



**DATE:** November 3, 2011  
**TO:** Bellevue Transportation Commission  
**FROM:** Kevin McDonald, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner, 452-4558  
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**SUBJECT:** Downtown Transportation Plan Update

## **INTRODUCTION**

The update to the Downtown Transportation Plan will address mobility issues and challenges and support Downtown growth forecasts looking out to 2030.

On November 10, staff and Plan update consultant DKS Associates will highlight best practices with regard to mobility in a dense, mixed-use urban setting and identify “measures of effectiveness” that will help evaluate proposed measures to address existing and future transportation issues. Commission input is requested on the proposed measures of effectiveness that may be finalized at the meeting on December 8.

## **MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS**

An understanding of best practices is fundamental for establishing the framework for the outcomes of the Plan update. Selecting the measures of effectiveness (MOEs) for use in transportation planning for Downtown Bellevue requires consideration of those measures that have been successfully applied elsewhere, in similar settings.

Qualitative and quantitative MOEs will help identify and compare the performance of specific transportation project recommendations. MOEs may include such components as the benefit to mobility (vehicular level of service/transit and vehicle travel time/mode split/pedestrian and bicycle circulation), the effect on the Downtown environment (urban character/ aesthetics/ pedestrian and bicycle safety and comfort), benefit to community sustainability (such as walking and bicycling access, vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions), and other factors considered best practice or important for a multi-modal downtown environment.

Recommended measures of effectiveness will be presented by the DKS Associates consultant team on November 10. Each recommended MOE will be accompanied by an explanation of why it is important for this Plan update – and how it can be used to evaluate individual proposed projects as well as the overall package of transportation system recommendations for the Downtown Transportation Plan Update.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT UPDATE**

A multi-faceted and robust public involvement effort is underway. A number of presentations and events have been held and are planned. The Plan update web site announces upcoming events, and documents past events, to view the web site go to:

<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/downtown-transportation-plan-update.htm>.

The following sections summarize recent public outreach:

### **Eastside Transportation Association**

On October 24, staff provided an overview of the Downtown Transportation Plan Update to the Eastside Transportation Association (ETA). The ETA is a private-sector group dedicated to improving the quality of life and the environment by reducing congestion in the Puget Sound Region through increased mobility. Key points raised by the ETA included comments on improving pedestrian safety and facilities, providing accessibility that supports economic development, increasing transit service focused on the Eastside/I-405 corridor, understanding the tradeoffs and costs of potential transportation projects, and seeking innovative mobility solutions.

### **Open House and Scoping Meeting**

In the early evening of Tuesday, November 1 staff hosted an open house and scoping meeting in City Hall. This meeting provided information to a broad section of the community and created forum to submit “scoping” comments regarding specific transportation issues. The 50-60 people in attendance reviewed display tables and talked with staff about concerns and suggestions for the specific mobility topics featured at individual tables: pedestrians; bicycles; transit; roadways; and signal operations. According to a “raise of hands” during a presentation in the Council Chambers, about half of those in attendance were Downtown residents. Staff will prepare a full report of the open house with a complete list of scoping comments.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- December 1 and 3: Downtown Walking Audits with Feet First
- December 8: Transportation Commission
  - Regional Projects
  - Measures of Effectiveness

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Letter from Bellevue Chamber of Commerce
- B. Web Card



November 1, 2011

Don Davidson  
Mayor  
City of Bellevue  
450 110th Ave. NE  
Bellevue, WA 98009

**Re: Downtown Implementation Plan**

Dear Mayor Davidson:

The Bellevue Chamber of Commerce appreciated the opportunity to hear from Kevin O'Neill at our most recent transportation committee meeting. The presentation on the City's process for the Downtown Implementation Plan (DIP) was very informative and the committee appreciated being included as a part of the outreach efforts. Based on the discussion at that meeting, the Chamber feels it is appropriate to share some feedback to this process in its early stages.

