

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

September 8, 2016
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioners Bishop, Lampe, Larrivee, Woosley, Wu

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Chair Zahn, Commissioner Chirls

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Michael Ingram, Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Commissioner Bishop who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Chair Zahn and Commissioner Chirls, both of whom were excused.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Augusta DeVries, 10325 NE 125th Place, Kirkland, said she works as the transportation program director for the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA), manager of number of Transportation Management Program (TMP) plans in Bellevue. TransManage is a part of the BDA and has members who are property owners and developers. She offered her services as a resource as the Commission looks to update the TMP code.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Woosley. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and the motion carried unanimously.

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

6. DRAFT MINUTES REVIEW/APPROVAL

A. July 14, 2016

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Woosley. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Larrivee and the motion carried unanimously.

7. STUDY SESSION

A. Transportation Management Program Review

Senior Transportation Planner Mike Ingram said the next step in the process to update the Transportation Management Program will be for the Commission to offer some recommendations to the City Council relative to making changes and seeking input and direction from the Council. Their direction will inform the work in the coming months to refining the code language before sending it back to the Council for an ultimate decision early in 2017.

Commissioner Woosley asked if either the Commission or the Council will conduct a public hearing on the changed ordinance. Mr. Ingram said the Commission has the option to hold a public hearing, and the Council likely would prefer to see the Commission do that, though it is not strictly required.

Mr. Ingram said the online open house was held during the latter half of July and most of August. The key messages centered on an interest in having more flexibility on the implementation side. There was mixed feedback about the idea of expanding the performance targets. Interestingly, there was strong support for continuing to post information at residential buildings. There was very little support for removing the TMP requirements altogether. Technological change was a strong theme carried throughout the comments.

Commissioner Larrivee noted that the number of respondents was fairly low, which could be the result of conducting the survey during the summer months. He asked if staff have given any consideration to what might be done differently going forward to gain additional input. Mr. Ingram said if a physical open house were held and 120 attended to discuss the TMP issues, he would be amazed. If 20 of those attendees subsequently were to give input, it would be almost overwhelming and all could be deemed a success. While the number of respondents to the online survey was not high compared to other types of projects the city does, it was impressive given the topic.

Commissioner Bishop pointed out that the scope of people who have an interest in the subject is quite limited. The number of respondents was a good representation of the number of people who are involved.

Commissioner Woosley suggested that as things get refined and there is something tangible to respond to and comment on, groups that are interested and directly impacted will likely engage a bit more.

Mr. Ingram called attention to the table in Attachment 2 in the packet listing the staff recommendations. He noted that the first recommendation was fairly straightforward in the way it addresses those parts of the code that are known to be dated and/or not working. He noted that the Commission had previously discussed the fact that enforcement provisions are lacking for parts of the current code.

Commissioner Woosley suggested that the wording of the posting requirements could be interpreted to mean posting in every cubicle in office buildings. He suggested it should be clarified to say at the appropriate locations within each tenant space. Mr. Ingram said the specific code section applies to office buildings in the downtown, so there is an additional overlay of several requirements, including the performance requirements. One of the requirements is that each tenant with 50 or more employees must have their own information

center overseen and facilitated by the building manager. That is in addition to information in the building lobby. He agreed the language could be clarified to refer to individual tenant spaces rather than workspaces.

Mr. Ingram pointed out that currently the provisions of BCC 14.60.070 have no associated enforcement mechanism. The provisions of BCC 14.60.080, which applies to the downtown, does have an enforcement mechanism, but it is overly heavy-handed and has never been used.

Mr. Ingram said the second recommendation is also related to a part of the code that is not working; it is focused on how the performance goal is characterized. There are two issues, the first of which is that the 35 percent reduction over ten years is not realistically achievable. The second issue is the way in which the expectation is set determined on a baseline measurement. Other cities set their performance requirements at specific drive-alone rates, and the buildings are responsible for meeting the requirement.

Commissioner Woosley reminded the Commission that he had previously pointed out that the number of number of people per square foot in office buildings is growing. In trying to address the overall trip generation impacts on the city's transportation system by large employers, a specific modesplit for a building could in reality mean twice as many trips generated by that building. He recommended recognizing that phenomenon in some way.

Commissioner Wu agreed that with more employees per square foot, each building will generate more trips overall. She pointed out, however, that achieving a lower percentage of drive-alone trips will reduce the number of trips overall. She said she would like to see building managers given incentives to reduce their drive-alone rates. Mr. Ingram explained that building conditions are set at the time the building is developed, which means that the flexibility to change the target will not be there. There will need to be, however, a process for determining what the target should be for buildings as they come online. That will admittedly not be easy to accomplish. Commissioner Wu suggested the targets could go beyond just drive-alone rates to include those who walk or bike to work.

