



Bellevue Planning Commission

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

6:30 to 10:00 p.m. ▪ Council Conference Room 1E-113

Bellevue City Hall ▪ 450 110th Ave. NE ▪ Bellevue, WA 98004

Agenda

- 6:30 p.m.
1. **Call to Order**
Vicki Orrico, Chair
 2. **Public Comment***
Limited to 5 minutes per person or 3 minutes if a public hearing has been held on your topic
 3. **Approval of Agenda**
 4. **Communications from City Council, Community Council, Boards and Commissions**
 5. **Committee Reports**
 6. **Staff Reports**
Paul Inghram, PCD
- 6:45 p.m.
7. **Study Session: Ped-Bike Plan Update CPA**
Briefing on the Transportation Commission's recommended CPA for the Ped-Bike Plan
Franz Loewenherz & Kevin O'Neill, Transportation
 8. **Approval of Minutes**
 - a. July 2, 2008
 - b. July 9, 2008
 - c. September 10, 2008
 9. **Public Comment*** - *Limited to 3 minutes per person*
 10. **Next Planning Commission Meetings –**

Nov 12 - Tentative agenda topics include:
 - 2008 comprehensive Plan Amendments
 - Ped-Bike Plan Update CPA Briefing
- 8:15 p.m.
11. **Adjourn**
Agenda times are approximate

Planning Commission members

Vicki Orrico, Chair
Hal Ferris
William Lai
Jay Hamlin

Pat Sheffels, Vice Chair
Douglas Mathews
Jennifer Robertson

Staff contact:

Paul Inghram 452-4070
Jeanie Christensen 452-7857

** Unless there is a Public Hearing scheduled, "Public Comment" is the only opportunity for public participation.*

Wheelchair accessible. American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation available upon request. Please call at least 48 hours in advance. Assistance for the hearing impaired: dial 711 (TR).



MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 22, 2008

TO: Chair Orrico and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Franz Loewenherz, Senior Transportation Planner
floewenherz@bellevuewa.gov 425-452-4077

SUBJECT: Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update Comprehensive Plan Amendment (File Number: 07-123138-AC)

No formal action is requested at this time. The October 22 study session is focused on Transportation Commission's recommended revisions to the 1999 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update. At its October 6 meeting, the City Council provided direction to the Planning Commission to move forward with the Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) phase of this project as part of the 2008 CPA work program. The October 22 study session will provide an opportunity to review questions raised by the Planning Commission and City Council. Staff also asks the Planning Commission to identify any other issues/questions at this study session. A public hearing on the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments will be scheduled for the Planning Commission meeting of November 12.

Background

This Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) process relates to amendments to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update. Details of the CPA are contained in the document entitled: *Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update 2008 Comprehensive Plan Amendments (this document was provided in your September 24 packet; please bring these materials to the October 22 Study Session).*

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan Amendment proposes to:

- 1) Amend existing policies and add new policies in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan to update the overall vision of realizing a robust, integrated non-motorized network.
- 2) Replace Figure TR-11 (Pedestrian System) and Figure TR-12 (Bicycle System) in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan with new network maps.
- 3) Amend Policy UD-53 of the Urban Design General Element of the Comprehensive Plan articulating the overall vision of implementing the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway concept.
- 4) Amend Policy PA-21 of the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan to make specific reference to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) trail system.
- 5) Amend existing policies and add new policies in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Facility Plan of the Comprehensive Plan to update the overall vision of realizing a robust, integrated non-motorized network.
- 6) Amend the project list and maps in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Facility Plan of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure the plan update responds to current transportation needs.

All of the amendments noted above have been reviewed by the Transportation Commission over the past 18 months, and were recommended by the Commission at its September 11, 2008 meeting.

At its October 6 meeting, Council was generally supportive of the policy direction and project revisions recommended by the Transportation Commission. The Council requested staff work with the Planning Commission in reviewing the following items:

Policy PB-2: Upon update of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan in 2008, the City will focus on accomplishing a number of specific short and mid-term implementation objectives. Specifically:

- Within 10 years of plan adoption, implement at least *two* completed, connected, and integrated north-south and at least *two* east-west bicycle routes that connects the boundaries of the city limits, and connects to the broader regional bicycle system.
- Within 5 years of plan adoption, implement at least one completed and connected east-west and north-south bicycle route through Downtown Bellevue.
- Within 10 years of plan adoption, reduce pedestrian/vehicle and bicycle/vehicle accidents by 25 percent (from 2007 levels).
- Within 10 years of plan adoption, construct 25 more miles of sidewalks along arterial streets (including collector arterials) above 2007 levels.
- Within 10 years of plan adoption, increase trips by bicycle and foot by 10 percent (over 2007 levels). [Note: Staff proposes modifying the date to 2009 to set in place a pedestrian and bicycle count tracking system.]

