

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

April 8, 2010
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Tanaka, Commissioners Jokinen, Lampe, Larrivee, Simas

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Glass, Northey

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Krawczyk, Kevin O'Neill, Drew Redman, Department of Transportation

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:41 p.m. by Chair Tanaka who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Simas, who arrived at 7:29 p.m., and Commissioners Glass and Northey, both of whom were excused.

3. PUBLIC HEARING

A. 2011-2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Chair Tanaka stated that every community is required by state law to create a local TIP, and to conduct a public hearing as a part of the process.

Senior Transportation Planner Mike Ingram reminded the Commission that staff provided a briefing regarding the proposed 2011-2016 TIP during the month of March. There are four categories of projects: projects listed in the 2009-2015 CIP; projects in the adopted 2009-2020 TFP; projects identified through planning studies; and regional projects the city may wish to participate in. The TIP is not financially constrained and is therefore able to include a comprehensive listing of projects.

Chair Tanaka declared the public hearing open.

Mr. Burden Hayden, 2622 134th Avenue NE called attention to item 40, the NE 24th Street/148th Avenue NE intersection project. He suggested the project should remain unfunded for a time because of the unknowns relative to Sound Transit's proposed East Link routing through the Bel-Red corridor.

Mr. Victor Bishop, 2114 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, spoke representing the board of the West Lake Sammamish Parkway Association. He voiced support for inclusion of the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project in the TIP. A copy of a letter from the West Lake Sammamish Parkway Association board president to the City Council dated September 2009 was provided to the Commission; it was noted that the letter encouraged keeping the Parkway project on both the CIP and TIP. The public process that was part of the development of the project was extensive and the community is fully behind the proposal. The project apparently stalled in the summer of 2009 during the process of determining what the first phase should be. The project spans a five-mile stretch of roadway and will take 20 years at best to fully build out. The first phase needs to be initiated in the next CIP.

Mr. Kirk McKuen, 4047 120th Avenue SE, testified that the US Secretary of Transportation recently made a policy statement calling for bicycle transportation to be considered equal to motorized transportation. As such, the Burlington Northern/Sante Fe rail corridor should be listed in the TIP for that purpose. The draft document makes no reference to using the corridor for transportation, either for bicycling or other means. The corridor could address many of the bike lanes listed throughout the TIP that run parallel to it, and it could be a very cost-effective solution. While the city does not own the corridor, it is in a position to have great influence over its use.

Chair Tanaka declared the public hearing closed.

4. STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Ingram reported that the city is set to be recognized on April 13 by Governor Gregoire for its success in implementing the Connect Downtown transportation demand management plan. Bellevue is one of seven communities statewide, and the only one in King County, to be recognized for its community implementation.

Deputy Director Dave Berg reported that the Budget One results teams' requests for results had been completed. On the capital side, the request for results that will most impact the work of the Commission is the outcome titled Improved Mobility. He noted that Assistant Director Kevin O'Neill serves on that results team.

Mr. O'Neill said the entire package of requests for results was released to all city staff on April 6. Of the seven outcomes identified by the City Council, improved mobility is one. An interdepartmental staff team was assigned to each outcome and tasked with developing them more fully and to think about the factors that most strongly influence each outcome. Each request for results includes a background description of the work of the results team, the resources used, and the actual factors identified that most strongly influence the outcome. Each of the teams has six members, all from different city departments, and each was charged to work as equals on behalf of the citizens of Bellevue. Various publications, including citizen surveys and the Comprehensive Plan, were utilized in helping to define the factors that most strongly influence the specific outcomes.

Mr. O'Neill said the four factors the group identified as those that most strongly influence improved mobility were existing and future infrastructure, traffic flow, the built environment, and travel options. The rationale for selecting each of the factors was included in the request for results document. For the purpose of improved mobility, the group members defined the term "citizen" fairly broadly given that the transportation system serves not only those who

live in Bellevue but also those who work in the city, those who choose to shop in the city, and those who come to visit residents of the city.

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

6. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Larrivee said Hopelink in partnership with King County Metro and the Puget Sound Regional Council has launched a pilot project in the east Bellevue area that offers bus rides to fixed route services. The free service is open only to seniors, low-income residents, and persons with disabilities. The pilot project will run for about a year under the management of Hopelink.

7. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda as printed was approved by consensus.