Commissioner Larrivee commented that not all businesses are alike and they can draw from a different population. A 70 percent drive-alone rate may be easier to achieve for a young tech company than for some other type of business. He suggested there should be a minimum target established for all and incentives beyond that.

Commissioner Lampe agreed with the notion of switching from an absolute reduction amount to a target amount.

Mr. Ingram said the third staff recommendation was to extend the performance goal beyond just office uses in the downtown to office uses citywide, which is a far more equitable approach. Office uses are increasingly a predominant use around the city.

Commissioner Wu asked if most office uses are near transit centers or hubs. Mr. Ingram said most of them are but a few are not. The Boeing office park in Eastgate and the Bellefield office park south of the downtown are two office developments that are not close to transit and the strategies they would need to use to achieve a lower drive-alone rate would not be the same as in the downtown.

Commissioner Woosley pointed out that offices located away from transit centers are still served by bus service. The vast majority of transit trips, even after East Link is operational,

will continue to be by bus.

Commissioner Larrivee commented that in looking at goals citywide, consideration should be given to the reality of how much the drive-alone percentage can be reduced in the areas not heavily served by transit. Accordingly, there should be some flexibility built into the system. Mr. Ingram said the data gathered from the Commute Trip Reduction program will be useful in determining what has worked and what has not worked.

Commissioner Woosley highlighted the fact that T-Mobile in Factoria has a contract shuttle service operating out of the Crossroads Bible Church, making that site the third largest park and ride in the city after South Bellevue and Eastgate. The private sector solution has proved to work very well and similar approaches should be encouraged.

Commissioner Bishop pointed out that T-Mobile has a real interest in effecting trip reduction because they are having to pay for the shuttles and the outside parking lot.

Mr. Ingram said the recommendation is to extend the performance goal to office uses citywide but not to other types of uses. The city has a lot of experience about how to effectively reduce trips at office settings given that most of the CTR employers operate office uses. Office uses make up by far the largest sector of employment, and office users tend to travel at peak periods.

Commissioner Lampe asked if the city has ever tried to influence travel habits at schools. Mr. Ingram said Bellevue has never done that, but Issaquah has. Their largest high school has a TMP requirement and a performance requirement.

Commissioner Woosley asked if the city will be able to monitor changes to levels of service based on the new high school start times, which are closer to the heart of the morning peak period. Mr. Ingram said he has heard concerns from the community about the impacts that could result from the shift in the school start times. A program called School Pool is launching at several schools specifically to help address the additional impact.

Commissioner Wu said if something is to be done about schools, the purpose should primarily be to help the surrounding communities address the impacts rather than to regulate driving alone.

Mr. Ingram stated that the fourth recommendation relates to the issue of flexibility. The notion is to have minimum baseline requirements and expectations for every site, with someone designated at each site to be responsible for overseeing the requirements and posting information. Beyond that, however, there could be a menu of options from which building managers can select. The options could be grouped according to different factors and outlined in an implementation guidelines document, which is the fifth recommendation. The base requirements would be established by city code, but the implementation guidelines would provide additional direction for how to comply with the code requirements. The advantage of having the guidelines would be that they could be updated administratively rather than through a code review process, making it easier to respond to changing conditions over time.

Commissioner Woosley asked if a check has been made to make sure there is no duplication of the state's CTR requirements. Mr. Ingram said there are a number of buildings in Bellevue that have CTR tenants, and quite a few that have no CTR-affected tenants. There are upwards of 30,000 CTR employees in TMP buildings, but there are also 11,000 employees in TMP

buildings that do not work for a CTR employer. The CTR and TMP requirements can work to complement each other in a building environment, and the CTR employers appreciate having the additional support they get from their buildings under the TMP requirements.

Mr. Ingram said the sixth recommendation concerns building size thresholds. The guidance received to date has been to have something firm to suggest to the City Council so there can be some clarity. The proposed revisions include no longer having TMP agreements for the buildings as small as 30,000 square feet. Instead, the threshold should be 50,000 square feet, which is the level at which buildings must designate a transportation coordinator.

Commissioner Larrivee asked how eliminating the smaller buildings from the requirements plays into the buildings having more employees per square foot. Mr. Ingram said the only requirement for the smaller buildings is the posting of information. That requirement was initiated in 1995 before there were so many ways of getting information out to employees, and that is the primary thinking behind why the requirement is no longer needed for the smaller buildings, along with reducing the administrative activities needed both for the buildings and the city.

