

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
BEL-RED CORRIDOR PROJECT  
STEERING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES

January 19, 2006  
4:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mike Creighton, Co-Chair; Terry Lukens, Co-Chair; Joel Glass; Doug Matthews; Kurt White; Sue Baugh; Steve Dennis; Norm Hanson; Bill Ptacek; Dean Rebhuhn; Ken Schiring; Pat Sheffels; Laurie Tish

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Kurt Springman; Earl Overstreet; Eddie Pasatiempo;

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kevin O'Neill, Dan Stroh, Michael Paine, Department of Planning and Community Development; Kevin McDonald, Goran Sparrman, Kris Liljeblad, Bernard van de Kamp, Department of Transportation

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Gerry Lindsay

**1. Welcome and Review of the Agenda**

Co-Chair Terry Lukens called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

The agenda was approved by consensus.

**2. Approve Minutes of December 1, 2005 Steering Committee Meeting**

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Mr. Schiring. Second was by Ms. Sheffels and the motion carried unanimously.

**3. Follow-up from December Study Area Tour**

Ms. Baugh said she found the tour to be very comprehensive and helpful. Mr. Creighton agreed, adding that he was surprised to know just how extensive the wetlands in the study area are. He noted that the area also offers a number of very impressive view corridors.

Mr. Rubhuhn commented on the large amount of traffic the area experiences. He said the area has great vitality, but no one walks from place to place.

**4. Information and Discussion of Regional and Local Transportation System**

- a. Transportation Planning Considerations
- b. Existing Transportation System Components
- c. Future Planned Improvements – Regional and Local

Kris Liljeblad, Assistant Director, Transportation Planning, allowed that the study area is very

confined from a transportation perspective. In order to increase the development intensity of the area in any meaningful way, it will be necessary to carefully match transportation with land use.

Consultant Torsten Lieneau with CH2MHill said roads are generally categorized into four major groups: freeways, major arterials, minor arterials, and collectors. Each has a different characteristic and serves a different function. As different land use alternatives are developed over time for the Bel-Red area, the types of roads to serve those land uses must be considered. The roadway types at the top of the hierarchy serve higher volumes and regional transit and have fewer access points; the roadway types lower on the list serve lower volumes and local transit .

How roadways operate are characterized by their level of service. Level of service is to some degree a level of how comfortable the travel experience is with respect to the capacity of the facility. Level of service is graded A through F, with A being free-flowing traffic and F experiencing a great deal more congestion and travel delays. Systems and facilities are designed to various levels of service, with urban systems generally in the D, E and F range. Freeways are measured on the A to F scale relative to their traffic speeds and densities. Intersection level of service is determined by the seconds of delay. Arterial segments are rated based on vehicle speeds through a corridor. Each type of facility can also be measured by comparing volume with capacity. Bellevue uses the volume-to-capacity (V/C ratio) methodology, and that is the approach that will be used by the consultants throughout the Bel-Red corridor study to report results. Where volumes approaches capacity, the ratio closes in on 1:1, indicating a state of increased congestion.

Mr. Lieneau said Bellevue uses the V/C ratio to determine concurrency. For purposes of the study, the focus will be on intersections rather than freeway operations or arterial corridors as a whole. The system in Bellevue is set up to measure the V/C ratio as an average over a two-hour period. For purposes of measuring concurrency, the city is divided into 14 Mobility Management Areas (MMA). For each MMA, the V/C ratios for each system intersection are averaged together to yield a single V/C ratio for the entire MMA. Each MMA has an established concurrency standard.

Mr. Lieneau said freeways by their very nature have restricted access points. New access points cannot be added at will. For interstate freeways, access points are governed by the federal government; for state highways, access points are governed by the Washington State Department of Transportation. There are two freeways, I-405 and SR-520, bordering the study area. Access points on both freeways are limited to no closer than one mile apart, though there are some exceptions where collector/distributor facilities are involved.