9. STUDY SESSION

A. 2011-2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Ingram said the TIP is a comprehensive list of projects that pulls from a variety of sources. Because the list is not financially constrained, the projects cover a range of needs that is very broad. The list includes regional projects the city might want to be involved in. The draft TIP includes 36 projects from the current CIP, 50 projects from the adopted TFP, 10 projects identified from long-range and other transportation plans, and 12 regional projects.

The Council will review the draft list during the month of May. They are required to adopt it by the end of June and submit it to the state.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Larrivee, Mr. Ingram pointed out that the city's adopted ped/bike plan identifies the BNSF corridor as a location for a non-motorized multiple use trail. The project is thus included in the TFP through the ped/bike plan.

Commissioner Larrivee agreed with the suggestion to keep item 40, the NE 24th Street/148th Avenue NE intersection project, unfunded until there is more certainty relative to Sound Transit's light rail plans for passing through Bellevue.

Chair Tanaka pointed out that the TIP is a prerequisite for being able to apply for grants and outside funding. The document serves the city as a low-level planning tool and largely represents a wish list of projects. The hard decisions about funding and proceeding with specific projects is made at the CIP level.

Motion to recommend to the City Council the Transportation Improvement Program as printed, and to approve the transmittal memo as included in the Commission packet, was made by Commissioner Larrivee. Second was by Commissioner Lampe and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Citywide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan Update

Associate Planner Drew Redman said the ten-year citywide TDM program is a follow-up to the successful four-year Connect Downtown TDM plan. He said in general TDM programs are intended to manage congestion, make the most effective use of the existing transportation system, minimize environmental and neighborhood impacts, and meet the Comprehensive Plan modeshare targets. The identified goals are to identify the constraints that exist in different areas of the city, primarily the employment areas; identify appropriate strategies to reduce drive-alone travel to those areas; and to link the relationship between environmental pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Redman said the adopted non-SOV modeshare targets for 2005, which are included in the Comprehensive Plan, are 40 percent for the Downtown area, 25 percent for the Bel-Red/Northup area, 25 percent for the Crossroads area, 35 percent for the Eastgate area, and 20 percent for the Factoria area. He noted that the Bel-Red/Northup Mobility Management Area (MMA) was subsequently divided into two distinct areas: Bel-Red and Wilburton. The modeling analysis done in 2008 indicated good progress toward meeting the targets and projected the modeshare for 2020 in the MMAs as follows: 38 percent for the Downtown area, 30 percent for the Wilburton area, 21 percent for the Crossroads area, 18 percent for the Eastgate area, 25 percent for the Bel-Red area, and 24 percent for the Factoria area.

While the targets are focused on commute trips only, they are not the only trips that occur in the city. They are, however, the majority of the trips. The number of people who commute to work in Bellevue exceeds the number of people who live in the city and commute elsewhere to work.

Commissions Lampe asked if the build out in the downtown has had much of an impact on the percentages of people coming into that area to access their place of residence. Mr. Redman said many of the units that have been constructed remain empty which factors into the fact that the number of residential trips in the downtown has not had much of an impact. The land use assumptions for 2020 recognize that there will be more residential in the downtown, though the area will remain primarily a major employment area.

The predominant work sector in Bellevue is finance, investment, real estate and services (FIRES). Citywide, more than half of all Bellevue jobs are in that sector, and 60 percent of the total number of businesses in the city are in that sector.

Mr. Redman said there are many companies located in the downtown that are large enough to be subject to the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) law, which mandates participation in drive-alone reduction programs and programs aimed at reducing the overall number of vehicle miles traveled. Even so, 75 percent of the downtown and Bel-Red businesses have fewer than 19 employees. It is easier for the city to work with the larger companies, but to really have an impact the smaller companies need to be brought on board.

In addition to the CTR requirements, there is a city requirement called Transportation Management Programs that affects buildings. The requirements are similar to the requirements that apply to large employers.

Connect Downtown is a transportation demand management program focused on downtown

Bellevue. King County has a program in which they match to a certain level incentives offered by employers to their workers not to drive alone. Congestion pricing is an approach being used in downtown London, England, that tolls local roads; the upcoming tolls on SR-520 fall under that category. Setting limits on the maximum number of allowed parking stalls is an approach that serves to encourage people from not driving alone; Bellevue already sets maximums both in the downtown specifically and citywide generally, though it might be a good idea to review the current limits. Portland has a parking management program that stems from an agreement on the part of businesses and the city that sets a limit on the overall number of parking stalls in the central business district, and making up the difference by offering transportation options. Children's Hospital in Seattle and Microsoft both have agreements with Metro to provide increased levels of service to their campuses.

