

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

September 11, 2008
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Vice Chair Northey, Commissioners Glass, Larrivee, Simas, Wendle

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Kiel, Tanaka

STAFF PRESENT: David Cieri, Kevin O'Neill, Kevin McDonald, Franz Loewenherz, Department of Transportation

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m. by Chair Northey who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners Kiel and Tanaka, both of whom were excused.

3. STAFF REPORTS

Transportation CIP Construction Manager Dave Cieri said the Commission calendar has been updated.

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

5. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Larrivee reported that he had the good fortune of attending the Pro Walk/Pro Bike conference held recently in Seattle. He said the conference was focused on promoting walking and biking and as such was very enlightening. The event was very well attended and a synopsis should be provided to the Commission at a future meeting.

6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Loretta Lopez, 13419 NE 33rd Lane, spoke as co-president of the Bridle Trails Community Club. She said the club has followed the update of the ped-bike plan. She noted that club member Norm Hanson has sent a memo to the Commission asking to have Commissioners meet with him to discuss the possibilities of coming to some agreement with respect to the proposal to place on-road bike lanes on both sides of 140th Avenue NE. Area residents are concerned that the desire of the city to create pedestrian and bicycle facilities should not run counter to the needs for vegetation and safety issues. The Commission was urged to reconsider including the project in the plan. The fact that the city has limited resources to spend on ped-bike projects should dictate being very careful in spending those resources. There is nothing that has been said yet about what the various projects will cost.

Ms. Terri Thompson, 14075 NE 30th Place, said she and her husband are cyclists and are appreciative of the fact that the city has an interest in creating more user-friendly areas. She stated, however, her vehement opposition to creating bicycle lanes along 140th Avenue NE. Creating the lanes would require widening the road by approximately ten feet. The proposal includes adding a foot path on the western side of the roadway and there is no reason why it could not be used for both pedestrians and bicycles. Traffic speeds along 140th Avenue NE are already very high; widening the road would increase speeds even more and decrease safety. There is a stream that runs parallel to 140th Avenue NE, and cutting down trees to widen the roadway to accommodate bicycles would be environmentally counterproductive. There is no way that adding bicycle lanes will increase property values for those living along 140th Avenue NE. The beauty of Bridle Trails is its rural look and feel; widening the road would undermine that completely.

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Northey revised the agenda by adding a discussion of 140th Avenue NE, the annual Commission retreat, and I-90 under Old Business.

Motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Commissioner Glass. Second was by Commissioner Larrivee and the motion carried unanimously.

8. STUDY SESSION

A. Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan – Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Senior transportation planner Franz Lowenherz noted that once the Comprehensive Plan amendment policy language, network maps, project maps and project lists are approved by the Commission, the Comprehensive Plan amendment process can be initiated. That process will involve a number of meetings with the Planning Commission, which has oversight responsibility for all CPAs.

Mr. Loewenherz reminded the Commissioners that implementation of a ped-bike plan is a requirement under the Growth Management Act. When the plan was last updated in 1999 it was brought forward as a combined action; the language in the Comprehensive Plan was adopted by ordinance, but the plan document itself was adopted by resolution.

The Transportation Element is housed in volume one of the Comprehensive Plan. Within the Transportation Element there are a number of sections pertaining to pedestrian and bicycle policies, all of which have been discussed over the course of the last few months. Volume two of the Comprehensive Plan contains the Transportation Facilities Plan, which includes all of the projects identified in the ped-bike plan, as well as some specific implementation policies.

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are made only once each year, and the Planning Commission has a critical path that must be adhered to in order for Council action to occur in January. To miss the deadline would mean delaying action for a full year.

Mr. Loewenherz reviewed with the Commissioners the three-phased approach for updating the ped-bike plan.

Strategic Planning Manager Kevin O'Neill explained that currently there are policies relating to the non-motorized environment in several documents, including in Comprehensive Plan elements and in the ped-bike plan itself. In the fall of 2007 there were a series of discussions about how to proceed and what the ultimate framework should look like. The Commission was clear in its desire to have the various policies better organized and all redundancies eliminated. The Commission also voiced a desire to develop a broader vision goal statement along with objectives for what is to be achieved in the short term. The Commission developed some specific goals and policies and presented them to the Council in March 2008, including the need for a connected and completed system both citywide and in the downtown for the short term.