The committee members were shown a map of the city indicating the intersections that have been analyzed earlier in the study. Mr. Lieneau allowed that the data represents a baseline and assumes no changes to the Bel-Red area land use patterns out to 2030. Within the study area, six of the intersections were shown in red, meaning they have been identified as operating over their rated capacity and therefore are of concern. It was noted that the failed intersections are located at the extremes of the study area, namely along the NE 8<sup>th</sup> corridor close to the Downtown, and near the Redmond city limit in the vicinity of NE 24<sup>th</sup> Street and 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

Mr. Lieneau noted that there are a number of transportation improvements contemplated for the study area. He showed the committee members a map indicating the location of all identified transportation improvements. He allowed that not all of the planned projects have been funded. The map indicated 16 projects within the study area.

With regard to transit facilities, Mr. Lieneau said there are different technologies related to high-

capacity transit (HCT): rail, conventional bus, and circulators, which are more localized. All three of the different technologies are in use in the Puget Sound region, and a combination of technologies could be effective in the study area and should all be considered in developing alternatives.

The Bel-Red area is strategically located between some large regional employment centers, with Microsoft in Redmond on the east end, and Downtown Bellevue on the west. Accordingly, the area lends itself to HCT. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a form a HCT that uses conventional buses as its technology, though generally HCT operates on its own right-of-way or dedicated lane. Transit improvements that are being considered include transit lanes, direct access ramps to the freeways, HOV lanes, and bypass lanes at intersections. HCT correlates to higher transit speeds, especially where the rights-of-way are exclusive.

There are a number of routes for conventional transit buses that exist in the study area, and others are being considered. Bus routes have the advantage of flexibility; they can quite easily be changed over time. Within the study area, route restructuring could provide for improved internal circulation. Buses carry anywhere from 45 to 70 passengers, though because they operate on the regular vehicles lanes their speeds are not higher than that of automobiles.

Local circulators can take the form of either rail, such as a streetcar, or rubber tire bus technologies. They provide for a ridership option within a certain area. Circulators are generally characterized by slow speeds, frequent stops and short lengths.

Mr. Lieneau said there are some existing transit routes within the study area, though most of the service operates on the edges; there is in fact no service within the center of the study area. Given the land uses currently in place, however, having no transit service in the middle is not necessarily a bad thing. As land uses change over time, however, consideration should be given to rerouting some of the transit services to serve new land uses that may come in over time. There is one route on Bel-Red Road and three routes on NE 20<sup>th</sup> and Northup Way; the majority of the nearby transit service is on NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

With regard to non-motorized facilities, Mr. Lieneau said they offer a number of benefits. Every trip, regardless of the mode, begins and ends with a pedestrian trip; there is always a walk to and from the car, bus or train. Non-motorized facilities need to be designed to be accessible to transit and adequate to serve those who choose not to own motor vehicles. Non-motorized facilities can serve to reduce the overall number of vehicle trips when used effectively in conjunction with land uses that support it; non-motorized facilities also provide certain environmental benefits; provide for an increased community vitality and sense of place; improve safety by reducing the number of vehicles on the road, and improve health through increased exercise.

Location is the most important consideration when planning for non-motorized facilities. In order to serve transit service, the walk distance should be no more than a quarter of a mile from transit access points. Parks, high-density residential, mixed-use developments, schools and community centers all are supportive of good non-motorized facilities. In areas where there are high vehicle traffic volumes, consideration should be given to separating non-motorized facilities from the roadway. Bicycle facilities can be shared with roadways that have low vehicle volumes. Non-motorized facilities can be greatly enhanced through aesthetics, landscaping and wayfinding features.

Mr. Lieneau pointed out that there are quite a few existing non-motorized facilities within the study area. Most of the arterial streets have sidewalks, though in some cases they are sporadic.

Often they are directly adjacent to high-speed traffic lanes and do not have the benefit of being separated by a landscape median. The study area is characterized by very large blocks, a fact that tends to increase jaywalking across roadways. There is one bike path in the study area, and there is a trail along between Bel-Red Road and 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

The committee members were shown a map of the non-motorized facilities planned for the study area. They were reminded that not all of the improvements have been funded, however.