As the Voice of Business for Bellevue, the Chamber understands that being able to get commuters and customers in and out of the downtown core is critical to maintaining both a strong business community and a strong tax base in our city. Customers and employees must have the ability to move safely and conveniently in and out of the Central Business District. To this end, we encourage you to review the origin and destination data for trips coming into downtown, including a careful look at the mode split. It will also be important, as downtown residency grows, to review and incorporate pedestrian needs with street traffic needs.

Traffic flow must also be a key consideration throughout this process. For instance, intelligent transportation systems should continue to be utilized and there should be a great deal of consideration as to how to best move traffic in and out of the downtown. This information will provide the basis for understanding travel demand.

We understand that the current review of the DIP is considered an update to the great work approved by the Council in 2004. However, we suggest that the council recognize some significant changes that have occurred since that time and changes that may occur in the future including: the impact of the voter-approved East Link light rail route and stations in Bellevue; opportunities for growth in bus rapid transit beyond the new RapidRide line B; the impact of tolling on the SR 520 Bridge as well as on I-405; a downtown zoning update; and the impact of the economic downturn on the City's budget as well as the potential for growth downtown. As these major infrastructure projects are constructed, we urge the City to regularly consider the impacts these projects will have on our local businesses and take steps to alleviate potential disruptions on all corridors, including those leading into downtown.

The Chamber also believes it is important to take inventory of the total downtown parking spaces. This would be helpful to businesses, residents and visitors in understanding what is available to them once they arrive downtown. An adequate parking supply will lead to reduced congestion as drivers will not be forced to look for parking while driving through city streets.

Finally, since this update will look forward to 2030, it is an opportunity for the City be very forward thinking and imagine how the City can lead the region in transportation planning and creativity. As we think about the recent developments in transportation and the likely growth of Bellevue and the region, we think that creativity and imagination will serve us all well. For instance, alternative fuel source infrastructure should be considered. Also, as the City of Bellevue continues to grow in population and becomes more cosmopolitan it will be important for the downtown to be able to accommodate increased taxi service and we believe this is something that should be considered.

We appreciate the Council undertaking this process and we are confident it will lead to better mobility in our city. The Chamber encourages you to consider what we have outlined as a way to conduct a very thorough process. The Chamber also urges the Council to maintain fiscal prudence and to be mindful of economic realities as you proceed with this update. Further, we would appreciate continued updates at key points as this project moves towards a Council vote. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with you on this important project.

Sincerely,



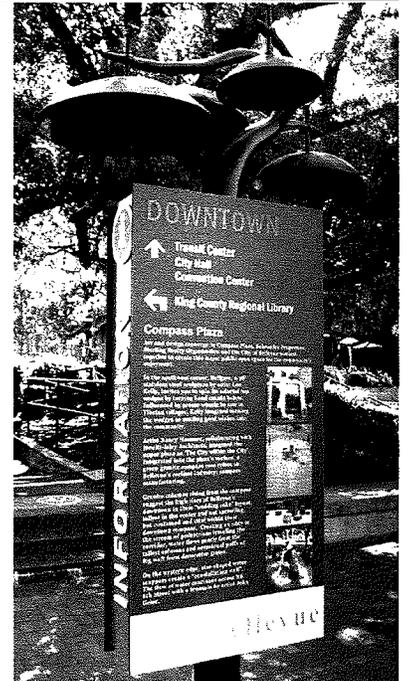
Janet Ray  
Chairman of the Board



Betty Nokes  
President & CEO

Cc: Bellevue City Council  
Bellevue Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors  
Steve Sarkozy, City Manager  
Chris Salomone, Director Department of Planning and Community Development  
Kevin O'Neill, Assistant Director Department of Transportation

 **Downtown** Transportation Plan Update



<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/downtown-transportation-plan-update.htm>

 **Downtown** Transportation Plan Update

*Join the City of Bellevue in the planning for the future of Downtown transportation.*

*Tell us what would improve the current and future transportation environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motorists.*

*Visit the plan update web site for information and meetings:*  
<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/downtown-transportation-plan-update.htm>

*Contact the project manager with suggestions:*

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