The Council took a close look at the goal of developing 25 miles of sidewalks along arterial streets in the short term and asked realistically the goal could be achieved. Mr. O'Neill allowed that the goal is ambitious, but achievable, especially considering that sidewalks are routinely constructed in conjunction with roadway and intersection projects.

The Commission has indicated support for an ongoing program to implement the policies and projects contained in the ped-bike plan. Staff is currently talking about how that could be done once the plan is updated.

Mr. O'Neill informed the Commissioners that as the package is forwarded to the Planning Commission, it will be published in the form used in the Comprehensive Plan. However, the ultimate document will pull all of the policies together in an organizational format.

Mr. O'Neill asked the Commission to address whether or not the amended policies as outlined in Attachment A of the Commission packet capture the main issues and concerns and to indicate whether or not the package is ready to be moved forward to the next step, which is consideration by the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Wendle referred to the education and enforcement grouping and the strike out of PB-25. He suggested that as the system gets developed over time, the city should take ownership for a map and a guide to help people understand how they can walk or ride their bike in the city. Other cities are taking that approach and finding that it works very well. It is often difficult to find out where the existing facilities are and how to make the connections. Mr. O'Neill said one way to do that would be to retain PB-25 but make it more specific to that objective.

Commissioner Glass agreed and stressed that there should be something for both trail users and bicyclists. There is a huge network of trails in the city, many of which are largely unknown to the general populace.

Motion to have the language of policy PB-25 read "Develop and implement an information program for bicyclists and pedestrians in Bellevue, and include bike and trail maps and other information reflecting the current system" was made by Commissioner Wendle. Second was by Commissioner Glass and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Larrivee referred to policy TR-79 and asked why the proposal for the fifth bullet was to strike "commercial areas." Mr. O'Neill explained that the desire of the Commission was to expand on the notion of commercial areas by specifically referencing retail centers and major employment centers. Commissioner Larrivee noted that the language of policy TR-55 specifically references commercial; he suggested that there should be consistency throughout the document in the way commercial areas are referenced.

Chair Northey suggested the two policies referenced are headed in different directions, thus there is less of a need to use the same language in both.

Motion to delete the word "commercial" from policy TR-55 was made by Chair Northey. Second was by Commissioner Larrivee and the motion carried unanimously.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Glass, Mr. O'Neill said the goal statement developed by the Commission will be in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff is recommending that the specific objectives be housed in the ped-bike Transportation Facilities Plan. There is nothing in Attachment A that the Commission has not previously reviewed. Attachment B uses the same language and intersperses it throughout the various Comprehensive Plan elements.

Motion to accept the policy framework amendments, as revised, was made by Commissioner

Glass. Second was by Commissioner Wendle and the motion carried unanimously.

Turning to the project list, noted that staff spent a great deal of time getting feedback on the draft network plan. Staff had a presence at a number of community events, conducted targeted outreach to different stakeholder groups, and set up an interactive interface on the web. The public expressed strong interest in seeing the existing system gaps filled in, a desire to make all projects context sensitive, and a desire to make sure the community is involved in the implementation stage. The public also highlighted the need to make information and education awareness building an integral part of the overall program. There were a number of interdepartmental meetings with staff, and each project on the list was reviewed with the Commission. Criteria was developed to inform a prioritization framework was approved by the Commission and applied in a GIS-based fashion; the resulting data was used as part of the process of prioritizing the various projects. The stated goal of focusing on north-south and east-west connections also informed the process.

Mr. Loewenherz said during the update process there were several from the community who voiced support for wanting to see the informal trails that presently exist preserved, though without any action on the part of the city to improve them. The issue particularly came to the fore in Bridle Trails. The compromise solution identified was to keep the network intact as previously identified, with the exception of the extension across the Kappela property, but to remove all of the projects from the list. Commissioner Van Valkenburgh proposed an amendment that would characterize the Bridle Trails community with its own unique coloring convention, but a final decision has not been made with regard to the suggestion. He said his recommendation would be to have consistency and not highlight Bridle Trails in any different way.

Commissioner Simas asked if any other parts of the city have their own distinctive designation in that regard. Mr. Loewenherz allowed that there are not. He explained that the amendment was proposed because at the time there was some question as to whether or not the city knew the legal status of the informal connections. The response of staff at the time was that the city does not know vagaries of the ownership status for all of the connections.