Regional Projects Manager Bernard van de Kamp turned the focus to regional transportation projects. He noted that Downtown Bellevue is a regional center with a significant draw. Over the next 15 to 20 years, significant growth in the Downtown core is expected both in terms of population and employment. In addition to the Downtown growth area, the Bel-Red area, Overlake, Crossroads, Belfield and Factoria/Eastgate are areas that have seen significant growth, all of which has resulted in increased travel demands.

Mr. van de Kamp noted that an exercise was recently completed that took a look at the travel demand within in the city and to various points in the region. For purposes of the study, the various MMAs were grouped into three general blocks. He indicated that the underlying assumptions include the regional growth anticipated through 2030; reconstruction of SR-520 as a six-lane facility with tolls; the expansion of I-405 with one new lane in each direction north of I-90 and two new lanes in each direction to the south of I-90; and a bus rapid transit system operating throughout the corridor with high frequencies and limited access points. With regard to I-90, the assumptions include an HOV lane in each direction to the west of I-405, and high-capacity transit operating between downtown Seattle, downtown Bellevue, Overlake and out to Redmond. All city projects in the six- and twelve-year investment plans are also assumed for modeling purposes.

The committee members were shown a graphic depicting the total interaction of trips between the three aggregated MMAs and all of the other major areas throughout the three-county area. It was noted that through trips were not included. The existing travel demand between Bellevue and south Snohomish County was shown to be quite high, a fact that has stimulated the state to invest heavily in the corridor. Similarly, high travel demands were shown for the corridor between Bellevue, Renton and south to Pierce County, and between Bellevue and Seattle. The total number of trips will continue to increase through 2030, with an increased demand on the roadways between Bellevue and the East King County cities of Redmond through to Duvall, and between Bellevue and South Snohomish County. The number of cross-lake trips between Bellevue and Seattle are anticipated to grow substantially as well, but the system constraints will impact growth.

Mr. van de Kamp said the analysis not surprisingly shows evidence of very similar commuter patterns out to 2030 during the peak periods. Consistent with the number of daily trips, equal growth in all categories is anticipated. Capacity at several park and ride lot locations is anticipated to increase, and some direct access ramps are planned. Investments in HCT are planned for both the I-90 and SR-520 corridors, though there is no timeframe for when it will all be accomplished. The vision is both ambitious and costly, but with the anticipated transportation demands, the investments are needed.

Mr. van de Kamp said a number of planning efforts have been going on for many years. An Environmental Impact Statement is being prepared in association with the SR-520 project; it will serve as the basis for developing a preferred alternative for the corridor. A master plan for the I-405 corridor was completed a couple of years ago; the recommendations included two additional lanes in each direction throughout the corridor along with bus rapid transit; steps are being made

toward implementation of the recommendations and some of the projects will be under construction within the next couple of years. Substantial agreements have been reached with regard to what approach to take with the I-90 corridor. The current plan calls for the addition of an HOV lane in each direction; ultimately the anticipation is that the corridor will include HCT facilities.

Sound Transit is actively pursuing HCT options for Phase 2. In addition, plans are being made in conjunction with King County Metro that focus on a possible reconfiguration that could improve local service, frequencies and the extent of service.

Mr. van de Kamp said the nickel gas tax that was approved by the state legislature in 2003 provided funding for several area projects, including close to \$500 million for I-405. The nickel gas tax revenues will be used to provide one additional lane in each direction on I-405 between the Downtown and I-90 for general purpose traffic, and will offer some HOV benefits by connecting SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street to the westbound I-90 ramp. I-912 failed at the polls in November 2005, meaning additional funding for statewide transportation projects will be coming online. For Bellevue, there will be additional investments made in the I-405 corridor, and a new NE 10<sup>th</sup> Street overcrossing will connect 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE with 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and provide access to the hospital campus being constructed. Funding in the amount of \$250 million has been allocated to start working on some of the collector/distributor lanes associated with NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street; the idea will be to create a braided ramp to separate traffic from NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street heading toward I-405 from the traffic on NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street heading for SR-520, and to eliminate the current bottleneck where eastbound SR-520 traffic looking to access the 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE exit interacts with I-405 traffic.

