



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR
450 100th Ave NE., P.O. BOX 90012
BELLEVUE, WA 98009-9012

DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE

PROPONENT: Paul Krawczyk, Project Manager City of Bellevue Transportation Department

LOCATION OF PROPOSAL: NE 4th Street and 120th Ave NE (Generally – See project area map)

NAME & DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

NE 4th Street/120th Avenue NE Corridor Project / SEPA review of the NE 4th Street/120th Ave NE Corridor Project

FILE NUMBER: 11-114971-LM

The Environmental Coordinator of the City of Bellevue has determined that this proposal does not have a probable significant adverse impact upon the environment. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C). This decision was made after the Bellevue Environmental Coordinator reviewed the completed environmental checklist and information filed with the Land Use Division of the Development Services Department. This information is referenced in the attached staff report and available to the public on request.

There is no comment period for this DNS. There is a 14-day appeal period. Only persons who submitted written comments before the DNS was issued may appeal the decision. A written appeal must be filed in the City Clerk's office by 5:00 p.m. on _____.

This DNS is issued after using the optional DNS process in WAC 197-11-355. There is no further comment period on the DNS. There is a 14-day appeal period. Only persons who submitted written comments before the DNS was issued may appeal the decision. A written appeal must be filed in the City Clerk's Office by 5 p.m. on **August 9, 2012**.

This DNS is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2) and is subject to a 14-day comment period from the date below. Comments must be submitted by 5 p.m. on _____. This DNS is also subject to appeal. A written appeal must be filed in the City Clerk's Office by 5 p.m. on _____.

This DNS may be withdrawn at any time if the proposal is modified so that it is likely to have significant adverse environmental impacts; if there is significant new information indicating, or on, a proposals probable significant adverse environmental impacts (unless a non-exempt license has been issued if the proposal is a private project); or if the DNS was procured by misrepresentation or lack of material disclosure.

Carol V. Helland
Environmental Coordinator

July 26, 2012
Date

OTHERS TO RECEIVE THIS DOCUMENT:

State Department of Fish and Wildlife
State Department of Ecology,
Army Corps of Engineers
Attorney General
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe



**City of Bellevue
Development Services Department
Environmental Review and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)
Threshold Determination**

Proposal Name: NE 4th Street/120th Avenue NE Corridor Project

Proposal Address: NE 4th Street and 120th Ave NE (Generally – See project area map)

Proposal Description: SEPA environmental review of the NE 4th Street/120th Ave NE Corridor Project

File Number: 11-114971-LM

Applicant: Paul Krawczyk, Project Manager
City of Bellevue Transportation Department

Decisions Included: SEPA Threshold Determination
Process II Administrative Decision
LUC 20.35 & BCC 22.02

Planner: David Pyle, Senior Land Use Planner
Development Services Department

State Environmental Policy Act
Threshold Determination: Determination of Non-Significance (DNS)

Carol V. Helland
Carol Helland, Environmental Coordinator
Development Services Department

Application Date: June 6, 2011

Notice of Application Publication Date: July 7, 2011

Date of Revised SEPA Checklist: October 20, 2011

Notice of Decision: July 26, 2012

Appeal Deadline: August 9, 2012

For information on how to appeal a proposal, visit the Development Services Records Center at City Hall or call (425) 452-6800. Comments on State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Determinations can be made with or without appealing the proposal within the noted comment period for a SEPA Determination. Appeal of the Decision must be received in the City's Clerk's Office by 5 PM on the date noted for appeal of the decision.

I. Proposal Description and Objectives

A. Project Description

The NE 4th Street/120th Avenue NE Corridor project is a collector arterial street improvement project designed to establish, widen, and functionally improve NE 4th Street and 120th Avenue NE. The proposal includes two primary components. The first is an extension of NE 4th Street between 116th Avenue NE up to 120th Avenue NE where a new section of right-of-way will be established. The second is the widening and re-alignment of 120th Avenue NE between NE 3th Street and Northrup Way to improve capacity and reduce delays. A project area map is included as Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Project Area



Improved street designs follow three typical cross-section concepts including a standard five lane street design, a five lane street design with walls (on both or either sides – when cut or fill is required), and a four-lane street section for the northern segment of the project. All of the design concepts include sidewalks and bike lanes (or multimodal paths), landscaping and design treatments, vehicle travel lanes, and turn lanes. Where slope cut or fill is required, retaining walls will be used to establish useable space. The right-of-way cross section design ranges in width from approximately 90 feet to 120 feet dependent on the number of lanes and amenities. Additional design elements include new signalized intersections, street lighting, and crosswalks. Complete street cross section details are included in the project SEPA checklist as **Attachment 1**.

The project has been designed to be constructed in stages with each stage self-contained and compatible with both current and proposed conditions. The first stage of construction is expected to be the widening of 120th Ave NE between NE 3rd Street and NE 8th Street and is estimated to begin in 2012 with construction of following stages possible as funding becomes available and design is finalized. The earliest possible completion of all stages is anticipated to be 2016.

i. Project Need

The NE 4th Street/120th Avenue NE Corridor project is designed to improve existing corridor conditions and was conceived as part of the Bel-Red and Wilburton subarea planning efforts. The project was designed in response to planned increases in intensity of land use (density) and is intended to improve safety, access, mobility, and circulation for local traffic. The NE 4th Street/120th Avenue NE Corridor project is intended to upgrade transportation infrastructure elements essential to maintain concurrence with the planned future redevelopment of the Bel-Red and Wilburton subareas and is designed to serve as a portal to future surface streets in these districts ensuring the City's Transportation infrastructure capacity is sufficient to serve the planned redevelopment of these areas. The project has been designed to complement and support regional and local land use plans, accommodate forecasted travel demands, and provide additional non-motorized connections to future planned transit facilities. By using the existing 120th Ave NE corridor and right-of-way for a majority of the improvements, the project minimizes impacts to existing land uses and development patterns while facilitating anticipated future development. Additionally, the proposed NE 4th Street extension alignment provides an optimal connection (direct extension of NE 4th Street) linking the Wilburton area to the Downtown with minimal impact to existing land use patterns.

The proposed project is consistent with the following local and regional planning efforts¹:

- Puget Sound Regional Council Regional Transportation Plan
- Puget Sound Regional Council Regional Transportation Improvement Program
- The Washington Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
- City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan:
 - Bel-Red Subarea
 - Wilburton Subarea
 - Downtown Subarea
 - Transportation Element
 - Land Use Element
 - Environmental Element
- City of Bellevue Transportation Facilities Plan
- City of Bellevue 2011-2016 Transportation Improvement Program
- City of Bellevue Mobility and Infrastructure Initiative and Finance Plan
- City of Bellevue 2011-2017 Capital Investment Program

¹ A complete description of the project's relationship to each of these planning programs is included in the project Alternatives Evaluation and Screening Technical Report (Attachment 5).