Commissioner Wendle noted that the design part of the implementation policies have been amended to talk about context sensitive design. That approach automatically will capture the kinds of issues that have been raised by the Bridle Trails community. He said he would be uncomfortable showing Bridle Trails with a unique color scheme given all of the diverse neighborhoods there are in the city.

Commissioner Simas asked if the city would benefit in any way from having a special color designation for Bridle Trails. Mr. Loewenherz said there would not be. During the discussions the Commission ended up taking off a number of projects in the community in response to the input received; the vast majority of the projects in the 1999 plan that called for acquisition of private easements and improvements to the informal trails have been removed,

and those that remain are deemed to be critical connections.

There was consensus not to color the Bridle Trails portion of the maps separately.

Mr. Loewenherz explained that once the Commission approves the project list, the next step in the process will be to offer a preliminary briefing to the Planning Commission on September 24, followed by a study session presentation to the City Council on October 6. It will be up to the Council to conduct the official handoff to the Planning Commission.

Motion to amend the project list to add a project to develop an effective share the road/share the trail concept for pedestrian and bicycle education programs for the motorized and non-motorized public, and develop maps for the bicycle and trail network systems, was made by Commissioner Glass. Second was by Commissioner Simas.

Commissioner Glass said he would give such a program a high priority rating.

Commissioner Simas asked if the Commission has the authority to recommend a non-construction item. Chair Northey allowed that there are a variety of other programs in the CIP that involve operations rather than construction projects.

Mr. Loewenherz said he would happily include the program, but suggestion another option would be to revisit the concept during the upcoming CIP/TFP deliberation on funding. Chair Northey suggested it would not be inconsistent to include it in the ped-bike plan.

Commissioner Wendle said he would support the motion. He suggested that such a program could include signage, which would be a capital outlay. Commissioner Glass accepted the concept as a friendly amendment.

Commissioner Larrivee asked if there are any existing programs that cover the same idea. Mr. Loewenherz said the policy guidance reflected in the language agreed to by the Commission provides ample opportunity to respond financially through the upcoming CIP/TFP process. Commissioner Larrivee suggested that while such a program may not be viewed as a classic capital expense, both the state and federal governments include grants for mobility management.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Simas, Mr. Loewenherz said the city has a number of different programs in place that address education outreach. There certainly could be improvements made to what the city is doing by way of education outreach.

The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Wendle pointed out that there are bike lanes on the lower portion of 134th Avenue NE that do not extend the entire distance. He asked if there is a desire to continue the

bike network further to the north. Mr. Loewenherz said there were ample discussions with the community about why bike lanes would not be appropriate on 132nd Avenue NE. The earlier draft network plan depicted bike lanes along that route.

Motion to approve the project list, project maps and project lists as amended was made by Commissioner Glass. Second was by Commissioner Larrivee.

Commissioner Larrivee voiced concern over approving the network maps when there is on the surface at least an open issue regarding 140th Avenue NE corridor. He proposed holding off making the final recommendation until that issue has been resolved.

Chair Northey noted that the roadway section in question is 140th Avenue NE between NE 40th Street and NE 60th Street. She noted that Mr. Hanson had written the Commission asking for a few Commissioners to meet with a few members of the local Bridle Trails community in an attempt to find a resolution. She stated, however, that she had received from the City Clerk's office notice that the Commission does not have standing to allow some members of the Commission meet with citizens outside the context of Commission meetings.

Chair Northey allowed that the Commission does have the authority to remove the project from the project list. If the project is not removed from the list, the recommendation will go to the Planning Commission and then to the City Council, and it would then be the decision of the Council to determine whether or not there should be a mediation process instigated. While not all Commissioners voted to keep the project on the list, the majority did, and if that vote stands then it must be determined that the Commission has moved the recommendation forward.

Commissioner Wendle stated that from a system planning level it is easy to conclude that the 140th Avenue NE project makes sense, particularly because the roadway is an arterial and because other north-south options for bikes have been removed from the list. He said he would oppose attempts to remove the project from the list.