Mr. van de Kamp allowed that the Bellevue-to-Renton section of I-405 is chronically congested; currently, the segment experiences congestion nine hours each weekday, and the projections show the congestion worsening over time. Funding in the amount of \$170 million has been earmarked to address that situation; \$150 million of the total has been put into a reserve fund pending future funding from a regional package, and the balance will be used to extend the northbound lane between 112<sup>th</sup> in the Newport Hills area and SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street. That will greatly improve the I-405 interchange with I-90.

Over the next ten years, the region will see a great deal of construction as a result of the recent gas tax legislation. A large amount of money has been allocated to the SR-520 corridor, though this money is adequate to fund planning and design work, but not construction. Projects in the Renton area will improve the traffic flow on I-405, and in the north end SR-522 will be improved and will serve as a relief valve for a lot of the cross lake trips. The gas tax revenues will be used in part to construct the new HOV lanes on I-90. Funding in an amount sufficient to construct a new aerial version of the viaduct along the Seattle waterfront is in hand, though the focus continues to be on the tunnel option.

The Sound Transit Phase 2 package may or may not be on the ballot for a vote in November 2006. The anticipation is that in time HCT will be running through the Bel-Red study area. Without any major land use changes, the regional system will seek to get through the area as quickly as possible. The committee members were informed that one of their charges is to comment on ways to capitalize on the opportunities presented by HCT and its potential stations.

Mr. van de Kamp said huge construction impacts are not expected to result from the I-405 corridor projects that are planned to begin construction soon. Much of the construction will be done off of the freeway; one example is the new southbound lanes between the Downtown and I-90 that will utilize a new tunnel to be constructed essentially in the median between the

northbound and southbound lanes. The neighborhood NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street/I-405 braid will be a major undertaking, but it will construct quickly once under way.

It is anticipated that construction of the new viaduct in Seattle will be done within the next five to ten years. Mr. van de Kamp said traffic can be expected to divert to other routes, including the Eastside, during construction. Much greater volumes through Downtown Bellevue are forecast. Accordingly, it will be important to get the NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street/I-405 braid and the general I-405 capacity projects through the Downtown area completed ahead of time.

Senior Transportation Planner Kevin McDonald allowed that there are some transportation system disconnects within the arterial and pedestrian/bicycle systems. He suggested that any future redevelopment of the study area should incorporate improvements to the internal circulation of the street system. It must be recognized that there is a demand for traveling to the northeast into Redmond and the southeast into Downtown Bellevue, and multiple modes of transportation should be incorporated to meet the demand; better pedestrian/bicycle, street and transit connections are needed. Improving the system of connections to and from the regional freeways will aid in distributing traffic to a variety of destinations. An HOV system or bus system between Overlake and the I-90 corridor at the Eastgate transit center may be appropriate to help provide relief for the vehicle traffic on 148<sup>th</sup> and 156<sup>th</sup> avenues. It must be kept in mind throughout the study that there are residential neighborhoods to the north, south and east; growth in the Bel-Red corridor must not be allowed to overly impact those neighborhoods.

Mr. Rebhuhn acknowledged the impacts construction of the new viaduct in Seattle will have on the Eastside and the Bel-Red corridor.

With regard to the notion of protecting the nearby residential neighborhoods, Mr. Rebhuhn suggested that a number of general capacity improvements may be needed; the focus should be on keeping vehicles on the main arterials and off of the side street shortcuts. Mr. van de Kamp answered that the huge influx of regional funding dollars means there is a huge list of regional projects to be delivered. It is always a struggle at the local level to balance levels of service against community impacts. As the study progresses, it should become clearer exactly what projects will be needed.

