



# MEMORANDUM

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DATE: November 5, 2007

TO: Chair Yuen and Members of the Transportation Commission

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SUBJECT: Downtown Comprehensive Plan Amendments

## SUMMARY

On August 6, 2007, the Bellevue City Council initiated a Comprehensive Plan amendment that identify potential improvements at several locations in and adjacent to Downtown Bellevue. These potential improvements were introduced to the Planning Commission on September 26, 2007 and the Transportation Commission September 27, 2007. The Planning Commission received another briefing on October 25, 2007.

A Public Hearing with the Planning Commission has been set on the draft Comprehensive Plan Amendments for Wednesday, December 12, 2007. At the November 15, 2007 Transportation Commission meeting, staff will respond to questions raised by the Commission at their September 27, 2007 meeting regarding the Comprehensive Plan Amendments. Staff will also be asking the Transportation Commission to forward recommendations on the Comprehensive Plan Amendments to the Planning Commission.

## BACKGROUND

The dramatic recent growth in the downtown is expected to continue at a vigorous pace into the foreseeable future. New construction needs as buildings go up and growing pedestrian and vehicle demands as new buildings are occupied, make it increasingly difficult to balance the competing policy conflicts as the downtown continues to grow. With the build out of the downtown there are only a few limited locations that offer the opportunity to address vehicle congestion with any sort of capacity improvement.

Staff reviewed a list of potential capacity projects in the Downtown through build out in 2030. What is represented in this draft Comprehensive Plan Amendment are the few staff felt would provide the most benefit while not conflict with other significant efforts in the downtown, such as Great Streets, NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street Pedestrian Corridor, Mid-block Crossings, Wayfinding and Public Art. Without prompt attention the ability to secure these improvements during development review will be lost. The list of proposed transportation improvements is included in Attachment 1.

### **Context of the Downtown Subarea Plan**

The Downtown Subarea plan envisions the creation of a Great Place – viable, livable, memorable and accessible. One component of that is an accessible transportation system for vehicles, transit, pedestrians and bicycles. A key element of the roadway network included utilizing both NE 2<sup>nd</sup> and NE 10<sup>th</sup> Streets to provide greater regional access and to serve higher east-west traffic volumes, with new extensions over I-405 and freeway ramp connections. It is important to point out that enhancing downtown access from the eastern – or I-405 gateway, was a clear policy choice by Council, and they chose not to recommend a widened Bellevue Way north and south of downtown for that purpose.

As staff have been working to advance the design and implementation of the Downtown Implementation Plan the analysis has moved out in time, to a 2030 planning horizon, consistent with other regional studies (I-405, SR 520, ST2). In the process, additional needs have become apparent that were not identified previously. Two of these needed improvements would extend existing east-west roadways, another would provide for additional right turn lanes, one would improve future freeway access, and one would realign an existing intersection.

The east-west roadway extensions are discussed below regarding their relationship to the Wilburton NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Study. The new right turn lanes would help address traffic delays due to right turning vehicles yielding to pedestrians. This delay to right turning vehicles can gridlock traffic traveling through intersections from the curb lane. The new right turn lanes are not anticipated to result in additional pedestrian crossing conflicts, but they will increase pedestrian crossing distance by about 11 feet per crossing. The new right turn lanes will provide additional signal timing options to address vehicle/pedestrian conflicts should that become necessary.

### **Consistency with Great Streets Projects**

The Great Streets project is an outgrowth of the Downtown Implementation Plan. However, as a work-in-progress, it does not have any policy standing of its own. The purpose of the project is to improve conditions for walking, to provide a palette of options for developers as they build out their street frontages, to coordinate improvements along street corridors, to identify landscape treatments, and to carry forward the downtown plan's urban design vision. The Great Streets project is not attempting to revisit the DIP's mobility recommendations, but acknowledges that the limited public rights-of-way downtown impose serious competition for space among legitimate downtown needs, including those of non-motorized users and aesthetics.

### **Relationship to Wilburton/NE 8th Street Study**

The Wilburton/NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Study identified two east-west transportation connections to increase connectivity and access between the Wilburton/Auto Row commercial area and downtown. A connection at NE 4th Street from 116th to 120th Avenue would provide general purpose vehicle connectivity from downtown and the I405 interchange to Wilburton and work as part of a system improvement that includes 120th Avenue NE, 124th Avenue north of NE 8th Street, and an expanded interchange at 124th and SR520. The connection at NE 6th Street from 112th to 120th Avenue is seen as an opportunity to provide a more efficient transit connection from the Bellevue Transit Center across I405 to eastern Bellevue. This has the promise of

improving ride times for one of Metro's Rapid Ride routes between downtown and Crossroads/Overlake. Both the NE 4th and NE 6th connections also would enhance pedestrian and bicycle access between downtown and Wilburton and may act as connection points to a future multipurpose trail in the BNSF corridor.