ii. NE 4th Street Extension - 116th Ave NE to 120th Ave NE

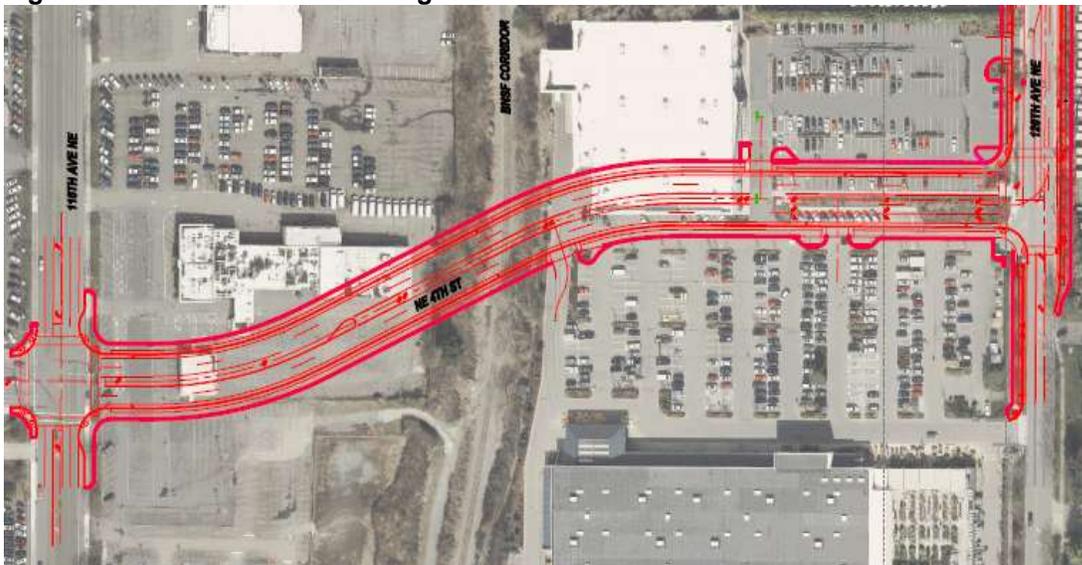
The extension of NE 4th Street from 116th Avenue NE to 120th Avenue NE is designed to boost mobility between Downtown, Wilburton, the Bel-Red corridor, and the Overlake area. The construction of this section of street includes the extension of NE 4th Street from 116th Ave NE up to the Port of Seattle railroad corridor, across the Port of Seattle railroad corridor, then to 120th Ave NE. The project has been designed to create a new arterial street that traverses the area's grade separation by utilizing a retained cut connection across the Port of Seattle railroad corridor including two travel lanes in each direction plus a center turn lane where needed. The project will be designed to allow future use of the railroad corridor for a pedestrian-bike trail or linear transit line through compatibility with a possible future bridge overpass.

When completed, the new street section is projected to relieve congestion at nearby intersections, improve travel times, and provide alternatives for vehicles, transit, freight, pedestrians and bicycles. A concept rendering of the NE 4th Street extension is included as Figure 2 below. Final roadway alignment and channelization design intended to minimize impacts to existing adjacent properties are anticipated to minimize impacts to the extent possible.

Construction of the NE 4th Street extension will require the partial demolition of two commercial structures and complete demolition of one commercial structure. The proposed design will impact steep slope critical areas regulated under City of Bellevue Land Use Code (LUC) section LUC 20.25H.

A complete description of the project proposal is available in the project Checklist required under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and included as Attachment 1. A preliminary project alignment is included as Attachment 2.

Figure 2 – NE 4th Extension – Stages 2 and 3



iii. **120th Ave NE Widening - NE 3rd Street to Northup Way**

To provide capacity for planned growth project designs include widening 120th Avenue Northeast from two existing lanes up to five lanes, including two travel lanes in each direction with a two-way center turn lane. Planned capacity is designed to accommodate more intense development contemplated in the vicinity of the future 120th Ave NE light rail station.

Construction of improvements along 120th Ave NE will require acquisition of additional right-of-way and planned demolition of two commercial structures to widen the street as the existing width of the right-of-way will not accommodate the proposed corridor design. Due to areas of sloping topography, slope cuts and retaining walls are necessary in areas to accommodate the grade change of the adjacent landscape.

Once completed, improvements are expected to provide congestion relief at arterial intersections, improve access to adjacent businesses and districts, and enhance travel times for cars, transit, freight, pedestrians, and bikes. The widening of 120th Ave NE will create a north-south corridor connecting downtown with planned improvements in the Bel-Red corridor such as the Spring District mixed use development. The project will also provide an important north-south extension of bike lanes, ultimately linking the downtown area to the SR 520 regional trail. Currently, no dedicated connection for cyclists between the 520 regional trail and Bellevue's Downtown exists.

The proposed design of this portion of the project includes impacts to steep slope critical areas, wetland critical areas, stream critical areas, and associated buffers regulated by the City of Bellevue Land Use Code (LUC) section LUC 20.25H. A complete discussion of critical area impacts associated with this project is included in Section VII below.

B. Proposed Alignment and Final Design

This analysis of potential impacts related to the corridor alignment is a project level effort to identify and mitigate environmental impacts. The final design of the project will be refined and value engineered during the project construction permit process for each stage of the project and a reduction in impacts is expected with project refinement. Final project design will include minor adjustments in vertical and horizontal alignment and design features to:

- Meet private property access needs
- Minimize required right-of-way acquisition
- Minimize impact to the function of private property
- Balance street grading cut and fill
- Avoid conflicts (where feasible) including impacting stream, wetland, and slope

resources and associated buffers (may include a reduction in preferred width to accommodate constraints)

As part of the final design process, final excavation quantities may increase or decrease, although impacts associated with the final design are expected to be consistent with or less than those identified in this report. Significant deviations from the proposed alignment and design not included in the project description considered with this analysis may require additional environmental review. As designed, the project would require the demolition of approximately 45,000 square feet of commercial space (including 3 full demolitions and 2 partial demolitions) and would require approximately 120,000 cubic yards of excavation (cut/fill).

C. SEPA Review Required

Bellevue City Code section BCC 22.02.033 requires submittal of an environmental checklist and any relevant supporting materials for any proposal that is not deemed to be exempt from SEPA review as listed in BCC 22.02.032. The NE 4th Street/120th Avenue NE Corridor alignment project proposal includes more than 500 cubic yards of cut and fill excavation activity, is proposed to impact critical areas and associated critical area buffers, and is not exempt from SEPA review.

D. SEPA Review Objectives

This report summarizes the environmental consequences that could result from the proposed NE 4th Street/120th Avenue NE Corridor alignment and street design consistent with WAC 197-11-060(3). The alignment under review was selected after a subarea and transportation facilities planning process and subject to prior environmental review in the Transportation Facilities Plan EIS (as incorporated by reference in Section VII below). The purpose of this analysis is to allow decision makers to disclose, and mitigate where necessary, adverse environmental impacts associated with specific project design elements, and ensure compliance with City policies and codes.

E. Previous Programmatic SEPA Review

This project and the proposed alignment has been documented as part of two Final Environmental Impact Statements issued in support of the Bel –Red Corridor Project on July 19, 2007 (addendum issued on February 12, 2009); and in support of the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) on March 5, 2009. These previous FEIS decisions were consulted as part of this environmental review process and are incorporated by reference as part of the project environmental record in Section VII below.

F. NEPA/FHWA Review

The applicant anticipates applying for Federal grants to assist in funding construction

of the corridor improvements. To be eligible for Federal grant; the project must comply with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. The applicant has submitted the project proposal and supporting documentation in the form of an application for Environmental Classification Summary (ECS) to Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) program liaison for review.

On June 21, 2012 the FHWA issued a final ECS and a Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE) on the project indicating that the project may proceed through a Categorical Exclusion as allowed by 23 CFR 771.117. The purpose of the DCE process is to present general conclusions about the anticipated impacts of the proposed action for each major area of environmental concern by listing the anticipated impacts of the proposed action, along with an assessment of impact minimization measures. If impact minimization measures are required, summary recommendations for avoidance or minimization are given.