Mr. Schiring commented that the first BROTS Study was completed in 1990. It consisted of numerous transportation recommendations. The current Transportation Facilities Plan contains 14 BROTS projects that still have not been funded and constructed. It would be counterproductive for the committee to study modes of transportation and select routes and designs only to have individual portions funded while the balance of the package languishes for years to come. He suggested that the recommendations of the committee should be forwarded in an all-or-nothing package scheduled over several consecutive budget years but with guaranteed funding.

Mr. Glass asked if any improvements to SR-520 are planned to the east of 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Mr. van de Kamp said there are some projects that are funded and under construction on SR-520 to the east of I-405. He allowed that the current primary focus of the SR-520 corridor study, however, is on the area to the west of 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE where the vulnerable structures exist. There are also currently no plans for additional access points to and from SR-520.

## **5. High Capacity Transit**

Mr. Liljeblad commented that the transit plan for the region includes HCT. A line will run across the lake, through downtown Bellevue, through the Bel-Red area to Overlake and beyond

to Redmond. Because Sound Transit is geared up with its Phase 2 study, Bellevue is in a good position to seed the process with ideas and proposals that will further the interests of the city generally and the Bel-Red area specifically. The current transportation system has significant capacity constraints; in order to satisfy the objective of maintaining mobility over time, and to make the Bel-Red area attractive enough to encourage redevelopment, it will be necessary to look at capacity enhancements. HCT is a potential capacity addition that could be useful in unlocking some of the development potential and access issues.

George Crandall, consultant with Crandall Arambula, said his firm has worked on the HCT system in Portland, Oregon, over the last 15 years, during which time a number of lessons have been learned. Choosing the right alignment is of particular importance. When transit lines and stations are constructed, they must be efficient, must be something the people will want to use as an alternative to being on the road, and they must generate fare revenues. The ideal station is located in a neighborhood hub adjacent to uses such as a grocery store, retail uses, support services, high-density housing within an eighth of a mile, and moderate-density housing within a quarter of a mile. That ideal can be directly translated into ridership and fare revenues.

Mr. Crandall said station location can have a significant impact on development potential. He shared with the committee members a map showing an analysis of two potential station locations in the Portland area, one of which is located adjacent to a freeway and the other two blocks in from the freeway. He said the proposed station location adjacent to the freeway was rated fair to poor with regard to usage and fare generation, whereas the station located on an internal street is rated fair to good. The potential for transit-oriented development should always be a major consideration in the selection of an alignment.

Once an alignment is determined, the focus is narrowed to the streets along which the line runs. The street environment can be seriously degraded by transit where it is force-fit into an existing alignment with very little right-of-way. High-capacity transit is often given priority, with on-street parking and a pedestrian environment put at the bottom of the priority list. In order to be successful, however, the order should be reversed. With on-street parking and a pedestrian environment, the result will be better streets to which development investors are always attracted. Photos of both good and bad results were shared with the committee. The environment of a street and access to stations is very important for success.

Mr. Crandall stressed that a transit station alone is insufficient to stimulate development. A framework plan must be in place first for the development community to tap into. The right framework will increase tax increment revenues and ridership. Priorities must be established, and some public investment is generally required. The ratio of public investment to private investment is generally in the range of 1:7 or better. In the end, someone must be assigned to making sure implementation is carried through to completion over time; it does no good to have a plan in place and to assume it will happen on its own.

Don Arambula with Crandall Arambula suggested that there are three potential alignments for HCT through the Bel-Red area. One alignment follows Bel-Red Road, another follows generally along the line of NE 16<sup>th</sup> Street going east and west and then connecting over to NE 10<sup>th</sup> Street or NE 12<sup>th</sup> Street to connect with the Downtown, and the third running along SR-520. He said by superimposing quarter mile circles on the three alignments gives one the sense of where the potential development areas are that could support the ideal station. The committee members were informed as to the number of developable acres for each of the three potential alignments (based on an earlier analysis of parcels that could be redeveloped and environmental constraints), and were shown that the highest potential lies with the SE 16<sup>th</sup> Street option, followed by the Bel-Red Road and SR-520 alignments respectively.

