



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Members of the Transportation Commission  
**From:** Andreas Piller, Assistant Planner, Transportation Department  
**Date:** February 4, 2014  
**Subject:** Subarea and Transportation Facility Plans Project Lists Consolidation

## OVERVIEW

Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan is undergoing a major update in 2014. As part of this update, the Transportation Department is reviewing and consolidating all transportation projects contained in Subarea Plans and Transportation Facility Plans. Existing Subarea and Transportation Facility Plans have overlapping geographic areas and redundant, conflicting, and outdated projects, including projects that have already been completed and others that are no longer consistent with current planning intentions. The purpose of this effort is to remove completed or outdated projects, eliminate redundancies and conflicts that exist between the various plans, and clarify the intentions of the City in terms of the transportation projects it is considering for potential future investment.

This memo presents background information about this effort, the proposed methodology, and the anticipated outcomes. This information will be presented at the February 13 meeting of the Transportation Commission, and staff will seek concurrence from the Commission on the proposed methodology at that time, in addition to any other feedback that members believe may assist this process. Staff will provide the Transportation Commission with recommendations in Spring 2014.

## BACKGROUND

The Bellevue Comprehensive Plan was originally adopted in December 1993. The last major update was completed in November 2004, with subsequent amendments adopted by ordinance between 2005 and 2010. In 2014, the city is conducting a ten-year update of the plan to stay consistent with state and regional planning frameworks and changing circumstances within the city. The update will consider changes to policies concerning key topics, include new population and growth figures reflecting the changes in the community in the last decade, and extend the planning horizon from 2022 to 2035. The [current Comprehensive Plan](#) is organized in two volumes: Volume 1 contains framework goals and general elements, and Volume 2 contains Subarea Plans and Transportation Facility Plans.

### Subarea Plans

Bellevue is composed of fourteen distinct subareas, each with its own character and development. Dividing Bellevue into subareas addresses neighborhood needs and focuses planning efforts in small areas of the city. Subarea Plans, written with direct citizen involvement,

are a key element in maintaining stable and predictable land use patterns in the city. This stability is one measure of the high quality of life that citizens in Bellevue expect. Therefore, the City makes a reasonable effort to follow these plans. Each Subarea Plan includes policies and a land use plan map, and the Downtown Bellevue and Bel-Red Subarea Plans also include project lists.

### Transportation Facility Plans

The current Comprehensive Plan includes six Transportation Facility Plans, which identify the roadway, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities needed to implement the City’s transportation policies. Note that, as described below, these are distinct from the twelve-year Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP), which is a financially constrained list of projects. Each Transportation Facility Plan includes policies, a project list, and a project map, but no two documents present this information in exactly the same format. This reflects the fact that Transportation Facility Plans are generally the results of discrete planning efforts undertaken at different times, thus each takes a somewhat different approach. For example, the Eastside Transportation Facility Plan is a result of the [Eastside Transportation Partnership](#) (ETP), which was initiated in 1987, whereas the Bel-Red/Overlake Transportation Facility Plan includes projects resulting from the [Bellevue-Redmond-Overlake Transportation Study](#) (BROTS), a 2008 update to an interlocal planning effort adopted in 1999.

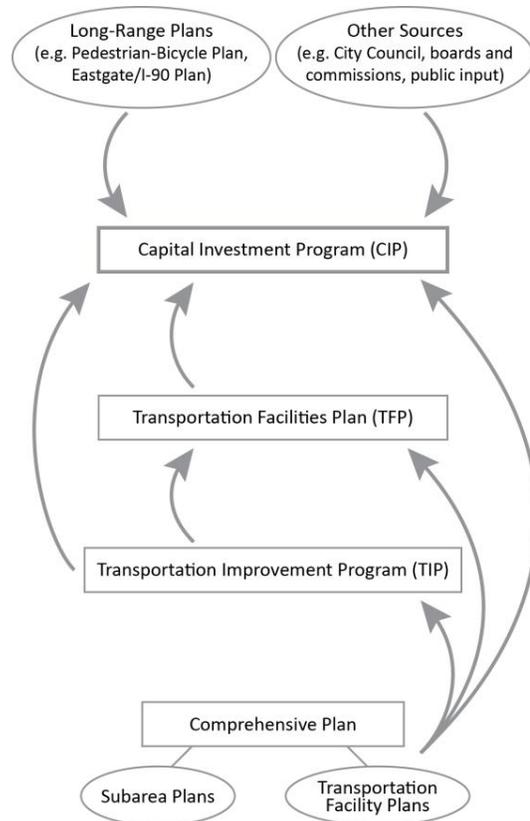
### Relationship to Other Plans

The Subarea and Transportation Facility Plans can be regarded as akin to ‘wish lists’, as they are not financially constrained, the projects have not been designed, and there is no specified implementation timeline. Several other project lists are also maintained by the City, with each serving a different purpose and holding different significance. The Capital Investment Program (CIP) is the only list that identifies fully-funded projects that will be implemented in a particular timeframe. Projects from all other lists must ultimately be adopted in the CIP before they are implemented. As shown in Figure 1, CIP projects can come from a variety of sources, and the projects from Subarea and Transportation Facility Plans may or may not be incorporated into other lists prior to their inclusion in the CIP.