Through the WSDOT/FHWA ECS/DCE process, as supported by the submittal of project documentation (discipline reports), the applicant has demonstrated and the FHWA has verified no significant environmental impact is expected. A copy of the final DCE decision issued in the form of a final ECS by the FHWA on June 21, 2012 is included as Attachment 3. This FHWA ECS finding is incorporated by reference as described in Section VII below.

The following documents were prepared in support of and approved through the FHWA NEPA review, have been consulted as part of this environmental review under SEPA, and are incorporated by reference as part of the project environmental record in Section VII below:

- Cultural Resources Technical Report - June 2011 (Attachment 4)
- Alternatives Evaluation and Screening Technical Report - August 2011 (Attachment 5)
- Air Quality Technical Report - June 2011 (Attachment 6)
- Community Effects Technical Report - July 2011 (Attachment 7)
- Fisheries, Wildlife, and Vegetation Technical Report - April 15 2011 (Attachment 8)
- Noise and Vibration Technical Report - June 2011 (Attachment 9)
- Transportation Technical Report - July 2011 (Attachment 10)
- Water Quality Technical Report - July 2011 (Attachment 11)
- Biological Resources Technical Report - June 2011 (Attachment 12)
- Hazardous Materials Discipline Report - July 2011 (Attachment 13)
- Wetland and Stream Delineation Technical Report - June 2011 (Attachment 14)

II. Existing Corridor Conditions

A. NE 4th Extension - 116th Ave NE to 120th Ave NE

The NE 4th Street extension is designed to provide a surface street connection

between 116th Ave NE and 120th Ave NE. This section of the project requires crossing a portion of four commercial private properties that are separated by an abandoned rail line owned by the Port of Seattle that is planned for future conversion to a multi-modal recreation trail.

The existing rail line corridor is characterized by steep slopes (critical areas) covered in blackberry with scattered trees on either side of the rail line. The four commercial properties (two on each side of the rail line) are considered developed and are primarily occupied by parking areas and commercial office or retail space. An aerial photograph of the project area demonstrating existing conditions and depicting the proposed alignment is included as Attachment 2. A complete inventory of the existing condition for this portion of the project is included within the project SEPA Checklist (Attachment 1), in Chapter 3 of the Alternatives Evaluation and Screening Technical Report (Attachment 5), and in the project discipline reports referenced in Section VII of this staff report.

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation

The current Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation within the NE 4th Extension vicinity is General Commercial and Community Business and is within the Wilburton/NE 8th Street Comprehensive Plan Subarea designation. City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Policy S-WI-3 identifies appropriate zoning for the site as General Commercial (GC) until the NE 4th Street extension is made, at which time the appropriate zoning will be Community Business (CB). The proposed project is designed to implement the Comprehensive Plan and is essential to the transition from GC zoning to CB zoning. A discussion on the corridors consistency and compatibility of the project with the City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan is included in Section III of this staff report.

Zoning

The area around the NE 4th Street Extension is currently zoned General Commercial (GC). As identified above, Comprehensive Plan Policy S-WI-3 identifies appropriate zoning for the site in current existing conditions as General Commercial (GC) and identifies appropriate zoning as Community Business (CB) after site access conditions have changed. GC and CB zoning are not inconsistent with the adjacent existing land uses and public roadways (highways and street right-of-ways) are considered allowed uses in these zoning designations. The proposed project is consistent with the areas zoning and is compatible with existing and potential area land uses - the proposed project is designed to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

B. 120th Ave NE Widening - NE 3rd St to Northup Way

The 120th Ave NE expansion includes widening and improving 120th Ave NE from approximately NE 3rd Street north to Northup Way. The project increases the number of travel lanes to two northbound and two southbound for a majority of the project, with a reduced street section at the north end of the project that includes two northbound and only one south bound travel lane. The corridor is currently developed

with a mix of office, commercial retail, and residential uses.

Existing Conditions

The condition of abutting properties where construction will occur varies throughout the corridor and is primarily characterized by maintained landscaping, driveways, and sidewalks. The area within project limits also includes clusters of significant trees, wetlands, streams, and steep slopes that are regulated as critical areas by the City's Critical Areas Ordinance. The existing street is primarily two lanes, is well established, and meanders through the area responding to physical limitations such as topography and hydrology. An aerial photograph of the project area demonstrating existing conditions and depicting the proposed alignment is included as Attachment 2. A complete inventory of the existing condition for this portion of the project is included in the project SEPA Checklist (Attachment 1), within Chapter 3 of the Alternatives Evaluation and Screening Technical Report (Attachment 5), and in the project discipline reports referenced in Section VII of this staff report.

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations within the vicinity of 120th Ave NE varies by district. The south end of the project is located within the Wilburton/NE 8th Street Subarea and Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations include General Commercial, Community Business, and Office. The north section of the project is within the Bel-Red Subarea and includes areas designated as Bel-Red General Commercial, Bel-Red Commercial/Residential, and Bel-Red Office/Residential. The proposed expansion of the 120th Ave NE right-of-way and widening of the street does not change the zoning or Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation (aside from areas affected by Comprehensive Plan Policy S-WI-3 as discussed above), rather the proposed project is designed to implement the Comprehensive Plan, including more intense development contemplated in the vicinity of the future 120th Ave NE light rail station. A discussion on the corridors consistency and compatibility with the City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan is included in Section III of this staff report.

Zoning

The section of the 120th Ave NE corridor under review as part of this proposed development project includes several zoning designations. The south portion of the project which extends from approximately NE 3rd Street to NE 8th Street is zoned General Commercial (GC) and Office (O). The north portion of the project (including the sections that extend from NE 8th Street to Northup Way NE) passes through several different zoning districts including General Commercial (GC), Bel-Red General Commercial (BR-GC), Bel-Red Commercial Residential (BR-CR), Bel-Red Office Residential (BR-OR), and Bel-Red Residential (BR-R). Aside from areas affected by Comprehensive Plan Policy S-WI-3 (as discussed above), the proposed right-of-way expansion and street widening does not affect the area zoning designations and public roadways (highways and street right-of-ways) are considered as allowed uses. The proposed project is consistent with the area zoning and is compatible with existing and potential area land uses.

III. Project Consistency with Comprehensive Plan Policies

The proposed project is consistent with the goals and polices of the City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan:

- The proposed project promotes future planned growth in the Bel-Red subarea and implements required infrastructure improvements identified in the City's TFP program.
- Improvements are expected to provide congestion relief at arterial intersections, improve access to adjacent businesses and districts, and enhance travel times for cars, transit, freight, pedestrians, and bikes.
- Project designs implement development of a transportation system that supports the regional and local land use visions.
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are included in project designs.
- Neighborhood character and context is considered through streetscape and urban design and will be implemented with construction of the expanded roadway.
- Project mitigation measures minimize the amount of through-traffic on local streets in residential areas.
- Street designs provide appropriate infrastructure to support freight movement regionally and through the City.
- Project designs and mitigation measures address air quality, noise, light/glare and other significant environmental factors.
- The project will not degrade the natural environment and has been found to be consistent with surrounding uses and existing development.

A summary of Comprehensive Plan consistency, including an analysis of specific Comprehensive Plan policies is included as **Attachment 15**.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Noticing

Application for project SEPA review was submitted on June 6, 2011. Following initial review of project documentation submitted, a notice of application and intent to issue DNS under the SEPA Optional Process was issued in the July 7, 2011 City Permit Bulletin and an initial comment period held open for 14 days. Comments were collected and a detailed review of environmental documentation completed.