Mr. Glass asked if any consideration has been given to having a transit line go toward Crossroads. Mr. Arambula said that option has not been specifically discussed. Mr. McDonald pointed out that Sound Transit regional planning does not serve the Crossroads area with HCT; the probable alignment is through downtown Bellevue through the Bel-Red area to Overlake and on to downtown Redmond.

Mr. Dennis commented that HCT located adjacent to high-density residential development works very well for getting commuters to and from jobs outside of Bellevue. He suggested that some focus needs to be on getting people to and from work at the Microsoft campus as well and asked how the benefit of having jobs within the circles around transit stations is weighed against having dwelling units within the circles. Mr. Crandall allowed that the Microsoft campus is a major employment center and as such should be served by HCT. Accordingly, there is the potential for another transit station somewhere in the middle. Residential development is a prime contributor to the number of trips generated, and many of those trips are to and from work. The highest transit ridership is achieved in areas that have high-density residential within a comfortable walking distance of a transit station. The more residential there is next to a station, the greater the likelihood of reducing the number of vehicle trips on the roadway system.

Mr. Arambula commented that office uses generate fewer total trips than residential. He added that transit systems should always be designed to serve the major employers, which in the case of Bellevue includes Microsoft and the hospital campus in addition to the Downtown.

Mr. Lukens asked if having a single transit station somewhere in the middle of the Bel-Red study area would be sufficient. Mr. Arambula stressed the importance of knowing what Sound Transit wants to do in the corridor. Obviously they want to tap into the greatest potential for transit-oriented development; that factor tends to favor having a station in the middle part of the corridor. Mr. Crandall said one factor relied on in determining station location is the total travel time over the length of the system; for every station, the overall travel time is reduced. In Portland and in other places, stations are located only a half mile apart, which means the quarter mile walking distance circles touch. Considering the distance between the middle part of the Bel-Red corridor and the Downtown, however, having more than one station could result in a reduced overall travel time without great benefit.

Mr. O'Neill commented that the obvious fixed points are the Downtown transit center and the Overlake transit center. In the final analysis, stations will likely not be located any closer than one mile apart. Exactly where a station should be sited within the corridor has not been determined.

Department of Transportation Director Goran Sparrman commented that the current thinking is that between the Downtown station and the Overlake area there should be two to three transit stations. He added that the Overlake Hospital complex is a very important area to serve and should be afforded one of the stations, leaving only one additional station between there and Overlake.

Mr. Lukens asked if the quarter mile and station layout model varies based on the technology used. Mr. Arambula answered that rail and bus technologies are generally set up to attract the same users.

Answering a question asked by Mr. Creighton, Mr. Crandall said on-grade systems are far superior to above-grade systems. Mr. Arambula said that is particularly true as it relates to the station platform; between stations, grade-separated alignments can work very well, but it is

difficult to get riders to climb stairs to access HCT at stations. On-grade platforms in quiet, safe environments are always preferable; beyond that decisions are generally made based on cost.

Mr. Schiring suggested the area of the Safeway operation has the greatest potential for high-density development rather than the area around Lake Bellevue. Mr. Arambula pointed out the need to serve known entities, of which the hospital is one. Moving the alignment one way or another can be done, but it will be necessary to keep in mind the need to serve the hospital campus. Mr. Crandall acknowledged that this was an area that would be looked at.

Ms. Sheffels commented that in considering station locations it should not matter if a quarter mile circle extends outside the study area. Mr. Arambula answered that the full impact and trip generation potential within each circle will be evaluated as part of the study.

Mr. Dennis suggested that a careful placement of a station could serve the hospital and the Safeway site. Mr. Sparrman observed that the ultimate decision with respect to where the stations will be located will lie with the Sound Transit board. Originally, Sound Transit could see no need for a station in the middle part of the study area. The Bel-Red corridor planning study is intended in part to show that there is, or will be, a market for at least one additional station. He added, however, that he is skeptical the area could support three stations.

