

City of
Bellevue



Transportation Commission Study Session

DATE: June 2, 2016

TO: Members of the Transportation Commission

FROM: Ron Kessack, Assistant Director, Transportation Capital Program Services, 425-452-4631, rkessack@bellevuewa.gov
Eric Miller, Capital Programming Manager, 425-452-6146, emiller@bellevuewa.gov

SUBJECT: Potential 2016 Transportation Levy

DIRECTION REQUESTED

- Action
- Discussion
- Information

Department staff will attend your meeting on June 9 to help facilitate the Commission's review, refinement and approval of a memorandum transmitting the Commission's recommendations on the programmatic themes and percentage allocations of potential voted transportation levy revenue to the City Council for consideration.

BACKGROUND

On May 16th and 23rd the City Council held study sessions on the topic of Long Range Financial Planning. Staff presentations and the Council discussions focused on the following areas:

- Review of the City's long range capital revenue forecast and needs;
- The City's pursuit of a Federal TIFIA loan to advance implementation of priority projects in the BelRed Subarea; and
- Options to introduce new revenue, most specifically referencing the potential for two voted levies, one focusing revenue on implementation of the Fire Long Range Facilities

Plan, and the second focusing on transportation improvements with emphasis toward neighborhood safety and connectivity investment.

On May 23 the City Council agreed with a staff proposal to engage the Transportation Commission in a series of discussions around the area Neighborhood Safety and Connectivity, including an evaluation of need and project types that would be appropriate for acceleration beyond what current resources would allow.

On May 26 the Commission held a focused workshop on the subject of the potential for a transportation levy. Commissioners reached consensus to develop a specific recommendation including five thematic areas and the relative allocation percentage of potential levy proceeds to each thematic category. The Commission consensus included the following thematic categories and allocation percentages:

- Capital Maintenance Program Enhancements (30%)
- Neighborhood Safety Program Enhancements (5%)
- Sidewalk/Pathway, Bikeway and Transit Connectivity Projects (30%)
- Neighborhood Traffic Congestion Solutions (35%)
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (5%)

INFORMATION

Attached to this memorandum is a DRAFT Transportation Commission transmittal memorandum to the City Council regarding the Commission's recommendations on the programmatic themes and funding allocation percentages for the Potential 2016 Transportation Levy. The language and messages in the attached are only a staff representation of the Commission's May 26 discussions and consensus around the topical messaging to the Council. Commissioners should feel completely open to modify or overhaul the narrative and/or message delivery.

NEXT STEPS

Commission representatives may wish to attend a City Council Regular Session on June 20 or July 5 to present and discuss your levy recommendations with the Council. Three (3) public open houses are being organized for the last week of June, as follows:

1. Tuesday, June 28, 2016, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.
Location: Bellevue Youth Theater, 16051 NE 10th Street
2. Wednesday, June 29, 2016, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.
Location: South Bellevue Community Center, 14509 SE Newport Way

3. Thursday, June 30, 2016, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.

Location: Bellevue City Hall, 450 110th Avenue NE

The Council is expected to consider input from the Commission and the public beginning on July 5 and to make final decisions regarding the levy by the end of July.

Please don't hesitate to contact Ron or Eric with questions or requests for additional information before the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. DRAFT Transportation Commission transmittal memorandum: Potential 2016 Transportation Levy



Transportation Commission

Commissioners:

Update Chair/Vice-Chair
Status

Scott Lampe

Janice Zahn

Vic Bishop

Francois Larrivee

Clifford Chirls

Todd Woosley

Vacant Position

City Council Liaison:

Kevin Wallace,
Councilmember

Staff Contact:

Kevin McDonald, AICP
Senior Transportation
Planner
425-452-4558
kmcDonald@bellevuewa.gov

Date: June 9, 2016

To: Mayor John Stokes and Councilmembers

Subject: Potential 2016 Transportation Levy

As indicated in our May 12 communication to the Council (Preliminary 2017-2023 Capital Funding Priorities), we commend the City Council direction and staff efforts to investigate potential new funding strategies and cash flow mechanisms (specifically a voted levy and/or Transportation Infrastructure and Finance Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan). We are excited to be tasked by the Council to provide feedback on the Council's identified themes for a potential Neighborhood Safety and Connectivity levy and on the relative funding allocation level to these thematic areas.