Noticing for SEPA review has been completed as follows:

Application Date:	June 6, 2011
Determination of Complete Application	June 30, 2011
Initial Public Notice (Permit Bulletin):	July 7, 2011
Minimum Comment Period:	July 7, 2011 – July 21, 2011(14 Days)

Public Notice of SEPA DNS: July 26, 2012
DNS Decision Appeal Period: July 26 – August 9, 2012 (14 Days)

B. Public Comment Received

To date a total of five comment letters have been received in response to the notice of application and notice of intent to issue DNS under the SEPA Optional DNS process. Comments received have been focused on impacts to aquatic resources (water quality and hydro period impacts to Lake Bellevue, Sturtevant Creek, and Kelsey Creek), impacts to existing commercial properties that will be affected through demolition and frontage/parking/access modifications, and impacts to adjacent residential communities. Additional comments focused on impacts related to increased traffic volumes and intensity throughout the corridor. Primary issues identified in comment letters received are summarized below.

- Information prepared focuses on stage 1 when all stages should be uniformly addressed
- Project designs have advanced to final engineering regardless of status of environmental review
- Inventory of project area critical areas/natural resource features is incomplete and does not adequately identify impacts
- Lack of general project critical areas feasibility analysis
- Lack of preliminary critical areas mitigation plans
- Stormwater mitigation proposed is not adequate and not appropriate
- Disagreement with alignment selected – better alternative alignment is available
- Existing commercial space and functional businesses will be impacted
- Traffic mitigation is not fully developed but is being relied upon
- Many environmental impacts are not considered including noise and glare
- Access to many properties will be impacted
- Parking supply for many properties will be impacted
- Construction methods will impact existing structures

A table of public comments received and staff responses is included as Attachment 16. Copies of public comment letters received are included as Attachment 17.

V. CHANGES MADE TO THE PROJECT DUE TO STAFF REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Based on staff review of the proposal and public comments received, staff determined that additional information was necessary to address various issues identified where additional documentation or clarification was warranted. A revisions letter was sent to the applicant on August 5, 2011 requesting additional information. A copy of the revisions letter is included as Attachment 18. In response to this request, on October 20, 2011 the Transportation Department submitted a revised

checklist with supplemental addendums addressing all items identified in the revisions letter. The resubmittal included a matrix identifying the changes made to the SEPA checklist and supplemental information provided related to each request. The revisions submittal response matrix is included as Attachment 19. In addition to additional information submitted with the revised checklist, the Transportation Department also submitted several additional revisions to the file to address project stormwater requirements, update the project design status, and provide copies of updated alternatives reports. As a result of requests made, the following design/SEPA elements were modified.

A. Focus of SEPA Checklist on Corridor vs. Stage 1

The proposed corridor expansion project is anticipated to go to construction with the the widening of 120th Ave NE between NE 3rd Street and NE 8th Street in 2012. The SEPA checklist submitted with the original proposal included a focus on an assessment of impacts associated with this stage and did not include a complete assessment of impacts from all stages. This is a review of potential adverse environmental impacts associated with the NE 4th Street/120th Avenue NE corridor project and is not focused on any specific stage of construction. To correct the focus of the checklist, the Transportation Department amended the SEPA checklist to provide broader analysis on the whole corridor without deference to any one stage. A revised SEPA checklist was submitted on October 20, 2011. The revised SEPA checklist is included as Attachment 1.

B. Identification of Threshold Discharge Areas and Clarified Stormwater Management Approach

The original submittal for SEPA review made on June 6, 2011 included a drainage approach that identified Threshold Discharge Areas (TDAs) based on the construction limits for each identified construction Stage (1-6). Under this approach, the requirements for stormwater detention and treatment were focused on the areas within the construction limit TDAs. While this approach to delineating TDAs and applying detention and treatment requirements is technically acceptable under the prescriptive application of the City's Utilities Department Storm and Surface Water Utility Code and Storm and Surface Water Engineering Standards (Stormwater Manual), it was not appropriate for the application of a cohesive corridor approach that needed to consider corridor wide impacts, not construction limit impacts for each Stage.

To address this issue and refocus the design of stormwater mitigation facilities on the whole corridor, construction limits were removed and TDAs were re-mapped to consider the full extent of the corridor. Re-mapping resulted in a different approach to the overall stormwater system design that evaluated the broader impact of the street expansion based on natural drainage patterns of all construction stages as opposed to design based on isolated impacts identified in each stage of construction.

In an effort to document the new approach to stormwater mitigation, the Transportation Department prepared and submitted (November 15, 2011) a technical memo outlining the project's drainage approach. The memo provides planning level details on stormwater detention and treatment requirements and is based on application of the current City of Bellevue stormwater requirements to the proposed corridor alignment. The memo identifies how TDAs are established and what the minimum requirements are for each TDA based on preliminary information related to the proposed alignment and increases in impervious surfaces. The memo concludes that through compliance with the City's stormwater requirements anticipated impacts associated with the expansion of the street section will be mitigated through the use of approved flow control and/or runoff controls. Complete facility design is required with construction permit application where verification of compliance with current stormwater standards is undertaken through the Utility Developer Extension Permit process. A copy of the technical memo outlining the project's approach to meeting stormwater detention and treatment requirements is included as Attachment 20.

C. Critical Areas Preliminary Feasibility Analysis and Improved Mitigation Concepts

Impacts to critical areas associated with infrastructure development projects can be mitigated when appropriately identified and when mitigation sequencing principles are appropriately applied to a project to ensure impacts are first avoided and minimized before mitigation of unavoidable impacts is allowed. The proposed corridor alignment includes impacts to steep slope critical areas, stream critical areas, wetland critical areas, and habitat resources. The original application submitted on June 6, 2011 did not include a complete analysis of feasible alternatives and did not adequately identify how mitigation sequencing was being applied; as a consequence, a request for additional information related to critical areas was made to the Transportation Department (see August 5, 2011 revisions letter included as Attachment 18).

In response to the request the Transportation Department submitted a critical areas feasibility technical memo. The memo identifies where impacts to critical areas are expected, why design changes could not be made to avoid the anticipated impacts, what alternatives were considered, and what mitigation efforts are proposed to offset known impacts. The critical areas feasibility technical memo is included as Attachment 21.

D. Clarification of Status of Design

The proposed alignment project is anticipated to be constructed in stages. Construction permits for the first stage (widening of 120th Ave NE from NE 3rd Street to NE 8th Street) and for subsequent stages (extension of NE 4th Street) were submitted concurrently with this application for SEPA review and are currently under

review by the Development Services Department. Although construction permits cannot be issued until the SEPA process has concluded, design development has advanced beyond the 60% design status that is typically required for project level SEPA review. To clarify the status of design, the Transportation Department has provided a status memo indicating that project design is ongoing to allow for a comprehensive review of constructability and design refinement. It is anticipated that the findings of this environmental review will be incorporated into the final design and an updated plan set submitted as a revision to the construction permit file. The design status memo is included as Attachment 22. Construction permits will not be issued without demonstrated compliance with this SEPA threshold determination.