Mr. White observed that as a result of the study there may be recommendations that will ultimately change the land use patterns within the study area. Those recommendations should serve to inform the station-siting decision to a large extent. Mr. Sparrman agreed, pointing out that nothing has been decided to date. In the end there will need to be some tradeoffs identified and agreed to. He added that when the study was kicked off the thinking was that the Sound Transit board would be making a decision on technology very early in 2006 and a go/no go decision about the Phase 2 ballot measure soon thereafter. Everything remains under negotiation, however. Within a month or so it should be possible to have a better idea about how the process will play out. The process of determining transit alignments and station locations is an extensive process, and no final decisions have been made yet.

Mr. Arambula cautioned the committee members from taking the circle locations too literally. He said they are intended to illustrate how to maximize the development potential of the study area.

Ms. Baugh asked if the recommendations of the committee can be overridden. Mr. Sparrman said the charge of the committee is to come up with a set of recommendations for the Planning Commission, the Transportation Commission and the City Council to review. Ultimately the City Council will make a decision on the plan they like the best. For its part, Sound Transit has shown a willingness to take local opinion very seriously in siting facilities.

Mr. Arambula added that the focus for Sound Transit will be on driving down travel times, costs, and impacts. The Bel-Red study is focused in part on developing recommendations that will further those goals. If the perfect circle can be found, Sound Transit's goals will be met.

Answering a question asked by Mr. Ptacek, Mr. Crandall said it is always necessary to balance competing interests. In Portland two potential alignments were presented, but it was determined that one of the alignments offered greater potential for creating true neighborhoods around the station locations, which increases transit ridership. It became obvious that the low-cost alignment would not be the best investment for the community. For the Bel-Red area three potential alignments have been identified. The next step will be to look at the station development potential along each of the alignments to inform the committee's decision making

process.

Mr. Rubhuhn asked if any general capacity lost by creating a transit alignment will be replaced. He pointed out that even with greater transit ridership, the bulk of the total trips on the system will continue to be by automobile. Mr. Crandall said increased capacity is very desirable, though there are some limitations. Consideration is and will continue to be given to that concern throughout the study. Ultimately, the overall transportation system should be truly multimodal.

Mr. Sparrman clarified that multimodal is a term that refers to an overall system that includes transit, general purpose capacity, freight movement, and non-motorized facilities. All of those elements will be included in the study.

Mr. Dennis observed that the riparian corridor essentially cuts the study area into east Bel-Red and west Bel-Red. He suggested that the study should at the very least include consideration of a station serving both areas. Mr. Creighton commented that there are large parcels ripe for redevelopment in the eastern part of the area, while the western area includes land uses that are less geared toward transit; people wanting to get their cars and televisions fixed are not likely to board the train. When considering where stations should be located, it will be necessary to surround them with supportive land uses.

Mr. Rubhuhn asked when the committee will be asked to look at how the riparian corridors and wetlands in the area should be treated. Mr. O'Neill said that issue is on the agenda for the next committee meeting.

## **6. Next Meeting(s)**

There was consensus to schedule the next meeting for February 2. There was also agreement to develop a tour of transit-oriented development in the Portland area in mid- to late February.

## **7. Communications Protocols**

Mr. O'Neill informed the committee members that all electronic communications involving the study are part of the public record and therefore are subject to public disclosure requests. He urged the members to create a special folder on their computers in which to store all digital materials focused on the corridor study.

## **8. Public Comment**

Ms. Pamela Toelle, 14845 NE 13<sup>th</sup> Street, urged the committee members to consider uses that could be lost by drawing the transit circles. The Bel-Red area is home to a large number of service uses that are not found anywhere else in the city. If they disappear, city residents will be negatively impacted. For those who live in the area, Bel-Red Road is a mobility lifeline; if a transit rail line is constructed along that alignment, some consideration will have to be given to where the local residents will be able to go.

## **9. Adjourn**

Mr. Lukens adjourned the meeting at 6:03 p.m.