#### *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*

The six-year [Transportation Improvement Program](#) (TIP) serves as a draft work plan for the development of local transportation systems. It represents an important planning component under the State’s Growth Management Act. WSDOT and

**Figure 1.** Various Sources of CIP Projects.



the Puget Sound Regional Council use local TIPs as a tool for coordinating the transportation programs of local jurisdictions with those of regional agencies. The primary importance of the TIP to Bellevue is that, in most instances, projects must be included to be eligible for state and federal grant programs. The TIP is not revenue constrained, nor is the list of projects prioritized in any way. The city may include all projects that it would choose to implement within the six-year time frame if funding were available. The TIP then, by definition, represents a relatively comprehensive listing of projects deemed necessary to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the city's transportation system.

#### *Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP)*

Despite the similar name, the [Transportation Facilities Plan](#) (TFP) bears no direct relation to the Transportation Facility Plans included in the Comprehensive Plan. The TFP serves as the city's twelve-year, or intermediate-range, transportation planning document. It includes high-priority projects from long-range plans (e.g. the [Eastgate/I-90 Plan](#)) and projects that address emerging needs and opportunities. Typically updated every two to four years, the Transportation Facilities Plan is financially constrained. Some projects do not have sufficient financial resources committed to fully complete them within the twelve-year plan horizon, but the identified cost of the projects as described in the TFP must be balanced with the City's transportation revenue projections for the twelve-year period. The Transportation Facilities Plan provides the first level of project prioritization necessary to identify projects for funding in the Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan.

#### *Capital Investment Program (CIP)*

Bellevue's [Capital Investment Program](#) (CIP) presents a schedule of major public facility improvements that will be implemented over the next seven years. Project design, land acquisition, construction costs, and the projected means of financing these costs are integral components of the plan. The projects included in the CIP are derived from a number of sources, including formal long-range plans adopted by the City Council, needs assessments and public surveys, and input from residents, the business community, and boards and commissions. This process ensures that the CIP is responsive to the officially stated direction of the City Council as contained in the Comprehensive Plan and supporting documents. The CIP presents the highest priority projects which can be funded from available revenue sources.

## **TRANSPORTATION PROJECT LIST REVIEW & CONSOLIDATION**

### **Why is This Effort Important?**

There are several motivations underlying this effort to review and consolidate the project lists contained in the various Subarea and Transportation Facility Plans. The most basic reason is to remove projects that are outdated, whether because they have been completed, superseded by more recently proposed projects, or because they are inconsistent with current planning initiatives. Projects that fall into the latter category are especially important to remove from the Comprehensive Plan, because their continued inclusion in that City Council-adopted policy document lends undo credibility to projects that no longer reflect the City's priorities or intentions.

Another reason to undertake this effort is to improve the considerable disclarity currently evident in the Subarea and Transportation Facility Plan project lists. This lack of clarity stems primarily from overlapping geographical areas, which result in redundant project listings or conflicting project descriptions. Whereas the fourteen Subarea Plans each describe a single geographically unique area, Transportation Facility Plans reflect the geographic limits defined by the planning efforts from which each plan is derived, several of which overlap.

For example, four Transportation Facility Plans—(1) Bel-Red/Overlake, (2) Bridle Trails, Bel-Red and Crossroads, (3) East Bellevue, and (4) Pedestrian and Bicycle—each include projects in the Bel-Red subarea, as does the Bel-Red Subarea Plan. This creates uncertainty as to the City’s intent regarding Bel-Red transportation projects. If a project at a particular location is included in two plans, but the projects’ descriptions differ, which should be pursued? If a particular project is included in one or more plans but not in all five, which vision for the Bel-Red subarea is more accurate? And if a project is included with consistent descriptions in all five plans, is there any value derived from all this duplication?

By consolidating the project lists from these various plans into a single volume—which at this point is being called a Transportation Master Plan—all of these issues will be addressed. Outdated projects will be removed, redundancies will be eliminated, and conflicts in project limits and descriptions between various plans will be resolved and a single project definition advanced.

## **Methodology**

This transportation project list review and consolidation effort has been underway since late 2013. The first step was the development of the methodology being employed, described below, so that the resulting recommendations follow consistent guidelines, and so the genesis of all recommendations is clear and can be easily understood. Concurrence on this methodology was obtained from the interdepartmental Comprehensive Plan Update project management team, and the analytical process has since begun.