The amendments to support the NE 4th and NE 6th connections include both policy amendments to the Wilburton/NE 8th Subarea Plan (Attachment 3) and projects listed in the East Bellevue Transportation Plan (Attachment 4).

The NE 4th and NE 6th improvements may continue to move forward as part of the Wilburton/NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Study and are included here to ensure that they are addressed even if commercial redevelopment issues associated with that project remain unresolved.

### **Review by the Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission was provided an introduction to this subject on September 27<sup>th</sup>. The Planning Commission's discussion identified the need for attention to non-motorized needs and the relationship to the Great Streets initiative. At the October 25<sup>th</sup> meeting staff addressed the issues previously raised and the Planning Commission and they set the public hearing date for December 12, 2007.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The Comprehensive Plan Amendments will be presented in detail to the Bellevue Downtown Association on November 14, 2007 and any comments received will be presented to the Transportation Commission on November 15, 2007. Transportation Commission comments and recommendation will be presented to the Planning Commission on November 28, 2007. A public hearing on the draft amendments is scheduled before the Planning Commission on December 12, 2007. The Planning Commission may make a recommendation to the City Council following the public hearing.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed Transportation Improvement Projects to Enhance Downtown Mobility
2. Draft Amendments to the Downtown Subarea Plan transportation projects list
3. Draft Amendments to the Wilburton/NE 8th Street subarea plan
4. Draft Amendments to the East Bellevue Transportation Plan

## Attachment 1

### Proposed Transportation Improvement Projects to Enhance Downtown Mobility

1. *NE 4<sup>th</sup> Street Extension* – The extension of NE 4<sup>th</sup> Street from 116<sup>th</sup> to 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE was evaluated within the context of Auto Row redevelopment, and as a component of both the Wilburton/NE 8<sup>th</sup> and Bel-Red Corridor planning efforts. It is a critical project, extending the grid of arterial streets serving both the downtown and the redeveloping area just to the east. It would serve a large number of trips, offering needed relief to NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street, 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. [The NE 4<sup>th</sup> extension would be amended into the Downtown Subarea Plan as a project serving Downtown from outside the subarea, and also into the East Bellevue Transportation Plan project list.]
2. *NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street HOV Bridge over NB I-405* – The extension of the NE 6<sup>th</sup> HOV bridge would allow buses and carpools to cross the freeway without the traffic and signal delays associated with the congested intersections at the arterial crossings of NE 12<sup>th</sup>, NE 8<sup>th</sup> and NE 4<sup>th</sup> Streets. Transit travel time savings entering/exiting downtown are expected to become more important with the implementation of King County Metro’s Rapid Ride connection between Downtown Bellevue, Overlake and Downtown Redmond, plus future feeder bus connections to a Downtown Bellevue light rail transit station. [The NE 6<sup>th</sup> HOV Bridge extension would be amended into the Downtown Subarea Plan Project List.]
3. *Intersection Channelization Modification* –The work done to date to analyze 2030 traffic conditions, including some new potential downtown development, has indicated that additional intersection improvements are necessary to alleviate congestion and maintain traffic flow. If the current pace of development continues, opportunities to make these changes could be lost:
  - a. NE 2nd Street and 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue – The recommendation would provide for the future connection of NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to I-405, including a straightening and realignment of NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the north between 112<sup>th</sup> and 114<sup>th</sup> Avenues, dual southbound to eastbound (toward I-405) left turn lanes, and a northbound 112th to eastbound NE 2nd right turn lane.
  - b. NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Bellevue Way – The needed upgrades include a northbound Bellevue Way right turn lane to eastbound NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and a dual left turn lane for southbound Bellevue Way to eastbound NE 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  - c. NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 106<sup>th</sup> Avenue – This intersection is complicated by the close proximity of a large sequoia at the northwest corner, just behind the sidewalk. While intersection improvements will occur on the northeast quadrant as part of the Wasatch block, some realignment will be needed to maintain the curblines at the northwest corner. This will require shifting the south curblines along NE 8<sup>th</sup> about 8-10 feet further to the south.
  - d. Bellevue Way and NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street – The needed upgrade is a southbound to westbound right turn lane on Bellevue Way. The current southbound through/right curb lane is often blocked due to pedestrian traffic in the NE 8<sup>th</sup>

Street crosswalk, blocking the through movement and upstream driveways. A dedicated right turn lane would allow the through movement to flow during the green phase.