E. Addition of NE 5th Traffic Mitigation Concepts

The extension of NE 4th Street is expected to increase traffic volumes on 120th Ave NE and cut-through traffic through the Wilburton Neighborhood via NE 5th Street is expected during congested periods. To minimize the potential for cut-through traffic the Transportation Department is proposing development and implementation of a traffic mitigation program for this area and proposed project mitigation will be implemented to minimize potential cut-through traffic from 120th Avenue NE through the Wilburton Neighborhood via NE 5th Street. A traffic committee has been formed consisting of resident volunteers who worked with the City in developing options for addressing cut-through traffic as a result of the Wilburton Connections projects (widening 120th Avenue NE and extending NE 4th Street from 116th to 120th Avenues NE). A questionnaire mailed to area residents in May of 2011, indicated support for a one-lane zone on NE 5th Street between 120th and 124th Avenues NE to discourage cut-through traffic. A one lane zone will require vehicles in both directions to stop at approximately the Bellevue School District Maintenance Facility and allow only one vehicle at a time to pass. The intent of this measure is to cause enough delay for drivers, that they stay on the surrounding arterial streets and avoid using NE 5th Street as a bypass. This mitigation measure will be implemented prior to construction of NE 4th Street – Stage 4, as a pilot project and evaluated before determining if it becomes a permanent improvement.

VI. Permits Required

Following the issuance of this SEPA threshold determination and dependent on the availability of project funding, the City's Transportation Department may choose to pursue issuance of construction permits to proceed with the proposed project. The following is a general list of permits and approvals required to proceed with construction (construction cannot proceed until the following permits have been issued):

- **Critical Areas Land Use Permit (LUC 20.30P)**: Administrative permit required for any development activity within critical areas or critical area buffers. Critical Areas Land Use permits require issuance of a notice of application and a notice of decision in accordance with LUC 20.35.

- **Demolition Permit (BCC 23.10):** Ministerial permit required to demolish existing structures to allow expansion of the Right-of-Way.
- **Clearing and Grading Permit (BCC 23.76):** Ministerial permit required for excavation and grading activity. Includes review of all grading activity and proposed site management practices during construction (CSWPPP, TESC Plan, and construction management BMPs).
- **Utility Developer Extension Permit (BCC 24.06):** Required for the design review, plan approval and field inspection of detention and/or water quality systems. Storm drainage infrastructure must be designed by a professional civil engineer to the current Bellevue Utility Codes and Storm Drainage Engineering Standards.

VII. Environmental Summary

Review of the environmental record suggests no probability of significant adverse environmental impact occurring as a result of the NE 4th Street/120th Ave Corridor proposal, provided that all applicable city codes and standards (including but not limited to those governing land use, utilities, clearing and grading, building, parking, traffic mitigation, and transportation demand management) and contingency mitigation measures (as identified through critical areas and construction permit review) are implemented. Therefore, issuance of a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) is the appropriate threshold determination under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements.

A. Environmental Record

Environmental review consists of analysis of the following documents, studies, and public comments submitted into the environmental record (included as an attachment to this staff report) or, if noted, incorporated by reference:

- City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan – Volume 1 and 2 (Incorporated by reference)
- City of Bellevue 2012-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (Incorporated by reference)
- City of Bellevue 2011-2017 Capital Investment Program Plan (Incorporated by reference)
- City of Bellevue Bel-Red Corridor Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (Incorporated by reference)
- City of Bellevue Downtown Mobility Plan (Incorporated by reference)
- City of Bellevue 2009-2020 Transportation Facilities Plan EIS (Incorporated by reference)
- Project Environmental Checklist – Final revised version submitted on October 26, 2011 (See Attachment 1)
- FHWA Environmental Classification Summary – Signed ECS dated June 21, 2012

(See Attachment 3)

- Cultural Resources Technical Report – June 2011 (See Attachment 4)
- Alternatives Evaluation and Screening Technical Report – August 2011 (See Attachment 5)
- Air Quality Technical Report – June 2011 (See Attachment 6)
- Community Effects Technical – July 2011 (See Attachment 7)
- Fisheries, Wildlife, and Vegetation Technical – April 2011 (See Attachment 8)
- Noise and Vibration Technical Report – June 2011 (See Attachment 9)
- Transportation Technical Report – July 2011 (See Attachment 10)
- Water Quality Technical Report – July 2011 (See Attachment 11)
- Biological Resources Technical Report – June 2011 (See Attachment 12)
- Hazardous Materials Technical Report – July 2011 (See Attachment 13)
- Wetland and Stream Delineation Technical – June 2011 (See Attachment 14)
- Public comment received during the SEPA review comment period (See Attachment 17)
- Stormwater/Drainage Approach Technical Memo – November 2011 (See Attachment 20)
- Critical Areas Feasible Alternatives Analysis Technical Memo – October 2011 (See Attachment 21)
- Project Plans – Preliminary Corridor Plans (See Attachment 23 – In File)
- No Effect Letter – June 2011 (See Attachment 24)
- Significant Tree Reconnaissance/Habitat Resources Technical Memo – October 2011 (See Attachment 25)
- Water Quality Impacts Technical Memo – October 2011 (See Attachment 26)
- Draft Storm Drainage Reports (See Attachment 27 – In File)

Impacts discussed are based on a conservative alignment design and are the worst case scenario for the project. Additional efforts will be made during preliminary and final engineering to reduce the impacts to the extent possible, although impacts beyond those identified in this analysis are not expected. Adverse impacts that are less than significant are usually subject to City Code or Standards intended to mitigate those impacts. Where such impacts and related regulatory items correspond, no further documentation is necessary. Other prescriptive mitigation will be applied through the project Critical Areas Land Use Permit and associated construction permits (Utility Developer Extension Agreement, Demolition Permit, Clearing and Grading Permit).

As outlined in Section I above, the implementation of the NE 4th Street/120th Ave Corridor proposal contains uncertainty surrounding construction sequencing and timing. Some of the notable factors that will affect the implementation of the construction program and which stages receive priority for implementation include the allocation of funding, and the advancement of other regional projects (Sound Transit East Link Project, Bel-Red and Wilburton Subarea Redevelopment, 124th Ave NE Corridor, NE 15th /NE 16th Streets, etc.).

To address this uncertainty, the corridor has been divided into stages. The design of each stage is forward compatible with the other stages and is eligible to pursue construction permit independent of the other stages in the corridor project. Where impacts to critical areas are proposed, a Critical Areas Land Use permit is required. Regardless of the sequencing of construction, environmental impacts presented in this analysis remain consistent and each stage is designed to operate as a stand alone project.

B. Earth

The topography of the project corridor varies. The portion of the NE 4th Street extension west of the Port of Seattle corridor is steeply sloped; rising up in a narrow band immediately west of the railroad embankment, and the portion eastward of the railroad embankment to 120th Avenue NE is generally flat. Along 120th Avenue NE, the land generally slopes downward from east to west and the street itself has a slight rolling character. The steepest slope along the project corridor is located along the proposed alignment for the extension of NE 4th Street. Here, the topography rises roughly 50 feet in elevation between 116th Avenue NE to the west and the Port of Seattle corridor. This change in elevation is concentrated immediately west of the Port of Seattle corridor, and based on the City's critical areas map, the area exceeds a 40 percent slope. The slope in this area was likely created through grading for the railroad alignment and with the development (leveling) of the adjacent commercial properties.

Seven soil types are located along the project corridor. For the proposed extension of NE 4th Street, the project would encounter three soil types: Norma sandy loam, Alderwood gravelly sandy loam, and urban land. Along 120th Avenue NE, the alignment from the NE 300 block to roughly NE 6th Street would encounter Alderwood gravelly sandy loam, then Bellingham silt loam to roughly NE 8th Street. From that location, the project would encounter urban land again, with an area of Tukwila muck that is east and north of Lake Bellevue. In the vicinity of the West Tributary of Kelsey Creek, the project would cross urban land soils again and then Seattle muck. The northernmost portion of the project corridor would encounter Everett gravelly sandy loam.