Chair Northey pointed out that because the project was retained on the list by formal majority vote, someone who voted in favor of the project previously would have to move to take it off the list.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested the Bridle Trails community should take their argument directly to the Council. The Council could direct the Commission to meet with the citizens and seek a compromise. Absent direction of that sort, the project should be retained on the list and moved forward in the process. In any event, the Council will have the final say.

The motion carried unanimously.

****BREAK****

B. NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street Project Update

Senior Planner Kevin McDonald said the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street project is a key roadway component of the Bel-Red subarea plan. It runs through the center of the corridor and has a couple of proposed light rail stations and high-density development nodes near the stations.

In April 2008 the Commission approved the arterial components of the transportation system for the Bel-Red corridor. Consensus on the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street project was not found, so the component did not go forward as a recommendation from the Transportation Commission to the Planning Commission.

The Commission had several discussions regarding design concepts for NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street and requested and received input from the Parks and Community Services Board regarding the park blocks component. The open house held for the community provided opportunity to receive feedback on the various transportation components in the subarea plan. In mid-May, design concepts for NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street were brought to the Commission for discussion along with a recommendation from the Parks and Community Services Board. The Council received a briefing late in May. In July the Planning Commission reviewed the design concepts and provided a recommendation on the roadway.

Mr. McDonald said the Planning Commission has recommended a four-lane arterial with turn pockets at signalized intersections, recognizing that to the east of 124th Avenue NE the traffic volumes will be such that during an interim period a two-way configuration is all that would be needed, allowing for the two outside lanes to be used either for transit or on-street parking; as demand increases, the lanes could be converted. The Planning Commission endorsed the concept of having wide sidewalks on either side of the street and the multipurpose off-street pedestrian/bicycle path on the north side of the entire length of NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street. They also endorsed the notion of including green elements continuous along the street, both formal and naturalistic.

Mr. McDonald said the Bel-Red Corridor Project steering committee spent a lot of time talking about NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street and in its transmittal envisioned a five-lane cross section, reducing to three lanes at 136th Place SE going up to NE 20th Street. They envisioned the roadway serving as the primary east-west non-motorized transportation facility; accommodating light rail in the center with two stations; and as having green linkages to streams and parks. Staff took that direction and developed design principles accordingly.

The NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street roadway is expected to carry between 20,000 and 30,000 vehicles per day by 2030.

The park blocks and frontage road concepts were not included in the recommendation of the Planning Commission. The proposed cross section including these components would have

required 256 feet of right-of-way at the stations, and 228 feet at non-station locations.

The research done concerning park blocks indicates that they are best integrated with neighborhoods on low-volume streets. For that and other reasons, the concept has not been carried forward. The research regarding frontage roads indicated they are quite useful in providing for local access to adjacent land uses parallel to high-volume arterials. However, the Planning Commission did not include the frontage roads in its recommendation, largely because of the amount of right-of-way needed.

The Parks and Community Services Board concluded that NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street should remain a functional multimodal corridor with green elements. Because the park block concept was removed from the design, however, the amount of park space will have to be made up elsewhere.

The major pedestrian/bicycle corridor is envisioned for the north side of NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street. As outlined, it includes about 16 feet for non-motorized transportation between landscaping along the street and the sidewalk in front of the businesses.

Commissioner Wendle asked if the notion of including bike lanes in the roadway was considered. Mr. McDonald said it was. While not part of the recommendation from the Planning Commission, it would be possible to include bike lanes as part of the roadway.

Mr. O'Neill said the feedback received from the Council was clear with regard to 197 feet being too wide for the roadway cross section. Staff literally went through every component seeking ways to reduce the overall width. The Planning Commission strongly favored retaining the multipurpose pathway on the north side of the road. If the outside lanes of the roadway were made wide enough, it is conceivable that cyclists could use the shoulders. That is not, however, part of the present recommendation.

Commissioner Wendle suggested that even as proposed the cross section is still very wide. The multipurpose pathway mixing pedestrians and bicyclists could be worse than being in the traffic; the bicyclists will want to ride in the road anyway through the corridor. The cross section could be reduced even more by not including the multipurpose pathway. Chair Northey concurred.

Commissioner Larrivee disagreed. He agreed that there could be potential conflicts between pedestrians and bicycles, but the multipurpose pathway could be constructed in a way that would accommodate both safely. Eliminating the pathway would certainly save right-of-way, but would not increase safety.

