaCombe commented that the community actively has lobbied to keep the project in the mix; they see it as one project, not as pieces. She allowed that the project could be earmarked as one project in the CIP but constructed in phases.

Commissioner Glass proposed that the section from Lake Hills Boulevard to Kamber Road, if shown as a separate project, would score very high. It is obviously more needed than the section from Kamber Road to NE 24<sup>th</sup> Street.

Chair Bell opened the floor to comments from the audience.

Mr. Dick Morris, 13430 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street, spoke as president of the Sunset Community Association. He thanked the city for getting the Kamber Road improvements constructed. He agreed that the segment between Lake Hills Boulevard and Kamber Road is needed and should be included in the first phase. The community is growing but there is a serious lack of sidewalks. Students walking to Bellevue Community College are cutting through where they should not be; having sidewalks would be very helpful.

Ms. Lindy Bruce, 13624 SE 18<sup>th</sup> Street, said she served on the West Lake Hills CAC. She said over the years the transportation needs of the neighborhood have been very carefully considered and the community is very pleased that the full mile section connecting with Sammamish High School is included in the proposed project. The section from Lake Hills Boulevard to Kamber Road should be constructed in the near future.

Mr. Tom Conover, 2030 139<sup>th</sup> Place SE, said he also served on the West Lake Hills CAC. He thanked Ms. LaCombe for her efforts to extend the sidewalk from SE 8<sup>th</sup> to Lake Hills Boulevard. The roadway is heavily used by kids going to and from school but there is no separation between cars and pedestrians. The project as proposed will definitely help, but if at all possible the project should be extended down to Kamber Road.

8. OLD BUSINESS – None
9. NEW BUSINESS – None
10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None
11. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None
12. REVIEW CALENDAR
  - A. Commission Calendar and Agenda

The Commission reviewed the items scheduled for discussion in upcoming meetings.

- B. Public Involvement Calendar
13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Young. Second was by Commissioner Wendle and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Bell adjourned the meeting at 9:11 p.m.

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Secretary to the Transportation Commission

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Date

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Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

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Date