Construction practices associated with the proposal consist of substantial modification to the underlying soils within the planned corridor and re-grading of the site for the re-construction of the expanded roadway. Fill would generally be comprised of material imported from an approved off-site source. Recycled excavated material may also be used, but because the project would be constructed in stages, excavated material may not always be sufficient or acceptable to satisfy the necessary fill volume. The proposed project would require roughly 118,545 cubic yards of earth movement, comprised of approximately 60,190 cubic yards of cut and about 58,355 cubic yards of fill along the corridor in total. A majority of the cut and fill activity is associated with the leveling of area for travel lanes and amenities including bike lanes and sidewalks. Due to the sites varied topography, cut and fill quantities

vary along the corridor. The most aggressive areas of fill will be used to allow the proposed extension of NE 4th Street to accommodate the steep slope near the Port of Seattle corridor, as the horizontal alignment of the proposed project would curve up the hillside. The hillside slope will not be altered, requiring the construction of substantial retaining walls on both sides of the proposed roadway and backfilling to create a roadway prism. There will also be filling used along 120th Avenue NE, though to a much lesser extent than for NE 4th Street. Excavated material not used on site would be disposed of at an appropriate facility.

Impacts to the slope areas along the Port of Seattle rail corridor are addressed through a Critical Areas Land Use Permit where the applicant must demonstrate that impacts have been minimized and where unavoidable appropriate mitigation is provided. In response to this requirement the applicant has provided a preliminary analysis of technical feasibility that addresses the requirements of the Critical Areas Land Use Permit demonstrating that applicable criteria can be met with design. Where impacts to slopes are found to be unavoidable retaining walls are proposed to minimize impacts to adjacent slope areas and mitigation is proposed through replanting nearby sections of Right of Way with native trees and vegetation. The preliminary Critical Areas Technical Feasibility Analysis is included as Attachment 21.

The City of Bellevue's rules and regulations that govern temporary erosion and sedimentation control, geotechnical evaluation of earth work and development in geologic hazard areas and construction best management practices will be enforced for all development activities associated with construction of the corridor expansion. Proposed construction activities would include the preparation of a Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (CWSPPP) and a Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control (TESC) Plan to address and mitigate any potential erosion. Erosion and sediment control measures are also required during construction to control erosion and prevent transport of sediment to Sturtevant Creek, Lake Bellevue, the West Tributary of Kelsey Creek, and other nearby water bodies. Stream flow would be diverted around the culvert at the West Tributary of Kelsey Creek to prevent water quality violations or erosion of the stream channel during culvert installation. In the geologic critical areas (steep slopes), the potential for erosion is lessened due to the fact that the proposed design would not require excavation of the existing hillside west of the Port of Seattle corridor. Instead, retaining walls would be constructed and fill would be used to minimize effects to the surrounding steep slope. These rules are enumerated in the Clearing and Grading chapter of the Bellevue City Code (BCC) Chapter 23.76. The enforcement of these rules will mitigate for any potential significant adverse impacts related to construction activity.

C. Air

The proposed project is located within an urban area of historically intense commercial activity. As a corridor expansion project that is expected to increase the number of vehicle trips, the Transportation Department has prepared an Air Quality Technical Report including an inventory of existing conditions contrasted with future

modeled conditions at full build out and under the no-build alternative. The Air Quality Technical Report is included as Attachment 6. Findings of the Air Quality Technical Report are summarized below.

Temporary Construction Impacts

Construction of the proposed project would have the potential to result in fugitive dust emissions and construction equipment emissions. Dust is mitigated through the application of water to the area to control dust as a requirement of the Clearing and Grading Code (BCC 23.76). Construction and vehicle emissions are regulated by standards for non-road engines, equipment, and vehicles (WAC 173-400). Emissions from road use vehicle are regulated by WAC 173-421. Mitigation measures related to construction are typically required through clearing and grading and building permits. Aside from BMPs to be used during construction activities, the proposed project is not anticipated to require any further mitigation measures regarding air quality during construction.

Long Term Impacts

Once completed, the street would be used by automobiles that release various pollutants to the air. The proposed project area is within a maintenance area for both carbon monoxide and ozone; however, the proposed project is not predicted to measurably affect regional miles of travel in the study area. The project is also not predicted to impact regional levels of carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter smaller than or equal to 10 microns in size (PM10), particulate matter smaller than or equal to 2.5 microns in size (PM2.5), and ozone (O3) levels. Based on the microscale CO screening analysis, and due to the lack of increase in regional miles of travel, the project is not predicted to cause or exacerbate a violation of the applicable ambient air quality standards. As such, it complies with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) local (microscale) requirements under its Conformity Rule for a project located in a CO maintenance area.

By improving traffic signalization and by implementing transportation network efficiencies the proposed project is anticipated to reduce emissions. Improvements primarily come in the form of added street capacity that could yield significant reductions in arterial street congestion and intersection delay and improve travel times for transit that would increase ridership. Additional improvements include improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities and support for future transit-oriented mixed-used development. A complete analysis of impacts to air quality is included in the project Air Quality Technical Report included as Attachment 6.

Greenhouse Gas (CO2) Emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions associated with improvements to the City's transportation network were analyzed in 2009 through the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) EIS. Existing conditions were estimated and future (2020) network conditions were modeled with TFP implementation and without TFP implementation and contrasted to existing conditions. Modeling revealed that implementation of TFP projects would result in a modest reduction of emissions. The NE 4th/120th Ave NE corridor project is

included in the TFP program. The 2009 TFP EIS also included recommendations for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions for transportation related emissions. Measures include establishing and promoting walking, biking, and public transportation options, improving traffic signalization, implementing transportation network efficiencies, and modifying parking requirements. Several of the recommended greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures identified in the TFP EIS have been incorporated in the NE 4th Street/120th Ave NE corridor design.

Project level SEPA rules require consideration of cumulative environmental impacts associated with a proposal (WAC 197-11-060 and 197-11-792). Under the rules, projects with no proximate cause to emissions of less than 10,000 metric tons of CO₂ per year are not required to report Greenhouse Gas Emissions. For transportation projects, only new induced emissions associated with the project must be reported. In other words, if the proposal does not cause additional vehicle trips there is no proximate cause to link the project to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Because the NE 4th Street/120th Ave NE project does not change land use plans, is not itself a vehicle trip generator, and expected greenhouse gas emissions associated with construction are less than 10,000 metric tons per year, reporting of greenhouse gas emissions and implementation of mitigation measures is not necessary for this project. Greenhouse gas emission will be analyzed and mitigation measures implemented as emissions generators are identified through review of planning and construction permits for the redevelopment of the project vicinity (Bel-Red and Wilburton/NE 8th Street Districts) as identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

D. Water

Impacts to water resources associated with this Corridor expansion project are primarily associated with the increase in impervious surface required for additional street travel lanes and include an increase in storm water runoff, modifications or alterations to stream culverts, filling of wetland resources, and impacts to stream and wetland buffers. To identify potential impacts to water resources, including streams and wetlands, the Transportation Department has prepared a Corridor Drainage Approach technical Summary (Attachment 20), a Wetland and Stream Delineation Technical Report (Attachment 14), a preliminary Critical Areas Technical Feasibility Analysis (Attachment 21), and has provided preliminary storm drainage reports related to each Stage of the Corridor proposal. Impacts to water resources are anticipated to be mitigated through application of the City's Surface Water Engineering Standards and Critical Areas rules. The project must provide appropriate storm water mitigation and must demonstrate that impacts to critical areas are mitigated in compliance with City codes and policies.