There are neighborhood programs in place in Oregon that aim to get residents out and familiar with their environment through the printing of local bike and walking maps. The maps include the locations of businesses that offer discounts for those who walk or bike in. Portland also has a transfer of parking rights program. Any development that wants to go below the minimum number of parking stalls allowed can trade with a development that wants to go above the maximum allowed parking. The trades must be made at the pre-development stage.

The metropolitan planning organization in Portland has a multimodal trip planning program in place. A similar program is offered by King County Metro but it only includes transit options. The Portland program includes bicycling and walking options.

Sunday Parkways is an idea that is practiced by a number of jurisdictions. Bogotá, Columbia, is famous for shutting down their roads on Sunday mornings, ushering in a big community festival and gathering. People ride their bikes, walk and run, and conduct aerobic activities at dance stages. On a much smaller scale, the road between two parks in south Seattle along Lake Washington Drive is closed on Sundays and a lot of families ride their bikes between the two parks.

Chair Tanaka asked if any analysis has been done by staff on what programs offer the most bang for the buck. Mr. Redman said the research indicates the results are contextual. Much depends on the audience being addressed and their willingness to participate in the programs. The degree to which programs become successful cannot be accurately forecast in advance.

Mr. Redman said the city's outreach efforts are primarily focused on the MMAs with the highest number of commute trips, and in the areas that are exceeding the 2020 congestion allowances or LOS standards.

Commute Advantage is a program targeted toward smaller employers in the downtown in an attempt to get them to provide commute incentives for their employees. That program is being expanded to the medical district. The city has enjoyed good success by supporting the Transportation Management Association (TMA), especially in the downtown; expanding the TMA service area is a possibility. Consideration is being given to expanding the telework outreach program beyond the boundaries of the downtown.

Mr. Redman said the next steps will be to talk with the stakeholders and vet the modeshare targets, develop appropriate strategies for each area along with a timeline, and develop a draft plan for public comment before following up with the Commission.

Commissioner Larrivee referred to the 2008 non-SOV modeshare table and clarified that the numbers indicate the percentages the modeling suggests would be attained based on certain assumptions, and the actual survey results from 2008. He noted that the Crossroads and Bel-Red numbers were pretty good, but asked if staff has tried to determine why the model is so far off in Factoria, Eastgate and downtown. Mr. Redman said much has to do with the fact that the model is based on vehicle counts rather than person trips. Certain assumptions must be made with regard to the number of persons in each vehicle.

Mr. Ingram said the modeshare survey asked employees about their travel habits, including all the motorized trips in the model, and gives credit for teleworking and compressed work week schedules. The trips not taken are not accounted for in the model. Some adjustments to the model will need to be made to allow for them.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested that the transportation system in place in the area is confusing to many, mostly because there are different transit authorities. It would be a good idea for the city to act as a clearinghouse. Mr. Redman said the state recently launched a new online rideshare tool that provides good incentives and matching programs. Mr. Ingram said staff plans to offer the Commission a briefing on that tool at a future meeting.

Commissioner Lampe noted that the traffic modeling for many of the downtown intersections are anticipated to be operating at very poor levels by 2030. He asked if those predictions are incorporated into the planning for things such as the allowed number of parking stalls for new construction. Mr. Redman said there is a team in the Department of Planning and Community Development working on the issue of parking requirements.

Chair Tanaka asked if any of the models take into account the price of a gallon of gas. Mr. Redman said there are a number of assumptions in the model that can be revised as needed. The price of fuel is one of those assumptions.

10. OLD BUSINESS – None

11. NEW BUSINESS – None

12. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Samir Rustagi, 4725 Somerset Place SE, asked if there are any plans in place for installing charging stations for electric cars.

Mr. Krawczyk said he would provide an answer to that question at the next Commission meeting.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 25, 2010

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

14. REVIEW CALENDAR

A. Commission Calendar and Agenda

The Commission reviewed the items scheduled for discussion at upcoming meetings.

Mr. Krawczyk reported that because of the Budget One timeframe, the Commission will need to have a draft of the initial CIP project list by May 14. He noted that in order to accomplish that task, a second meeting in April would be necessary.

Mr. Berg reminded the Commissioners that in the past there has been a long list of projects and a funding line, and the Commission was asked to determine which projects should be shown above and which below that line. The Budget One process does not have a funding line. Rather, the focus will be on projects that will best achieve specific outcomes. The results teams will prioritize the list of projects, and their recommendation will be fed back to the Commission for one additional review.

B. Public Involvement Calendar

15. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Tanaka adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

Date