Below you will find our recommendation for five (5) thematic levy funding categories – not intended to be in any prioritized order – and our suggested levy proceeds allocation percentage to each category.

A. Capital Maintenance Program Enhancements (30%)

As indicated in our May 12 Funding Priorities transmittal, it is of vital importance that the City continue to adequately fund the preservation and maintenance of its previous capital investments. The City is experiencing dramatic growth which creates new and increased demands on the existing transportation system which in turn requires additional maintenance expenditures. The effects of deferred routine maintenance have proven to cost agencies significantly more in future dollars when infrastructure reconstruction or full replacement may be required. For this reason we strongly encourage enhanced funding for two of the City's important capitalized maintenance programs, Street Overlays (CIP Plan No. PW-M-1) and Major Maintenance (CIP Plan No. PW-M-19). For Overlays, we encourage this enhancement be focused toward local streets which have been given a second tier priority to arterials in the program since 2010.

B. Neighborhood Safety Program Enhancements (5%)

We believe a modest enhancement to existing programmatic investment in this thematic category can leverage significant safety benefits across the City. The Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (CIP Plan No. PW-M-7) is constrained in its breadth and effectiveness by the limitations of capital allocations and staffing resources to address a backlog of neighborhood-identified traffic safety and management priorities. Other existing programs including the Minor Capital Programs for Traffic Operations, Signals & Lighting, and Collision Reduction (CIP Plan Nos. PW-M-2 & 20 and PW-R-46) could do more to enhance safety through addressing mid-block crossing needs, improving crossings at signalized intersections, and addressing high accident locations.

C. Sidewalk/Pathway, Bikeway and Transit Connectivity (30%)

Many ongoing capital programs and discrete projects systematically enhance the connectivity and safety of our transportation system, especially for non-motorized users. We believe funding for a significant enhancement to programs such as the Neighborhood Sidewalks Program (CIP Plan No. PW-W/B-76) and Pedestrian & Bicycle Access and Connections Program (PW-W/B-56) should be a priority for inclusion in a voted levy. These programs are currently unable to maintain their established work programs under the pressures of increasing public requests and project costs.

For bicycle system connectivity, again referencing our May 12 communication, we believe a significant investment in a new Bicycle Rapid Implementation Program (BRIP) is a priority and will help to meet the goals of the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan. The BRIP would implement at least two complete and integrated North-South and two East-West priority bicycle corridors that connect the city limits and will install automated data collection systems to measure pedestrian and bicycle usage on a continual basis. BRIP emphasizes physically separated bicycle facilities intended to minimize conflicts between roadway users.

D. Neighborhood Traffic Congestion Solutions (35%)

While we understand roadway capacity projects often turn into high-cost solutions to congestion issues at an intersection or along a corridor, we believe that targeted capacity projects can reduce travel time and relieve stress for residents commuting to or from home, work, shopping or recreational activities.

E. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS; 5%)

We believe a modest enhancement to the Department’s ITS Plan Implementation program (CIP Plan No. PW-R-156) will go a long way toward advancing strategies such as travel time information and parking availability applications that inform the traveling public in “real time” leading to reduced trip making and/or shortened trip distances. This investment may also better position the City of Bellevue to benefit from new technologies under development and early implementation, including systems to accommodate automated vehicles.

We will attend a City Council meeting in the near future to provide comments on behalf of the Transportation Commission during a Regular Session agenda item 5: Reports of Community Council, Boards and Commissions.

Thank you for considering our recommendations and for the opportunity to serve you and the community on the Transportation Commission.

Sincerely,

New Chair, Bellevue Transportation Commission

New Vice-Chair, Bellevue Transportation Commission