Streams

The proposed alignment crosses the West Tributary of Kelsey Creek, which originates in Wetland D. Lake Bellevue, the headwaters of Sturtevant Creek, is in the vicinity of the proposed project, but over 150 feet west of the corridor alignment. The

project includes unavoidable filling of approximately 10 linear feet of the stream channel of the West Tributary of Kelsey Creek and as mitigation day lighting of approximately 150 linear feet of new stream channel. The existing non-fish-passable culvert at the 120th Avenue NE crossing will be replaced with a fish-passable culvert that will be large enough to allow for some wildlife passage. Stream buffer impacts will be mitigated through buffer enhancement.

Wetlands

There are four wetlands in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project along 120th Ave NE. The southernmost, Wetland A, is near NE 12th Street, then Wetlands B, C, and D are in the northern portion of the corridor towards Northup Way. Wetland A is a 8,260 square foot Category III palustrine emergent, scrub-shrub (PEM/SS) depressional unit. Wetland B is located along an open roadside ditch east of 120th Avenue NE and is entirely within the project corridor. Wetland B is approximately 4,420 square feet in size and is also a Category III PEM/SS depressional unit. Wetland C is part of a larger wetland system associated with the West Tributary of Kelsey Creek that extends off site to the east, is categorized as a Category II wetland and is approximately 2 acres in size. Wetland C is a PEM/SS riverine system. Wetland D is a 4.9 acre Category II palustrine aquatic bed, emergent, scrub-shrub, and forested wetland with a hydrogeomorphic classification of depressional outflow.

The proposed alignment will impact all of the wetland buffers within the corridor, and will impact approximately 13,050 square feet of wetland area through the placement of fill or grading. Where impacts will occur, mitigation is required. Proposed mitigation measures include wetland creation, wetland re-establishment, or wetland and wetland buffer enhancement. Depending on the type of impact and mitigation measure proposed, mitigation ratios range from 1:1 to 8:1 to compensate for lost wetland and reduced buffer dimensions. Enhancement will include a minimum of two vegetation classes and a variety of native species to emphasize species diversity. Mitigation will occur locally within either the Sturtevant or Kelsey Creek basins.

A complete assessment of stream and wetland impacts and proposed mitigation measures are identified in the preliminary Critical Areas Technical Feasibility Analysis as Attachment 21. Critical Areas Land Use permits are required when impacts to Critical Areas are proposed. As part of the Critical Areas Land Use Permit process, the applicant must demonstrate that there is no viable alternative with less impact to Critical Areas and must include adequate mitigation measures designed to replace or replicate lost functions. Through application of the City's development standards, required mitigation measures, and required best management practices, it is expected that any adverse environmental impacts to streams and wetlands will be minimized and mitigated for impacts to critical areas within the project vicinity.

E. Plants and Animals

The proposed NE 4th Street/120th Ave NE Corridor project is not expected to significantly or adversely impact plant and animal resources within the project vicinity

due to the general urban character of the site. To properly characterize the project area and identify potential impacts to sensitive resources, the Transportation Department has prepared a Significant Tree and Habitat Assessment (Attachment 25), a Wetland and Stream Delineation Technical Report (Attachment 14), a Fisheries, Wildlife, and Vegetation Technical Report (Attachment 8), and a Biological Resources Technical Report (Attachment 12). The reports, prepared by a qualified professional, include an inventory of site resources, a discussion of project objectives, and a summary of anticipated impacts associated with project implementation.

Four wetlands, identified as Wetlands A, B, C, and D, were delineated in the central and northern portions of the project corridor. Native vegetation in the study area is limited to these four palustrine wetlands and a small area of nearby forested uplands. In addition, native trees have been planted along the entire corridor as part of the the corridors landscaping. Query of the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife Priority Habitat GIS database did not identify the presence of known habitat, although Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) priority habitats in the project corridor include freshwater wetlands (Wetlands A, B, C, and D), fresh deepwater habitat (Lake Bellevue), riparian (West Tributary of Kelsey Creek), and instream (West Tributary of Kelsey Creek) resources. Habitat resources known to support specific species are protected under the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act and implemented through the City of Bellevue Land Use Code Critical Areas requirements. LUC 20.25H.150 identifies different species of local importance and includes performance standards intended to manage habitat resources that support these species.

To avoid impacts to species of local importance, project biologists and design engineers discussed ways to avoid and minimize impacts to the wetlands, stream, and forested areas in the project corridor. The design team concluded that filling Wetlands A and B would be required and are unavoidable for the project to be constructed. As refinement of the alignment design continues, the design team will look at ways to minimize impacts to the project corridor stream and Wetlands C and D. To receive construction permit, the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed alignment constitutes the minimum necessary impact to Critical Areas and that impacts, where necessary, have been accounted for in a complete mitigation plan.

Mitigation measures include avoiding and minimizing clearing, grading, and filling of project corridor wetlands, streams, and forested areas during preliminary engineering design; protecting these habitats during construction; and mitigating unavoidable impacts to the areas after construction is complete. The proposed project includes replacement of the existing non-fish passable culvert at the 120th Avenue NE crossing with a fish-passable culvert and constructing approximately 150 linear feet of new stream channel to facilitate potential future fish use. As stated earlier, there are no fish species currently in this portion of the West Tributary of Kelsey Creek because of existing downstream fish passage barriers. The project's replacement of the non-fish passable culvert at the 120th Avenue NE crossing with a fish-passable

culvert would allow for fish passage once the downstream barriers are replaced with fish-passable systems, which is in the City's long range plans. To mitigate for impacts to pileated woodpecker, snags and native tree species should be installed in the mitigation area to provide immediate and future habitat for this species.

Other potential ways to increase habitat function are to enhance existing wetlands, or create new wetlands, with different hydrologic regimes (e.g., permanently ponded areas, seasonally ponded areas, saturated-only areas, etc.), create habitat features (e.g., install woody debris, plant thin-stemmed emergent plants for amphibian habitat), and perform the wetland mitigation adjacent or near to other wetlands and/or a stream, if possible.

If other species of local importance are proven to utilize the site during future review done as part of the critical areas land use permit process, compliance with the City's Critical Areas Overlay District performance standards (LUC 20.25H) must be demonstrated. Through application of the City's development standards, required mitigation measures, and required best management practices, it is expected that any adverse environmental impacts will be minimized and mitigated for any species identified in the project vicinity.

F. Transportation

Impacts to transportation systems from street expansion projects are primarily identified through traffic volume increases, impacts to intersection level of service, and impacts to transit and freight mobility. To adequately address potential impacts associated with the proposed Corridor expansion, the Transportation Department prepared a Transportation Technical Report (Attachment 10) that documents existing conditions within the corridor and compares them to short and long term build out conditions contrasted against the no-build option.

The analysis generally concludes that volume increases and intersection delays are consistent with those forecasted through local and regional traffic demand projections as based on land use planning assumptions. In this case, the Bel-Red and Wilburton subareas are planned for significant increases in density through redevelopment (such as the Spring District redevelopment project) and the NE 4th Street/120th Ave NE project is designed, in part, to accommodate the planned increase in vehicle trips anticipated with the redevelopment of these subareas.

Most impacts identified are in reductions of intersection level of service, although only one intersection is expected to fall below a "D" level of service; however, compared to the no-build option, there is a small improvement in traffic mobility when considering the level of service at all intersections. Impacts to freight and transit are expected to be short-term and the redevelopment of the corridor is expected to provide additional freight mobility through capacity improvements. Few adverse impacts to the transportation network are identified in the Transportation Technical Report. Where identified, possible impacts have been resolved through proposed mitigation

measures designed to minimize impacts.