Commissioner Woosley suggested the issue of having more employees per square foot should be addressed in the impact fee calculation assumptions.

A motion indicating the support of the Commission for the staff recommendations and move them forward to the Council was made by Commissioner Larrivee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Ingram said a slot is scheduled on the Council's agenda for September 19.

B. Complete Streets Ordinance

Senior Planner Kevin McDonald said a subcommittee comprised of former Chair Lampe, current Chair Zahn and Commissioner Chirls met with staff to review existing policy with respect to complete streets and to identify potential ordinance language for a complete streets policy. On July 14, Department of Transportation director Dave Berg requested that the Commission adopt a complete streets policy for the purpose of achieving eligibility for the city to be nominated for a complete streets award. For a city the size and complexity of Bellevue, the award would be \$500,000, funds that could be used to build projects that advance general mobility. The subcommittee developed ordinance language that establishes the legislative intent; is complementary to existing policies; acknowledges and affirms all of the modal plans in place; and supports the recently adopted Vision Zero.

If approved by the Council, the recommended ordinance would essentially adopt a new complete streets section in Bellevue city code. The section would provide direction for a complete streets network, provide for exceptions, and provide direction to use the latest design guidance. A complete streets design manual could also be developed to guide staff, consultants and the community, and explain how the principles could be applied in specific circumstances. The ordinance would also have a work program item for the Commission, specifically to look at the Comprehensive Plan to see if existing policies need to be amended or if new policies need to be added to support the complete street ethic.

Mr. McDonald explained that complete streets are defined as corridors and transportation networks that are scoped, planned, designed, built, operated and maintained to enable safe

access for all users. In planning for complete streets, the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and ability are taken into consideration to assure they can move safely along and across streets.

The notion of complete streets is not new to Bellevue, but what the city is missing is a complete streets ordinance. The ordinance is the key piece for being eligible for the grant program. The complete streets idea is embedded into the work the city does to develop plans and policies that speak to providing mobility options.

Commissioner Woosley said it was his understanding that adopting a complete streets ordinance would be a straightforward exercise involving tidying things up to qualify for the award program. He asked if staff had in mind any specific policy changes that might be needed. Mr. McDonald said the intent is to go through the exercise to determine if any modifications to existing policies or if any new policies might be warranted to help implement the complete streets framework. It could be that policy support is needed for something the city is already doing, and it could be that policy direction is needed for something the city should be doing. The subcommittee, staff and the city attorney's office have reviewed the proposed code language and have determined it to be appropriate for the specific situation and is consistent with existing adopted policies. There is no presumption with regard to what the nature of policy changes, if any, might be.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bishop, Mr. McDonald explained that the complete streets framework can involve corridors, parallel corridors, and street networks. The complete streets approach and ordinance is not a substitute for coming up with a citywide transportation plan. Just as the Vision Zero ordinance provided an umbrella and organizing principle for all the things the city already does, the complete streets policy framework will organize the pertinent policies in one place.

Commissioner Wu commented favorably on the way the proposed ordinance is structured. She noted that 14.60.191.A defines what complete streets are; 14.60.191.B explains how complete streets will be brought together in a system; 14.60.191.C spells out the likely exceptions; and 14.60.191.D gives the director the authority continue to maintain and update a transportation design manual to implement the policy framework. She asked, however, that is meant by the documented absence of current demand as noted in 14.60.191.C.1. Mr. McDonald said the paragraph is one of the exceptions and in the sense used it means there is no evidence that demand for the mode exists along a corridor. The word "documented" was used intentionally and is tied to the notion of creating a record of decision of why a roadway or corridor was designed the way it was.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested that "known" would be a better word than "documented." The other Commissioners concurred.

Mr. McDonald shared with the Commissioners a color-coded map indicating the number of jurisdictions within the various states that have adopted complete streets policies or ordinances. In Washington state, there are currently 56 jurisdictions with complete streets ordinances on the books.

The complete streets award program was introduced in May 2016 by the Transportation Improvement Board. The conditions for eligibility include having a complete streets policy. Award dollars do not have to be allocated to a specific project; they can be spent with flexibility within jurisdictions to advance the embedded ethic of having a complete

transportation system. Several awards will be granted from the available \$10 million that has been set aside for the purpose. Jurisdictions must market their complete streets programs to a nominating agency, which in turn will look at all of the submissions and forward to the Transportation Improvement Board its recommendations. Bellevue intends to market its program to Feet First, an organization that is authorized to nominate eight jurisdictions for awards, two of which must be from the east side of the state and the balance from the west side of the state. Other nominating agencies include the state Department of Transportation, the state Department of Commerce and Washington Bikes. Eligibility must be shown by October 1.