Mr. O'Neill said the intent is to have the facility ultimately extend across I-405 with the same kind of treatment. One of the public comments the Planning Commission received was from the bicycle coordinator at Children's Hospital who indicated support for both the off-street

path and bike lanes; that suggestion would add ten feet more to the cross section. The proposal is geared as much at placemaking and urban design as at straight travel considerations.

Chair Northey suggested it will not be possible to have it all in designing the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street roadway. She said she could support using the outside lanes for parking, but if the desire is to reduce the cross section, light rail should be built down the middle and there should be only one lane of travel each way on either side. Bel-Red Road and NE 20th Street will help to serve as east-west arterials. It makes no sense to build a four-lane arterial through an area that is going to be served by light rail. Cutting one lane of traffic in each direction would allow for more area in which to construct a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Mr. O'Neill said staff and the consultants modeled the working of the corridor in many different ways. The Final Environmental Impact Statement concluded that the enhanced land uses in the corridor will generate between 20,000 and 30,000 trips per day by 2030, even with an aggressive light rail system in place. Consideration was given to reducing the street width to the east of 124th Avenue NE from five lanes to three lanes, and the 2030 volumes will probably allow that to happen. The modeling indicates, however, that reducing the entire length of the roadway to three lanes will cause trips to move over to Bel-Red Road, NE 8th Street and NE 20th Street. The compromise solution would be to construct the five-lane cross section but initially use the outside lanes for on-street parking or transit.

Commissioner Wendle cautioned against adopting the traditional approach of creating one roadway that has everything for everyone, especially along a corridor that represents essentially a clean slate starting out. The city certainly needs to be ready to accept light rail when it comes, but the proposal in its present configuration is simply flawed in a number of respects. The expanse of the cross section is enormous, and there is no real connection for the land uses on either side. There must be another solution, such as creating two streets instead of one, or changing the land use vision so the amount of traffic to be generated can be accommodated.

Commissioner Larrivee concurred. He suggested that the land use goals the vision attempts to create could be defeated by having a cross section that is just too wide. One option might be to transfer the bicycle lanes to some other east-west corridor. He said he had concerns about having four lanes of traffic in addition to a major transit thoroughway.

Commissioner Glass asked if cut and cover tunneling would be all that much more expensive compared to having to purchase right-of-way. Mr. O'Neill said tunneling is by far the most expensive way to build light rail; the right-of-way saved would not be offset by the difference in cost. Sound Transit has very strict criteria about when tunneling can be used and they stick to them religiously. There are a lot of things that are intriguing about the shallow tunnel concept, but even with those portals are required and the cost of construction goes up.

Commissioner Wendle said one option would be to have light rail running along the sides of

the street. Instead of creating a platform width, there would only be need for a wider sidewalk. That would create some issues for vehicle turning movements, but would let light rail operate more like bus transit.

Chair Northey pointed out that a side-running operation would mean the light rail would have to operate at slower speeds. She said the Light Rail Best Practices committee concluded that speed is a critical factor to light rail ridership and therefore success.

Mr. McDonald said the Transportation Commission is free to concur with the recommendation of the Planning Commission or to provide an alternate recommendation. The position taken will be presented to the City Council on September 22 along with the recommendation of the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested that constructing a robust bicycle system through the corridor operating in conjunction with light rail, but with fewer roadway facilities, will achieve the goals. It would not, however, address the potential spillover effect to other arterials.

Commissioner Glass asked what kind of spillover numbers would result from narrowing the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street profile. Mr. McDonald said the displacement is not one-for-one. The modeling shows that some of the trips simply will not occur absent the capacity on NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street, but also indicates transportation system failure on the other major roadways, including 116th Avenue NE and NE 8th Street. Mr. O'Neill added that the Environmental Impact Statement assumed the NE 4th Street extension and the NE 10th Street extension. However, with enhanced land use happening in Bel-Red, Wilburton and the downtown, the limited number of east-west connections will mean fairly dire conditions for the corridor by 2030.

Commissioner Glass said he would not want to support narrowing the width of the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street corridor if the result would be total gridlock for the area.

Commissioner Simas suggested that the proposed land use scenario will result in a need for the number of traffic lanes outlined in the Planning Commission recommendation. The bigger question is whether or not the density will be sufficient to support the wide sidewalks and multiuse bike and pedestrian lanes.

