

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 17, 2005
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Eric Miller, Kristi Oosterveen, Jen Benn, Kris Liljebld, Assistant Director, 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.

3. STAFF REPORTS

Capital Programming Manager Eric Miller announced that the city's Season of Sharing will be kicked off on November 29 in the lobby of City Hall. He invited all of the Commissioners to attend.

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

5. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Wendle reported that he attended the Sound Transit high-capacity transit open house on November 14 at the North Bellevue Community Center. He said there was a lot of discussion about various route alternatives. The meeting was not very well attended.

6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

7. STUDY SESSION

A. TFP Update: Preliminary Staff Project Prioritization

Kristi Oosterveen, CIP Coordinator, noted that more than 30 people from the public attended the TFP open house event on November 10. During the Commission meeting that followed

several questions about different projects were raised. The preliminary staff prioritization list was released on November 14.

Ms. Oosterveen distributed to the Commissioners an updated transportation CIP revenue forecast. She noted that since the forecast was first released in September, \$5.882 million has been added to the projected revenues. In the staff's preliminary ranking three BROTS projects are above the funding line, and the Redmond contribution for those projects totals \$2.7 million. In addition, \$150,000 in the form of an NEP contribution has been added to the total, and \$3 million in gas tax revenues has been included owing to the rejection of I-912. Overall, the projected unconstrained revenues for transportation projects totals \$80.545 million.

Capital Programming Manager Eric Miller noted that for the sake of consistency all of the revenues are shown in 2006 dollars.

Commissioner Northey said it would be helpful to know if the top scored projects are above the funding line, and how many of the lower-scored projects have been recommended by staff for inclusion above the funding line.

Commissioner Young commented that the top project on the previous list, OV-001, is not above the funding line at all on the staff-recommended list. Mr. Miller said staff lowered the priority ranking for the project based in large part on the comments of the Commission at the November 10 meeting. Of the top 15 projects, only one other project, NE-001, falls below the funding line. On the ped/bike list, five of the projects that were in the top 15 have been dropped below the funding line.

Ms. Oosterveen explained that the exercise staff undertook to develop its prioritized list included a dot exercise to rank the projects on the roadway/intersection, ped/bike, and unscored projects lists. The top 25 projects from each list were then pulled off and ranked by staff from one to ten. The three lists were thus melded into a single ranked list. She said nine of the 15 current TFP projects that are below the funding line are shown as pre-design amounts in the current TFP.

Commissioner Wendle asked about the philosophy of including projects on the list for pre-design without an assumption that the projects will be implemented during the TFP timeline.

Commissioner Young reiterated his question regarding the policy standard for sidewalks on both sides of streets. He observed that if sidewalks were constructed on only one side of a street instead of both sides, a great deal of money could be saved that could then be put into other projects.

With regard to the Factoria area, Commissioner Young observed that several ped/bike projects on the staff priority list are ranked higher than capacity projects. He pointed out that SE 38th Street has pedestrian issues but also serves as a major choke point for vehicular traffic.

Chair Bell commented that in the 2005-2011 CIP ten percent of the total allocation is for ped/bike projects. The current TFP has nine percent of the total funds allocated to ped/bike projects. Fully 40 percent of the total funds on the proposed TFP list are earmarked for ped/bike projects.

Commissioner Glass pointed out that several of the projects have both ped/bike and

roadway/intersection components and he asked Chair Bell how he divided the funds for those to come up with the percentages for each category. Chair Bell said the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project he put in the ped/bike category; projects involving actual construction of roadway/intersection components were included in that category.

Chair Bell urged consideration of breaking up the large projects such as West Lake Sammamish Parkway into smaller segments and not have so much funding allocated to preliminary design. Ms. Oosterveen clarified that the community wants to see a design for the entire corridor and that is why the project was included with funding to bring it to the 30-50 percent phase. Once the plan for the entire corridor is in hand, it will be easier to calculate more realistic cost estimates for each segment. Of the \$5 million cost, \$1.5 million is for the 30-50 percent design of the entire corridor, and a survey of the entire corridor, leaving \$3.5 million for implementation of the first segment.