A motion to recommend approval of the draft complete streets ordinance, substituting the word “known” for “documented” in 14.60.191.C.1, was made by Commissioner Woosley. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Larrivee.

Commissioner Woosley suggested ordering the safe and reliable mobility options, which include walking, biking, riding transit, driving and freight, in the fourth whereas paragraph in the ordinance in order of their respective modeshares.

Commissioner Lampe said he would not object to making that change, but pointed out that the order of the mobility options likely will not any impact on eligibility for the grant.

Commissioner Wu agreed, adding that for many years driving has played a dominant role in mobility. She said it is time to give focus to other modes of travel. Walking is the most vulnerable group and safety in that realm is vitally important.

Mr. McDonald suggested changing the order in which the mobility options are offered in the whereas clause would be non-substantive, but proposed that adding a rationale would be substantive and would require hard data showing that driving is more commonly or frequently used than walking, and there is no data for walking. The order should not be changed on the representation of mode choice.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McDonald said the recommended ordinance would be before the Council on September 19.

8. OLD BUSINESS – None
9. NEW BUSINESS – None
10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None
11. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Lampe reported that the previous evening he along with Commissioner Bishop attended the open house at City Hall focused on the buildout of additional lanes on I-405. He said the work is slated to be completed by 2024.

Commissioner Woosley asked if any information was shared about the design and schedule for the demolition and replacement of the Main Street overpass. Commissioner Lampe said no new information was shared. Commissioner Woosley said it was his understanding that there is

the opportunity to include a pair of ramps to match the half-diamond at NE 10th Street. He said the perfect time to do that would be when replacing the overpass.

Commissioner Bishop said he discussed the issue with the WSDOT representative at the open house. He said he made the suggestion that the NE 2nd Street structure should be constructed as part of the detour for the Main Street overpass project. The representative allowed that that option had not been considered, rather the focus has been on the approach that was taken with the NE 12th Street overpass project, which was to build the overpass in halves. One issue is that the retaining walls under the Main Street overpass are too close to allow putting anything else under it. He suggested it would be appropriate to ask WSDOT to share their thoughts with the Commission at a future meeting about the NE 2nd Street/Main Street ramps. The WSDOT representative did say that the new Main Street structure will be built in a way that will not prevent any future options relative to ramps, which was a tip of their hand that they are not considering ramps as part of the Main Street project.

Commissioner Woosley added that the East Main station area CAC has recommended a significant increase in the land use intensity for the area. Any redevelopment of that area should factor in some sort of ramp. If ramps are built in conjunction with NE 2nd Street rather than Main Street, more right-of-way will be needed. The preliminary engineering identifies that the northbound off-ramp would have a complete take of several very expensive existing buildings. If done at Main Street, those costs could be saved. It will be in the interest of the city to make its voice known.

Commissioner Larrivee said it was his understanding that WSDOT will be investing in some of the East Link rail corridor projects. He suggested it would be interesting to have a briefing on that as well.

Commissioner Woosley said WSDOT has a legal obligation to replace the rail crossing that was demolished when the Wilburton tunnel was removed. There could be a ramp connecting with I-405. The northbound SE 8th Street exit connects with 116th Avenue SE as well, and one possibility would be to have a southbound ramp coming off of 116th Avenue SE. If the Eastside Rail Corridor connection could be cantilevered out over the freeway to the north of the Wilburton trestle close to I-90 on the west side of I-405, the additional connection would be beneficial.

Commissioner Lampe agreed it would be helpful to have an update regarding the Eastside Rail Corridor, the timetable for which has most of the work completed by 2020.

12. STAFF REPORTS

Mr. McDonald called attention to the letter in the desk packet from the Bellevue Downtown Association regarding the Transportation Management Program, and the memo from Senior Planner Paul Krawczyk regarding the Newport Way sidewalk project.

Mr. McDonald reported that most of the infrastructure at 108th Avenue NE and NE 4th Street has been completed. The work still to be done includes the final channelization striping, the embedding of the decorative pavement within the crosswalks, and the landscaping.

The Vision Zero policy amendments recommended by the Commission will be before the Planning Commission in study session on October 28. Their public hearing will be held sometime in November, and their recommendation will be forwarded to the Council for

consideration as part of the annual Comprehensive Plan amendment package.

13. COMMISSION CALENDAR

The Commission reviewed its calendar of upcoming agenda items.

14. ADJOURN

Commissioner Bishop adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

Date