Mr. O'Neill said the recommendation of the Planning Commission includes land use policies and zoning that would allow building heights up to 150 feet and floor area ratios of up to 3.5 in the two nodes; that will lead to a fairly intensive buildout scenario in the nodes. He said the recommendation of the Commission could be an expression of concern with regard to the roadway width and ask that further analysis be done.

Commissioner Simas suggested that if in fact NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street is intended to serve as the main traffic arterial connecting Bellevue and Redmond, then the focus needs to be

on moving traffic. In that event, the bicycle lanes should be in the road and not on the side. Mr. O'Neill said there are in fact multiple purposes for the roadway. It is not intended to be the main connection for cars; Bel-Red Road already serves that function, as does NE 20th Street to some extent. The NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street roadway is intended to add more general purpose capacity, and is intended to create a grid through the center of the corridor. It is intended to serve as the primary route for bicycles moving through the corridor. Of course the roadway is also intended to serve light rail and to serve as a green space through an otherwise gray area.

Commissioner Wendle observed that one issue the city will face is having to acquire all of the right-of-way in one go; it will not be possible to preserve the space in phases. That will likely mean other projects will have to wait. By narrowing the scope, it might be possible to acquire the necessary right-of-way and have room for the light rail and one lane of traffic in each direction, then over time as the need is identified additional east-west corridors could be constructed. Mr. McDonald said staff and the consultants took a close look at creating parallel corridors, but the fact that so many stream crossings would be required helped to focus all of the desired uses on a single corridor.

Commissioner Glass commented that an aerial configuration for the light rail would require far less right-of-way for the corridor and would be less expensive than tunneling. That would not activate the street and would not be as attractive, but could be done successfully as a compromise to having a very wide corridor. Mr. O'Neill said the consultants were tasked with doing simulations of an aerial light rail configuration. The impact of an aerial approach on the sidewalk and green space environments was apparent. The option certainly is still alive given that Sound Transit will make that final determination.

Commissioner Glass said he would support a motion in favor of directing staff to evaluate other options in light of the concerns voiced by the Commission relative to the urban design disconnect, too much roadway capacity vis-a-vis the transit investment, the ped-bike elements, scale and cost, and benefits. He said his top concern was the overall right-of-way width.

Chair Northey suggested taking a short break to allow time for crafting an appropriate motion.

****BREAK****

Mr. McDonald offered the following draft motion to the Commission:

The Transportation Commission recommends to the City Council that staff be directed to do additional analysis of the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street project description, taking into account the following concerns: 1) the overall width of the roadway and the resulting separation of land uses; 2) the cost and scale of the project; 3) the roadway capacity, specifically whether or not the roadway can function with only two to three lanes; and

4) the non-motorized transportation component, evaluating bike lanes versus the off-street multipurpose pathway.

Commissioner Larrivee noted the Commission had earlier voiced concern about putting too many different functions in the same corridor. He suggested that issue should be highlighted in the memo. Chair Northey proposed adding a bullet about trying to do too much within one corridor. Mr. McDonald suggested the addition “might go well under this one.”

Commissioner Simas said he would still like to see identified the primary purpose and function of the roadway. Commissioner Larrivee commented that because so much is trying to be done in the corridor, it is no longer clear what the intended function is. Mr. O’Neill asked if that should be embedded “in that bullet” worded something like “and lack of clarity on the primary purpose.”

Commissioner Wendle suggested “...analysis of the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street project description...” should read “...analysis of the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street project concept....”

Mr. McDonald said “I added this bullet here regarding the functions.”

Commissioner Simas said he would like to see included a more direct statement regarding the primary purpose and function of the roadway. Chair Northey proposed adding “...e.g. the primary purpose and function of the roadway...”.

Commissioner Glass said he would support adding near the bottom “consider further evaluating other vertical alignments.” He said that could refer to either tunnel or aerial configurations. Chair Northey said she would not support adding that. The purpose of redeveloping the corridor as a single unit is to get a great urban pedestrian corridor, and neither a tunnel or aerial alignment will fulfill the vision.