Commissioner Northey expressed some discomfort with the fact that the staff-ranked list differs so much from the scoring. That suggests either that the scoring does not reflect the true priorities, or that staff has opinions that differ from the Comprehensive Plan goals. To some extent, the staff ranking is a measure of who showed up for the meeting. Ms. Oosterveen explained that the scoring and ranking exercises were done by the same staff members, with the exception of the assistant directors who were not asked to score the projects.

Mr. Miller cautioned against breaking down the percentages for ped/bike projects and roadway/intersection projects by looking at the existing plans. What is often lost is the high proportion of roadway projects that actually are implementing sidewalks. The Richards Road project was clearly a capacity project, but it included sidewalks and bike lanes. Project EB-100 will ultimately be shown as a capacity project for impact fee purposes, but it includes significant ped/bike components.

With regard to EB-105, the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project, Commissioner Glass said he would favor getting the project done as close to all at once as possible rather than breaking it up into four or five cycles. He allowed that that would require earmarking even more funding for the project. Commissioner Holler agreed that because the roadway is so heavily traveled it would be better to get the work done all at once rather than section by section over time.

Commissioner Young suggested that if \$1.5 million will get to the 30-50 percent design stage for the whole corridor, leaving \$3.5 million for implementation of the first segment, there is nothing to say that the project could not be accelerated later on once a plan is in place for each segment.

Ms. Oosterveen said the time to argue in favor of accelerating the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project will be when the CIP is updated in 2006. Commissioner Northey suggested that increasing the allocation for the project in the TFP by 50 percent would be legitimate. Of course adding money to the project will mean taking money away from other projects. She said she could support adding \$2 million to the project. Mr. Miller said when staff first heard that I-912 had failed, the thinking was that about a half million dollars per year would be directly programmable to transportation capital projects and the thinking was that it should all be put toward to the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project. In the end, however, it was concluded that the extra \$3 million overall will make a big difference in where the funding line is drawn.

Mr. Liljeblad said staff is more concerned with what projects are above the funding line than the order those projects are in. He agreed that for every additional dollar earmarked for West Lake Sammamish Parkway, some other project will be left wanting. He suggested the Commission should spend its time focused on the top 40 projects and making a determination with regard to which projects above the line should be below the line, and which projects below the line should be above the line.

The Commissioners reviewed the staff-prioritized project list and agreed with the rank order for projects 1 through 21. There was consensus to consider having a sidewalk on only one side of the street for project 4, SB-100.

Chair Bell and Commissioner Northey suggested that at least part of the cost of project 12, NC-108, should be paid for by the local property owners in the form of a local improvement district. There was agreement to reduce the cost to \$1 million.

The Commissioners questioned the need for project 14, BT-100, and Mr. Miller pointed out that it offers the only east-west pedestrian route between the north city limit at NE 60th Street and NE 29th Place. Mr. Liljeblad added that it offers one of the few connections to Bridle Trails from 148th Avenue NE to the east. He said staff recognizes the need for the project and believes the project that has been on the list for a long time should remain above the funding line.

Chair Bell asked what the impact would be if project 15, DT-008, were to be delayed for a couple of years. Mr. Liljeblad said implementation for the I-405 corridor is currently focused on the section through the Wilburton tunnel. The extension of NE 2nd over the freeway and the associated ramps project can be expected to lag behind the construction of the NE 10th Street improvements. The city has in hand a grant to fund the design work for NE 2nd from 112th to Bellevue Way, and to some degree the cost estimate serves as a placeholder for further design or property acquisition. It will be critical to have enough of a design in place for NE 2nd to preserve the needed cross section as the area develops.

There was agreement to reduce the funding amount for project 15, DT-008, to \$500,000.