- e. Bellevue Way and NE 4<sup>th</sup> Street – The needed improvements include right turn lanes for southbound Bellevue Way to westbound NE 4<sup>th</sup> (toward Bellevue Square parking) and westbound NE 4<sup>th</sup> to northbound Bellevue Way movements (toward Lincoln Square).

## Attachment 2

### Draft Amendments to the Downtown Subarea Plan Transportation Project List

Proposed additions are shown with underline formatting, deletions are shown with ~~strikeout~~ formatting. Other text shown would remain as currently adopted.

#### Project Number Project Location/Description

#### Freeways

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>101</b> | <b>I-405 from NE 8th Street to NE 70th Street</b><br>Construct an HOV lane and one or more additional lanes (general purpose, HOV, and/or HCT) in each direction to improve the person carrying capacity of the corridor with final designation of usage and number of lanes dependent on the results of the Growth Management Act, implementation of Transportation Demand Management legislation and analysis performed in the High Capacity Transit study.   |
| <b>102</b> | <b>I-405 from SE 8th Street to I-90</b><br>Construct an HOV lane and one or more additional lanes (general purpose, HOV and/or HCT) in each direction to improve the person carrying capacity of the corridor with final designation of usage and number of lanes dependent on the results of the Growth Management Act, implementation of Transportation Demand Management legislation and analysis performed in the High Capacity Transit study.  |
| <b>103</b> | <b>I-405 at Northup Way and 116th Avenue NE</b><br>Construct a northbound on-ramp and a southbound off-ramp connecting the intersection of 116th NE and Northup Way with I-405.   |
| <b>104</b> | <b>SR-520 at Bellevue Way NE</b><br>Construct an eastbound on-ramp to SR-520 from Bellevue Way NE.  |
| <b>105</b> | <b>I-405 at NE 4th, NE 6th and NE 8th Street</b><br>Construct freeway interchange and access improvements between I-405 and Downtown Bellevue in the vicinity of NE 4th, 6th and 8th. Principal features of the improvements are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. A new 4-lane HOV ramp on NE 6th between 112th NE and I-405, connecting to a new HOV interchange at NE 6th and I-405 to serve transit, carpools and vanpools. Cul-de-sac 114th NE at NE 6th.</li><li>b. Widen NE 8th from 110th NE to just east of 116th NE; with intersection improvements at NE 8th/112th NE and NE 8th/116th NE.</li><li>c. Widen NE 4th overpass for an additional eastbound lane; remove HOV restrictions.</li><li>d. Widen NE 6th to five lanes between 110th and 112th NE.</li><li>e. Widen I-405 from Main Street to NE 12th to accommodate the HOV/Transit interchange at NE 6th and design the interchange modification to allow for an additional travel lane in each direction.</li></ol> |
| <b>106</b> | <b>I-405</b><br>Add two general purpose lanes on I-405 in each direction north of NE 10th and south of NE 2nd, with one additional lane in each direction between these streets.  |
| <b>107</b> | <b>I-405</b><br>Add new I-405/SR-520 access at NE 10th via collector-distributor lanes from and to the north.   |
| <b>108</b> | <b>I-405</b><br>Add new I-405 access at NE 2nd via collector-distributor lanes from and to the south.   |
| <b>109</b> | <b>SR-520/124th Avenue NE</b><br>Create a new full interchange at SR-520 near 124th NE.   |

**110 I-405/116th Avenue NE**  
Provide new ramps to/from 116th NE/Northup Way.

**111 SR-520/Bellevue Way**  
Add eastbound off-ramp from SR-520 to 108th NE/112th NE at Bellevue Way.

### Roadways(Downtown)

**201 110th Avenue NE from NE 4th Street to NE 9th Street**  
Widen this section from three lanes to four or five lanes, including traffic signal at NE 6th.

**202 112th Avenue SE/NE from SE 8th Street to NE 12th Street**  
Widen this section to provide additional turn lanes at all intersections. This widening would provide the following:  
a. Left-turn lanes on 112th at SE 4th, SE 6th, NE 2nd, NE 6th and NE 10th.  
b. Dual left-turn lanes on 112th NE at NE 8th.  
c. Northbound to eastbound right-turn lanes on 112th NE at NE 4th.

**203 103rd Avenue NE/105th Avenue NE/107th Avenue NE/NE 11th Street**  
Reconstruct the following sections within Downtown to meet city design standards (i.e., sidewalks, lane width, etc.):  
a. 103rd NE between Main and NE 1st.  
b. 105th NE between NE 2nd and NE 4th.  
c. 107th NE between Main and NE 2nd.  
d. NE 11th between 110th NE and 112th NE.

