

City of

Bellevue



Post Office Box 90012 ■ Bellevue, Washington ■ 98009 9012

**DATE:** December 5, 2013

**TO:** Bellevue Transportation Commission

**FROM:** Kevin McDonald, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner, 452-4558  
[kmcdonald@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:kmcdonald@bellevuewa.gov)

**SUBJECT:** Downtown Transportation Plan Update: Downtown Subarea Plan Policies  
**Preliminary Staff Recommendations**  
<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/downtown-transportation-plan-update.htm>

## INTRODUCTION

On October 7, 2013, the City Council endorsed the Transportation Commission's "Mobility Options" strategy for Downtown, and provided direction to proceed with policy development and integration with the Downtown Livability Initiative. Beginning on December 12, 2013, staff will provide policy recommendations for the Downtown Subarea Plan transportation section that are based on Commission and Council direction.

Transportation Commission direction is requested on the preliminary recommendations for goals, policies and narrative sections. In subsequent meetings, staff will provide an updated transportation project list for Commission review.

Commission recommendations for amendments to the Downtown Subarea Plan will be merged with amendments related to land use and urban design that are developed by the Downtown Livability Initiative Advisory Committee. A comprehensive package of policy amendments will be transmitted to the Planning Commission for consideration and a recommendation to the City Council.

Please refer to the City Council agenda packet materials for the October 7 study session included as Attachment 1, and a spreadsheet of preliminary recommendations for goals, policies and narrative in Attachment 2.

## Downtown Subarea Plan Structure and Proposed Amendments

Each Element of the Comprehensive Plan and each of the Subarea Plans consist of Goals and Policies, together with "Narrative" sections that provide background and context that supports the policies. In keeping with a format that has been prepared for the overall update of the Comprehensive Plan, staff has reviewed the Downtown Subarea Plan with respect to the Transportation Commission's "mobility options" strategy and recommendations (included in Attachment 1), and has made a preliminary determination as to whether the existing goal,

policy or narrative section is “Still Valid” or if it is “Time to Go”. If language is still valid, then staff may propose edits, or may recommend new language if something is missing in the existing Subarea Plan (Attachment 2).

### **Downtown Mobility Options Policy Recommendations**

The Downtown Subarea Plan was adopted in 2004 following the work of the Downtown Implementation Plan Steering Committee – with review and recommendation by the Transportation Commission and the Planning Commission. This update to the transportation section retains the structure of the current Plan while incorporating language that reflects circumstances that have changed during the past 10 years. Recommended policies reflect the refined mobility options developed through the Downtown Transportation Plan process that will serve the emerging needs of residents, employees and visitors to Downtown Bellevue.

Through the Downtown Transportation Plan, the Commission recommended a strategy of four mobility options to enable people to get around in private vehicles, on transit, as pedestrians and on bicycles. This strategy is consistent with that adopted in the current Subarea Plan, however the Commission’s work included revised priorities and refined strategies that are reflected in draft Subarea Plan recommendations, briefly summarized as follows:

#### **Private Vehicles**

- Recognize that “auto bias” streets are designed and maintained as such.
- Remove the concept of “signature streets” that is not used (staff recommendation)
- Recognize the importance of the regional roadway system to Downtown mobility
- Support for traffic operational improvements through SCATS

#### **Transit**

- Introduce four components of transit service: coverage; capacity, speed and reliability; and passenger comfort, access and information
- Advocate for needed transit service to support anticipated Downtown ridership
- Defer much transit policy to the Transit Master Plan, to be later embedded in the transit policies in the Transportation Element

#### **Pedestrians**

- Expand the pedestrian section to include crosswalks, mid-block crossings, through-block connections and sidewalks and landscaping
- Support for grade-separated mid-block crossings on auto bias streets
- Include wheeled users in design updates to the Pedestrian Corridor

#### **Bicycles**

- Expand the bicycle section to include on-street design options and end-of-ride facilities

**Other recommended changes include:**

- Hierarchy of streets – is “hierarchy” the correct term?
- Refer to mobility topic maps that show project locations and types instead of having separate policies describe projects
- Move Transportation Demand Management policies to the Transportation Element
- Expand discussion and policy related to on-street parking, include a parking map and add a pay for parking program
- Add new policies related to curbside uses such as freight/parcel loading, passenger pick-up/drop off, taxi stands and electric vehicle charging stations

**NEXT STEPS**

At the Transportation Commission meeting on January 9, 2014, the agenda will include further review, discussion and/or revision of preliminary Downtown Subarea Plan policy recommendations. Staff is preparing an updated Downtown transportation project list for Commission review and comment at a winter 2014 Commission meeting.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. City Council agenda memo and Transportation Commission recommendation for the September 23 Council study session (occurred on October 7)
2. Spreadsheet of preliminary Downtown Subarea Plan policy and narrative recommendations