With regard to 19, RV-100, it was agreed that the project description should be pared down to include a sidewalk on only one side of the street, and that the project cost should be set at \$2 million.

Mr. Miller explained the parameters of project 20, CR-100, for the Commissioners. He said the project would add a U-turn for eastbound traffic and make some access management revisions. Some left-turns to the driveways on the south side would be allowed, but no left-turns would be allowed to the north.

Commissioner Northey asked if PW-M-2 and PW-I-84 discretionary funds could be used for the project since it meets number three signal warrants. Mr. Miller said there is a safety issue but not a signal issue. He said the two funds are typically used for smaller projects and CR-100 would take would take three years worth of PW-I-84 funding.

With regard to project 21, DT-009, there was agreement to set the estimated cost at \$1 million.

Mr. Miller said there was a push by a couple of members of the staff team to raise the profile of project 22, NC-103. Their reasoning was that if a signal is going to be put in at Cougar Mountain Way, and a signal further to the east at Village Park Drive, there should also be a signal at 164th Avenue SE and Lakemont Boulevard.

The Commissioners concurred that project 22, NC-103, should be dropped down below the funding line. It was also agreed to combine projects 33, DT-007, and 21, DT-009, and show the total cost at \$1 million.

The Commissioners concurred with the rank order for projects 23 through 32, 35 to 39, and 41 and 42.

With regard to project 40, EB-103, the Commissioners agreed to consider sidewalks on only one side and to list the cost at \$1.5 million. There was also agreement to consider sidewalks on only one side of project 43, NE-100, and to reduce the cost to \$2 million.

No changes were suggested to the rank order of projects 44 and 45.

The Commissioners proposed moving projects 46, OV-003, and 47, NE-001, up above the funding line, but below project 40.

Commissioner Northey suggested adding \$300,000 to project 49, OV-001, to include a traffic analysis, primarily for the three intersections that make up the iron triangle. Commissioner Young pointed out that the analysis would include projects 49, OV-001, 89, CR-002, 30, CR-001, and 35, OV-002, and how they interrelate.

Commissioner Glass pointed out the need to place project 57, FA-102, higher on the list and above the funding line. It was agreed to put it ahead of project 42.

9. OLD BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Ken Schiring, 16223 NE 28th Street, said he agrees with the projects associated with the iron triangle area with the exception of OV-001, a project that would result in a tremendous loss of property for the adjacent commercial uses. With regard to projects in the Factoria area, he said crossing the street at intersections is always risky, especially crossing under I-90 where traffic coming down the hill looks for traffic but not pedestrians. With regard to NE-001, he said if a median is to be installed between 156th Avenue NE and 164th Avenue NE but no sidewalks or bike lanes, the existing situation will be complicated. He also commented that Bellevue has codes with regard to required landscaping between business properties and the roadway. It makes no sense to require businesses to go to the expense of putting in the landscaping if a few years later the city will be coming in to widen the street and tear out all of the landscaping. At that point, the city cannot require the business owner to put the landscaping back in, and unless the city does it there will be businesses without landscaping facing the street.

Mr. Bill Serr, 1412 153rd Place SE, indicated his support for the iron triangle projects with the

exception of OV-001. He said too many special interests are involved in ranking the project list. Project EB-102 on SE 16th Street is a safety project that should not be put any lower on the list. Safety issues should be pulled out from the other projects and addressed separately and before any other work. All BROTS projects should also be packaged together and prioritized as a single project.

Mr. Jim Hunt, 12817 97th Avenue NE, Kirkland, pointed out that project DT-007 is going to close 114th Avenue NE and the bike facilities that exist there currently. There is also nothing in the TFP project list that addresses alternative bike facilities.

11. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 13, 2005

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Young. Second was by Commissioner Yuen and the motion carried unanimously.

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 Yuen and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Bell adjourned the meeting at 9:19 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

Date