**204 Downtown**  
Restrict left turns on major arterials to signalized intersections.

**205 Downtown**  
Ongoing optimization of traffic signals on major arterials.

**206 106th & 108th Avenue NE**  
Implement a one-way couplet (106th NE northbound and 108th NE southbound) between Main and NE 12th.

**207 NE 8th Street**  
Add one westbound lane on NE 8th St between 106th NE and 108th NE (while preserving the large sequoia~~no widening west of 106th NE~~).

**207.5 NE 8th Street / Bellevue Way**  
Add new southbound to westbound right turn lane.

**208 NE 4th Street / Bellevue Way**  
Provide dedicated southbound and westbound right turn lanes. ~~Convert eastbound thru right lane to right only.~~

**209 NE 2nd Street / Bellevue Way**  
Add new southbound left-turn lane on westbound NE 2nd. Add new northbound right turn lane on Bellevue Way. Add new dual left turn lanes on southbound Bellevue Way.

**210 NE 10th Street / 112th Avenue NE**  
Configure the intersection for one left-turn only, one thru-lane and one thru/right-turn for each approach with the extension of NE 10th.

**211 NE 2nd Street**  
Extend NE 2nd Street from 112th NE across I-405 to 116th NE, including intersection improvements at 112th NE and 116th NE. Add new dual left turn lanes southbound on 112th at NE 2nd.

**212 NE 10th Street**  
Extend NE 10th Street from 112th NE across I-405 to 116th NE. Development related road & access improvements

- 213      **106th Avenue NE from Main Street to NE 12th Street**  
Widen this section from 4 to 5 lanes.
- 214      **108th Avenue NE from NE 8th Street to NE 12th Street**  
Widen this section from 4 to 5 lanes.
- 215      **108th Avenue NE from Main Street to NE 4th Street**  
Widen this section from 4 to 5 lanes.
- 216      **NE 2nd Street from Bellevue Way to 112th Avenue NE**  
Widen this section from 3 or 4 to 5 lanes.
- 217      **Portions of the 103rd, 105th, and 107th Avenue, and NE 5th and NE 7th Street alignments**  
Provide mid-block access corridors within a Downtown superblock which accommodates vehicle access to parking areas, loading/delivery access, and pedestrian circulation. Develop specific design concepts and implement them as development occurs in each superblock.

**Roadways (outside of Downtown)**

- 301      **116th Avenue NE from NE 12th Street to Northup Way**  
Widen this section from 3 lanes to 5 lanes.
- 302      **NE 24th Street at Bellevue Way**  
Provide a westbound to northbound right-turn lane and prohibit north to west and south to east turning movements during the p.m. peak period on Bellevue Way NE.
- 303      **114th Avenue SE from Main Street to SE 8th Street**  
Widen this section from 2 to 3 lanes and provide an additional southbound lane on 114th Avenue SE at the SE 8th Street intersection, in coordination with I-405 widening.
- 304      **112th Avenue SE/Bellevue Way Intersection**  
Extend the northbound right-turn lane and rechannelize the intersection to favor traffic flow to 112th Avenue SE.
- 305      **108th Avenue SE between Main Street and Bellevue Way**  
Provide traffic control measures on 108th SE to discourage through traffic on this street. Specific measures should be developed through a neighborhood traffic control program involving residents of that area.
- 306      **124th Avenue NE at Bel-Red Road**  
Provide northbound to westbound and southbound to eastbound left-turn lanes (as proposed in the Bel-Red Subarea Plan).
- 307      **NE 12th Street/116th Avenue NE Intersection**  
Provide a northbound to eastbound right-turn lane and eastbound to northbound dual left-turn lanes.
- 308      **Bellevue Way SE 30th Street to I-90**  
Provide additional southbound and northbound thru-lanes when a traffic signal is installed at the SE 30th Street/Bellevue Way intersection.
- 309      **SE 8th Street at 114th Avenue SE/118th Avenue SE**  
Provide HOV and other traffic improvements.

**Transit**

- 401      **Downtown**  
Construct the transit facilities within Downtown needed to support the projected level of transit service and ridership consistent with the Downtown Implementation Plan.
- 402      **NE 6th Street between 112th Avenue NE and I-405**  
Construct a new transit center.
- 403      **Downtown**

Provide a transit circulator for access to restaurants, shopping, parking and places of employment throughout Downtown and possibly to adjacent activity areas.

- 404**      **Region**  
Construct new park-and-ride lots specifically aimed at providing transit service to Downtown Bellevue.
- 405**      **Downtown**  
Improve transit stop facilities and amenities for transit riders.
- 406**      **108th Avenue NE**  
Add a northbound contraflow curb lane for buses only between NE 4th and NE 8th.
- 407**      **108th Avenue NE**  
Add a southbound curb lane for buses only between NE 10th and Main.