Commissioner Larrivee held that the recommendation of Commissioner Glass is closer to a potential recommendation than to an outline of the concerns of the Commission. Mr. McDonald suggested the concept might in fact be embedded in the overall width of the right-of-way given that a different vertical alignment of light rail, whether underground or overhead, the right-of-way width would shrink.

Commissioner Wendle proposed having a bullet reading “Consider other alignments of light rail and other project elements.” Chair Northey thought the bullet should read “Consider shifting alignments of various transportation elements.”

Mr. O’Neill suggested the second bullet was saying two different things. He said he did not hear any Commissioner say there should not be a roadway through the corridor along the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street alignment, or that there should not be light rail, ped-bike

connections or greenway, each of which is a function of the roadway. Chair Northey said the bullet should refer to too many functions in the right-of-way rather than in the roadway. Mr. O'Neill asked if that could be interpreted to mean the functions could be split into multiple corridors as opposed to happening in a single corridor, and Chair Northey said that could be the result. Commissioner Glass said he would like to see other alternatives considered.

Mr. McDonald clarified that the second bullet should address the number of functions being incorporated into the corridor. He suggested moving the final bullet to follow the second because the two concepts should be taken together.

Chair Northey proposed removing the word "only" from the fourth bullet. With regard to the first bullet, she said the concern is more about whether the width of the right-of-way supports the desired urban environment. The "separation of land uses" language may or may not be saying the same thing.

Commissioner Glass moved the motion "as worded on the screen." Second was by Commissioner Simas.

Commissioner Larrivee said his concern was not that the land uses would be separated but rather that the city will not see the intended result. Mr. O'Neill proposed using the words "...and the resulting impact on land use character....".

Chair Northey voiced concern with the way the second bullet was drafted. Commissioner Wendle commented that the purpose of the corridor is multimodal, but it is all trying to be done within a single right-of-way. The Commission appears to be in agreement that all of the various elements are ones that are supportable and desired, and there is no one primary function. Commissioner Simas said he could not agree with that statement. Depending on the use of the corridor, the bike lane could be part of the roadway. On the other hand, if there are going to be throngs of people using the area, wider sidewalks will be necessary; if the urban design will not result in lots of pedestrians, narrow sidewalks would be acceptable.

Chair Northey suggested the motion should state that the primary purpose of the corridor should govern functional priorities. Mr. McDonald proposed "...the allocation of space...."

Commissioner Glass accepted all of the suggestions as friendly amendments to his motion. The final language is now as follows:

The Transportation Commission recommends to the City Council that staff be directed to do additional analysis of the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street concept, taking into account the following concerns: 1) the overall width of the roadway and the resulting separation of land use character and urban design goals; 2) the number of functions being incorporated into the right-of-way (eg., the primary purpose of the corridor should govern

the allocation of space); 3) consider shifting the alignments of the various transportation components; 4) the cost and scale of the project; 5) the roadway capacity, specifically whether or not the roadway can function with only two to three lanes; and 6) the non-motorized transportation component, evaluating bike lanes versus the off-street multipurpose pathway.

The motion carried unanimously.

C. Bel-Red/Overlake Transportation Study (BROTS) Update

Mr. McDonald informed the Commission that a number of focus groups have been conducted, and staff has spoken directly to a number of people in the East Bellevue area, regarding transportation impacts and what the city should do about them. On September 17 at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall there will be an open house focused on the types of transportation system projects that could be implemented to address the major concerns that have been raised, which primarily fall into three categories: transit, non-motorized transportation, and traffic calming.

D. West Lake Sammamish Parkway Project Update – Memo Only

E. Bel-Red Corridor Project Implementation Update – Memo Only

9. OLD BUSINESS

Chair Northey noted that the Final Environmental Impact Statement has been issued for the I-90 project. She said she was irritated by the fact that she had some time ago asked for a briefing on the subject, but with the publishing of the Final Environmental Impact Statement it appears it is too late.

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

12. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 10, 2008

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

13. REVIEW CALENDAR

A. Commission Calendar and Agenda

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

Chair Northey called attention to the need to schedule the annual Commission retreat. The Commissioners indicated a preference for conducting the retreat on either a weekday afternoon or a Sunday during the month of October.

It was agreed that Commissioner Simas would represent the Transportation Commission at the October 22 Council meeting.

B. Public Involvement Calendar

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Northey adjourned the meeting at 9:56 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

Date