Project lists from all Subarea Plans and Transportation Facility Plans have been migrated into a single spreadsheet, and the projects in the CIP, TFP, TIP, and the City’s online archive of ongoing and recently completed projects were also all migrated to spreadsheets. Project locations and limits were revised to reflect a consistent format, and each project was assigned one or more project categories (e.g. roadway, non-motorized, transit) and project types (e.g. new road construction, modify channelization, install sidewalks), thereby facilitating the filtering of projects both by where they are located and what they entail. This is beneficial in determining which projects overlap or are redundant, and it also allows for rapid identification of the types of projects that may not be appropriate for continued inclusion in a Comprehensive Plan (e.g. turn lane additions, specific channelization recommendations).

With this data entry complete, projects are filtered by location one street at a time, and the following five steps are completed for each:

- **Step 1:** Compare each project to the list of archived/completed projects and those listed in the CIP, TFP, and TIP to determine whether Subarea/Transportation Facility Plan projects have been built or adopted and are currently in design or construction. If a match is found, record the relevant project number(s) for future reference.
- **Step 2:** Compare each project to the other Subarea/Transportation Facility Plan projects proposed on the same street to determine whether any overlap exists in project extents and/or descriptions. Record the numbers of any such projects to facilitate future cross-referencing.
- **Step 3:** Flag projects that may be inappropriate for continued inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan because they are largely operational in nature (e.g. turn lane additions, specific channelization recommendations).
- **Step 4:** Compare each project to those contained in other long-range plans, such as the 2009 Pedestrian-Bicycle Transportation Plan and the ongoing Transit Master Plan. Record the number and source of any matching projects to facilitate future cross-referencing.
- **Step 5:** For any remaining projects of uncertain status, consult staff for additional information.

This process will classify all projects in two separate but related ways. The first assigns each project with a status, and the second provides a recommended course of action for each project. Each project will be assigned one of the following six status categories:

- **Built** – Project completed.
- **Partially Built** – Some portion(s) of the project have been completed, but others have not.
- **Ongoing** (Planning/Design/Construction) – Project in progress.
- **Outdated** – Project extents overlap and/or description is similar to other projects included in more recent Subarea/Transportation Facility Plans, functional plans, or adopted projects, or the project description includes aspects that are inconsistent with current plans for the affected area. Outdated projects also include those that address issues that may be inappropriate for continued inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan (e.g. turn lane additions, specific channelization recommendations).
- **Deleted** – Project was eliminated by prior action by the City Council or previous Comprehensive Plan Update processes.
- **Not Complete** – No record was found indicating that design or construction of the project has begun, nor do any other projects or plans indicate cause for the project to have been deleted or be considered outdated or superseded.

Ultimately, the above classifications will inform what course of action should be taken for each project. The following six potential actions have been identified:

- **Remove** – Project would no longer be included in the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Remove (Conditional)** – Project would no longer be included if the project list remains in the Comprehensive Plan. If it is moved to a Transportation Master Plan, it may be appropriate to retain the project, though perhaps in a revised form that incorporates some degree of needs assessment and/or conditional triggers.

- **Revise** – Project extents and/or description would be revised to reflect adopted project descriptions and/or more current planning efforts.
- **Consolidate** – Project extents overlap with and/or description is similar to other Subarea/Transportation Facility Plan projects, which would all be consolidated into a single project.
- **Maintain (No Change)** – Project has not been adopted or built, does not conflict with other projects or more recent planning efforts, and continues to be relevant to the City's future intentions for the affected area. Therefore, the project would be retained in its current form, with perhaps only minor formatting modifications (e.g. restatement of the location/limits).
- **Further Review** – It is not immediately clear what action should be taken; additional consultation with other staff is required.

### **Anticipated Outcome**

As previously indicated, the outcome of this effort is expected to be a single volume listing all transportation projects that were not eliminated by the review and consolidation process. Staff is currently considering this single volume to be a Transportation Master Plan that would exist separate from but referenced within the Comprehensive Plan. This Transportation Master Plan would be comparable to other plans such as the [Water Comprehensive Plan](#) and the [Parks and Open Space System Plan](#), which are referenced in their respective elements of the Comprehensive Plan. For example, the Parks, Open Space, Recreation Element references its associated functional plan as follows: "To implement the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, the city has developed and periodically updates the Parks and Open Space System Plan. This functional plan provides an analysis of major park and recreation issues and describes both the short-term and the long-term strategies for addressing these issues."

Preliminary staff review of this scenario suggests that projects listed within a Transportation Master Plan would retain the same standing as if they were adopted within the Comprehensive Plan. Staff will provide the Transportation Commission with recommendations for revisions to the project list and a formal determination of the status of a Transportation Master Plan in Spring 2014.