DATE: February 1, 2010

TO: Mayor Davidson and City Councilmembers

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Department of Planning and Community Development
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SUBJECT: Initiation of Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project

During its January 19 Study Session, the City Council deliberated on initiating the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project. A majority of the Council expressed support for the project and a desire to see the project get underway. Before proceeding, staff was directed to return with several amendments to the project map, Council principles, public involvement plan, and scope of work. Tonight staff is seeking approval of these refinements and Council direction to proceed with the project.

Project Map

On January 19 Council had several questions and comments about what was identified in the presentation as the “primary” and “secondary” study areas. Attachment A reflects a revised approach to the project map which seeks to integrate two points of Council feedback: (i) Clarity about where land use change may and may not be considered; and, (ii) Inclusion of the entire area that has key transportation relationships with the above.

This approach is consistent with the City’s integrated land use and transportation planning process. Subarea planning projects typically include an area where land use change may be considered (the “primary” land use and transportation study area) and a broader “area of transportation influence” that captures key transportation relationships with the primary area. This zone of influence is not intended to have a solid boundary, but rather encompasses the general area where key transportation impacts and mitigation should be evaluated and considered. Based on Council direction, the project map has been revised to ensure this zone of influence is adequately broad, and to indicate that it is not a hard and fast boundary but will be further defined as more analysis is undertaken as the project proceeds. Within this broader zone, the Lakemont Boulevard Interchange has been called out for special attention, given the interrelationship between the access points to I-90 in the Eastgate area and those further to the east. As staff considers ways in which the improvements being identified as part of the WSDOT I-90 Corridor Study could benefit circulation in Eastgate, we will also look at how these improvements could best improve circulation at Lakemont as well.

Council Principles

Attachment B provides the revised Council principles, based on feedback received on January 19. Text that is underlined reflects revisions where language was either moved or added.
Public Involvement Plan

Attachment C reflects the updated direction on the public participation program, based on comments made on January 19. Staff understands that community participation (especially from residents in the project area and along the affected transportation corridors) is crucial throughout the planning process. Additional language is included to reference involvement from potential annexation area representatives. Another addition is the potential for a Council liaison to the CAC; this is a decision that could be made by Council at the time the CAC is selected.

Scope of Work

The Sound Transit Phase 2 (ST-2) measure approved by voters in 2008 is the means by which light rail will be extended from Seattle to Bellevue and Redmond (the East Link project). It also included $82 million in funding for detailed study of ST3, including “high capacity transit” or HCT from Bellevue to Issaquah. It is not clear when Sound Transit will start the ST-3 study, but the City of Issaquah is officially on record with Sound Transit and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) as favoring light rail as the preferred high capacity transit (HCT) mode for the entire I-90 corridor. As noted by Council, the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project provides an opportunity for Bellevue to work with the City of Issaquah and other agencies to determine potentially desirable routes and station locations in advance of the Sound Transit study. The full project scope will be revised to include this Council directive, as indicated in Attachment D.

Provided the Council approves these refinements as summarized above and included in the attachments, staff is prepared to launch the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Revised Project Map
B. Revised Council Principles
C. Revised Public Involvement Plan
D. Revised Project Scope
The Primary study area encompasses the commercial properties in the Eastgate / I-90 corridor and is the area within which land use changes will be considered. Outside this area no land use changes are anticipated as part of this study.

Arrows indicate a broader zone of transportation influence which is included for transportation planning.
Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project

Draft Council Principles

Strike-draft version revised per Council discussion on January 19, 2010

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

1. Enhance the Eastgate corridor’s economic vitality without degrading mobility in other parts of the City, and ensure that it continues to contribute to the diversity of the City’s economic mix. [Text added]

2. Retain and enhance neighborhood-oriented services and businesses, which are important to nearby residents of Bellevue and the adjacent Eastgate potential annexation area. [Text unchanged but moved up in order]

3. Improve linkages with Bellevue College, which may include land use and transportation strategies, and recreational as well as a variety of partnerships that benefit both the College and the City as a whole. [Text added]

4. Better integrate land use and transportation across Eastgate, which may include consideration of transit-oriented development in portions of the area. Changes in land use should be informed by transportation opportunities and impacts. For example, the large Eastgate park and ride facility may create an opportunity for a transit overlay district, with well integrated land use and transportation performance. [Text added]

5. Continue to evolve Eastgate’s transportation infrastructure to a high performing, multimodal system, including coordinating with service providers on increased transit service to the area.