### Parking

- 501**      **Downtown**  
Allow on-site parking requirements for new buildings to be met by off-site parking facilities. Such facilities should be strategically located to reduce traffic congestion.
- 502**      **Downtown**  
Facilitate the construction of garages for short-term parking (if, following study, such facilities are determined to be the most appropriate option to address to short-term parking problems.
- 503**      **Downtown**  
Implement a parking guidance system to more efficiently utilize the Downtown parking supply.

### Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities

- 601**      **Downtown**  
Improve pedestrian facilities by completing a network of sidewalks in Downtown where they are missing, providing connections from surrounding neighborhoods, enhancing pedestrian signals and crosswalks, and removing obstacles on sidewalks. The interim sidewalk width where they are currently missing should be at least 8 feet.
- 602**      **Downtown**  
Develop policies and standards which can be used to identify and evaluate appropriate locations for mid-block pedestrian crossings. Provide mid-block pedestrian crossings with a signal as a need arises.
- 603**      **Downtown**  
Designate bicycle routes through Downtown, as shown on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, and including routes on Main (as part of the Lake-to-Lake Trail), on or adjacent to NE 6th from Bellevue Way to 114th NE, 100th NE, 106th NE from Main to NE 10th, 108th NE, 112th NE, 114th NE south of NE 6th, and Bellevue Way north and south of Downtown.
- 604**      **Downtown**  
Implement provisions to encourage the developers and owners of Downtown buildings to provide long-term bicycle parking and storage and showers/lockers for employees and short-term bicycle parking for visitors.

### Parks and Open Space

- 701**      **Downtown**  
Complete development of Downtown Park in accordance with adopted Master Plan.
- 702**      **Downtown**  
Improve Ashwood Park with guidance from an updated master planning process when funding becomes available.
- 703**      **Downtown**  
Acquire land and develop a neighborhood park in the Northwest Village District.

- 704**            **Downtown**  
Acquire land and develop a neighborhood park in the East Main District.
- 705**            **Downtown**  
Develop a graceful connection from Downtown to Meydenbauer Bay.
- 706**            **Downtown**  
Acquire land and development a linear green buffer on the south side of Main Street between 112th SE and 110th SE.

### Gateways & Wayfinding

- 801**            **Downtown**  
Implement a phased Downtown wayfinding system for pedestrians, bicycles, and automobiles that reinforces city identity as well as unique characteristics of Downtown neighborhoods as appropriate.
- 802**            **Downtown**  
Develop gateways into Downtown at identified locations through private development and public investment.

### Municipal Buildings

- 901**            **Downtown**  
Relocate civic functions to a Downtown campus.

### Attachment 3

#### Draft Policy Amendments to the Wilburton/NE 8th Subarea Plan

*Proposed additions are shown with underline formatting, deletions are shown with ~~strikeout~~ formatting. Other text shown would remain as currently adopted.*

**POLICY S-WI-17.** No extension of 124th Avenue south of Main Street, ~~or N.E. 4th Street east of 116th Avenue~~ should be permitted.

**POLICY S-WI-NEW.** Improve local access, street system connectivity and traffic flow by providing additional east-west transportation connections, including an arterial street connection at NE 4th Street between 116th and 120th Avenues and multi-modal access at NE 6th Street between Downtown and 120th Avenue NE.

## Attachment 4

### Draft Amendments to the East Bellevue Transportation Plan Transportation Project List

Proposed additions are shown with underline formatting, deletions are shown with ~~strikeout~~ formatting. Other text shown would remain as currently adopted.

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
<i>[numbering follows projects already included in the East Bellevue Transportation Plan]</i>		
<u>582</u>	<u>NE 4th Street between 116th Avenue NE and 120th Avenue NE</u>	<u>Create a new 4 lane arterial street connection with street landscaping, non-motorized facilities, and turn lanes as needed to provide efficient intersection movement.</u>
<u>583</u>	<u>NE 5th Street between 120th Avenue NE and 124th Avenue NE.</u>	<u>Identify and install traffic calming mitigation measures to reduce neighborhood impacts in accordance with a neighborhood implementation plan.</u>
<u>584</u>	<u>NE 6th Street multi-modal corridor between 112th Avenue NE and 120th Avenue NE</u>	<u>Create a transportation corridor that may include a combination of transit, HOV, general purpose and non-motorized facilities between 112th Avenue and 120th Avenue, with a non-motorized connection to the BNSF RR corridor.</u>