The City's transportation system is subject to ongoing traffic analysis and network management and when intersection delays increase due to higher traffic volumes and congestion the Transportation Department implements contingency measures, such as the addition of new intersection signals, signal timing and traffic synchronization, the addition or expansion of intersection turn pocket quieting lanes, traffic calming measures, and signage. The redevelopment of the Bel-Red and Wilburton/NE 8th Street subareas will increase the number of vehicle trips, although the increase will be delayed in relation to the actual implementation of development plans. As traffic volumes increase, the Transportation Department will continue to make network improvements to retain the efficiencies gained through this corridor project.

An example of a transportation network contingency measure is related to the Spring District. To date the only current project under development review related to the Bel-Red subarea rezone is the Spring District redevelopment project. As the Spring District site is developed, vehicle trips are anticipated to increase. In response to the anticipated increase in trips, the Transportation Department is considering adding one new traffic signal on 120th NE between NE 12th and NE 15th where the new signal will be aligned such that it will accommodate future access needs for the west side of 120th NE properties (Spring District).

Through application of the City's Transportation Design Standards and implementation of appropriate contingency mitigation measures it is expected that adverse environmental impacts to the City's transportation system will be minimized and mitigated.

G. Built Environment

The NE 4th Street/120th Avenue NE corridor project includes a widening of 120th Avenue NE and the creation of a new section of right-of-way between 116th Avenue NE and 120th Avenue NE. The project will impact adjacent properties through reduction to currently available parking, reduction of lot size and available setback, reduction of area available for landscaping, and the demolition of existing commercial structures. The proposed project would not displace any residences although up to 200 employees could be displaced through demolition of commercial and retail buildings to allow for the expansion of the right-of-way. Project plans identify the complete demolition of three buildings and partial demolition of two buildings.

For the NE 4th Street extension, one of the buildings to be demolished (east of 116th Avenue NE) is currently vacant and its removal will not cause the displacement of employees. One of the buildings that will be partially demolished is along the north side of the NE 4th street extension and east of 120th Avenue NE (Best Buy building). To mitigate impacts to the Best Buy commercial building, the City plans to facilitate acquisition of property that could allow construction of an addition to the north side of

the building to add an amount of retail space equal to the portion demolished. If the proposed mitigation is successful, there would be no employee or commercial space displacement. If the business has to be relocated due to project impacts, all employees and commercial space would be displaced (approximately 135). If the building addition is not completed prior to the demolition, there could be a short term temporary displacement of some of the workers at this business.

For the 120th Avenue NE widening and re-alignment, two commercial buildings adjacent to 120th Avenue NE, north of NE 8th Street, would be acquired and the buildings demolished as part of the proposed roadway improvements. It is estimated that the displacement of these two automotive sales and servicing buildings could displace up to an estimated 60 employees. The City has notified the adjacent property owners and tenants of the planned roadway improvements and will provide relocation assistance to the businesses as required.

In addition to the planned demolition, the proposed project includes impacts to the functionality of existing commercial properties. Although the corridor alignment is designed to avoid and minimize impacts to sensitive landscape features and private commercial properties that extend throughout the project area, unavoidable changes to the frontage of existing commercial properties where landscaping, parking, and points of access are required to facilitate the expanded right-of-way and integrate with the expanded corridor design.

The proposed project will construct or widen urban arterials that will provide no additional on-street parking within the corridor. During the design process, the project will identify means for mitigating parking impacts on adjacent parcels such as constructing new onsite spaces (surface or structured), converting standard spaces to compact spaces, and identifying potential off-site opportunities for parking replacement. In order to build the project, right-of-way (ROW) that currently supports parking activities on adjacent properties will need to be acquired for the project. This ROW acquisition impacts the viability of approximately 400 parking spaces corridor-wide. The project will be designed to avoid or to minimize parking impacts to allow the remaining parking on adjacent parcels to meet City standards wherever possible. For specific properties that would be adversely affected by loss of parking spaces, the City will work with property owners to reconfigure parking lots based on City standards to recoup the loss of parking spaces and maintain access and circulation.

Reductions to currently available parking, reductions of lot size and available setback, and reductions of area available for landscaping may result in the sites and structures along the corridor being placed in a status as legally nonconforming. Future expansions or renovations to these sites or buildings may trigger compliance with current standards including design guidelines, setbacks, parking, and landscaping, although improvements and compliance would only be required if specific thresholds are exceeded as part of future redevelopment. Nonconforming structures and sites may continue to be utilized without upgrades being required, if redevelopment is not proposed.

The project is currently in the preliminary design phase. As it progresses through final design phases, efforts will be made to minimize impacts to the extent possible. Where acquisition causes the displacement of a business, displacement of parking, adverse impacts on loading dock facilities, and/or changes in property access, the extent of these impacts would be considered in the relocation services offered as part of the project.

VIII. Conclusion and Determination

For the proposed project action, review of the environmental record indicates no probability of significant adverse environmental impacts, provided that applicable city codes and standards, including (but not limited to) those governing critical areas, noise, signage, lighting, land use, building, clearing and grading, parking, traffic mitigation, and transportation demand management are implemented for whatever alternative is ultimately proposed for construction. Therefore, issuance of a Determination of Non-Significance pursuant to WAC 197-11-340 and Bellevue City code 22.02.034 is appropriate.

Other adverse impacts that are less than significant may be mitigated pursuant to Bellevue City Code 22.02.140, RCW 43.21C.060, and WAC 197-11- 660.

IX. Mitigation Measures

The lead agency has determined that the requirements for environmental mitigation have been adequately addressed in the development regulations and comprehensive plans adopted under Chapter 36.70A RCW and in other applicable local, state or federal laws or rules, as provided by RCW 42.21C.240 and WAC 197-11-158. As identified in this SEPA analysis, the City's Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Code, Clearing and Grading Code, Stormwater Code, and Transportation Code include provisions designed to avoid and minimize environmental impacts through design. When impacts are unavoidable, specific mitigation is prescribed by applicable codes and designed to offset impacts. Consequently, no specific SEPA mitigation measures are required for this Threshold Determination. Project specific conditions of approval may be applied in conjunction with underlying permit decisions described in Section VI above.

Attachments

- 1. SEPA Checklist**
- 2. Project Alignment/Project Aerial**
- 3. FHWA ECS Letter**
- 4. Cultural Resources Technical Report**
- 5. Alternatives Evaluation and Screening Technical Report**
- 6. Air Quality Technical Report**
- 7. Community Effects Technical Report**

- 8. Fisheries, Wildlife, and Vegetation Technical Report**
- 9. Noise and Vibration Technical Report**
- 10. Transportation Technical Report**
- 11. Water Quality Technical Report**
- 12. Biological Resources Technical Report**
- 13. Hazardous Materials Discipline Report**
- 14. Wetland and Stream Delineation Technical Report**
- 15. Project Comprehensive Plan Analysis**
- 16. Table of Public Comments**
- 17. Copies of Public Comment Letters**
- 18. Project Revisions Letter**
- 19. Project Revisions Response Matrix**
- 20. Project Stormwater Management Approach Memo**
- 21. Project Critical Areas Feasibility Analysis Memo**
- 22. Project Design Status Memo**
- 23. Draft Project Plans (In File)**
- 24. Fisheries No Effect Letter**
- 25. Corridor Significant Tree Inventory and Habitat Analysis**
- 26. Water Quality Impacts Technical Memo**
- 27. Draft Stormwater Drainage Reports (In File)**