6. Increase connectivity across the Eastgate corridor, addressing the area’s numerous barriers such as its limited street and non-motorized (both pedestrian and bicycle) network, and stand-alone developments.

7. Model environmental sustainability in planning for Eastgate’s future, so that future plans for the area produce measurable environmental benefits.

8. Improve the Eastgate Corridor’s urban design quality and coherence, recognizing the area as a major City gateway and prominent location on the Mountain to Sound Greenway.

9. Work to improve the performance of state facilities in the area – I-90 and its access points—which today create major issues for the City’s land use and arterial system.

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Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project
Draft Public Involvement Plan
Strike-draft version revised per Council discussion on January 19, 2010

Public Involvement Plan Objectives

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

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

Public Involvement Plan Components

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

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

  In addition, participation of non-City agencies would be sought, either as non-voting members of the CAC or to serve in another advisory capacity. This could include:
  - WSDOT
  - King County/METRO
  - Mountains to Sound Greenway

- **Other City Boards and Commissions.** Other City boards and commissions, including Arts, Human Services, and Environmental Services, may have an interest in this project and will be briefed as progress ensues. [Text Added]

- **Community workshops/open houses.** Public workshops and/or open houses will be conducted at appropriate junctures in the planning process to increase opportunities for participation by the public at large.
• **Business and property owner panels.** Structured panels of business owners and property owners as used in the Bel-Red project were very effective at achieving two-way dialogue and ensuring that these key interests were well understood.

• **Media.** Media will be used for broad and ongoing distribution of project information. Opportunities for media communications include:
  - A project website will be established and maintained, to include project information, reports, meeting summaries, and notices of upcoming events.
  - News articles will be prepared and published in:
    - It's Your City
    - Neighborhood News
    - News Releases (to area newspapers and TV and radio stations)

• **Project mailings.** Mailings of project information and upcoming events will be sent to study area property owners and other stakeholders, nearby residents, and nearby neighborhood associations. A list of "interested parties" will be maintained and used for notification of project information.

• **Other measures** will be identified as the project progresses to ensure appropriate engagement and participation by affected or interested parties.
Scope of Work and Anticipated Products
The project scope will involve the following major elements:

- **Economic and market analysis.** With the help of consultants, the existing employment and business mix in the area will be evaluated, and long-term growth prospects for the area will be analyzed for a variety of land uses.
- **Land use alternatives.** Based in part on analysis of the area’s constraints and opportunities, the economic/market analysis, input from community stakeholders, and other factors, land use alternatives will be generated for additional analysis.
- **Transportation analysis.** Any revised future land use vision for the corridor will require regional access, adequate circulation within the area, and mitigation of impacts to surrounding areas. The transportation impacts of each land use alternative will be modeled and evaluated. The results of this analysis will help identify a preferred land use alternative, with an appropriate package of multi-modal transportation strategies.
- **Early consideration of ST-3 improvements for I-90 corridor.** Preliminary discussions will take place with the City of Issaquah, Sound Transit, and other agencies on potentially desirable high capacity transit routes and station locations in advance of the Sound Transit ST-3 study. [Text Added]
- **Greenhouse gas and health impact analysis.** In accord with Washington State greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions goals, the plan will explore means to reduce GHG emissions in the study area. In addition, grant opportunities will be explored that would allow the project to assess the health impacts that could result from land use and transportation changes.
- **Selection of a preferred alternative.** Based on the evaluation of alternatives and public input, a preferred alternative will be selected. The preferred potential development patterns will be refined and illustrated. In addition to land use and urban amenities, the preferred alternative will include the transportation improvements needed to accommodate the vision, and strategies to minimize impacts to surrounding areas.
- **Integrated GMA planning and SEPA environmental review.** This concept emphasizes beginning environmental review as early in the planning process as possible so that environmental considerations can effectively inform the development and evaluation of project alternatives, and create a more efficient SEPA process.
- **Financing and implementation strategies.** A financial strategy will be prepared to guide funding of the transportation, urban amenities and other improvements needed to realize the preferred alternative.