The City Council responded positively to this policy, but raised questions about whether there were implications/problems if the City didn't meet these goals, particularly since this policy would be in the Comprehensive Plan. Staff was asked to follow-up with legal staff to assess this issue. Additionally, it was suggested that the language might be rephrased as follows: "...the City will focus the goal of accomplishing..." to the beginning. Staff will provide more information at the meeting to address these concerns.

Policy TR-79: Assign high priority to pedestrian and bicycle projects that:

- Address safety issues;
- Provide system connectivity or provide connections to the existing portions of the system to develop primary north-south or east-west routes;
- Complete and connect planned pedestrian or bicycle facilities or trails;
- Conform to and are consistent with Bellevue's roadway classification system;
- Provide access to activity centers such as schools, parks, public facilities such as libraries and community centers, retail centers, major employment centers, and concentrations of housing; and commercial areas;
- Provide accessible linkages to the transit and school bus systems; and
- Serve concentrations of residents with special accessibility needs, including those who are challenged by: disability; a lack of vehicle ownership, low-income status, age, or minority status.

The Mayor shared the Planning Commission's concerns (expressed at their 9/24 briefing) that the wording of the last bullet item incorrectly captured the intent of Title VI Federal Guidance, enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race,

color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Upon additional staff review, it is proposed that this wording be modified to: Serve concentrations of residents with special accessibility needs.

Projects: S-304-E; B-105-E; and B-105-W

- S-304-E: Add a 6 foot wide pathway or sidewalk on the east side of NE 140th Avenue NE from NE 60th Street to NE 40th Street.
- B-105-E: Add a 5 foot-wide bike lanes on the east side of 140th Avenue NE between NE 60th Street and NE 24th Street. Component of priority bike corridor; NS-4: Somerset-Redmond Connection.
- B-105-W: Add a 5 foot-wide bike lanes on the west side of 140th Avenue NE between NE 60th Street and NE 24th Street. Component of priority bike corridor; NS-4: Somerset-Redmond Connection.

Councilmember Noble expressed concern that the Transportation Commission had not arrived at a context-sensitive design for the 140th Avenue NE corridor. Transportation Commissioner Francois Larrivee, who joined staff at the October 6 Council Study Session, responded that Commission determined that the 140th Avenue NE corridor represents a critical component in the City's north-south bike corridor network. After extensive deliberation, the Transportation Commission feels strongly that an integrated bicycle route network is needed that connects the boundaries of the city limits, and connects to the broader regional bicycle system. Therefore, the Commission recommends bicycle lanes fill the missing link along the 140th Avenue NE corridor that connects to existing bicycle lanes at NE 60th in Redmond down to existing bicycle lanes at NE 8th to the south. This action is consistent with direction found in the 1999 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan. Concilmember Noble requested that the Planning Commission deliberate on this project recommendation and encouraged the Commission to visit the project location.

Next Steps

On October 22 the Planning Commission will meet in a study session to discuss the Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan Update Comprehensive Plan Amendment. Staff will come prepared to address the issues referenced above and any additional questions the Planning Commission might have relative to its review of this Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

A public hearing will be scheduled for November 12. The Planning Commission will be asked to deliberate and make a recommendation following the November 12 hearing or at subsequent meetings, as needed.

Attachments

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update Schedule
2. Dennis Neuzil comment letter (September 22) on Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update Comprehensive Plan Amendment (File Number: 07-123138-AC)

Attachment 1

Planning Commission Schedule

Potential Planning Commission dates	Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update
October 22	Study Session: Engage the Planning Commission in a discussion of the Transportation Commission’s recommended revisions to the policy framework, network maps, project lists, and project maps.
November 12	Public Hearing: Hear public testimony. Potential recommendation.
November 19 [If needed]	Make Recommendation: Make recommendation on Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Comprehensive Plan Amendments to City Council.
Additional dates if needed	Additional study sessions may be scheduled as needed to complete the Comprehensive Plan Amendment review process.

Attachment 2

**Dennis Neuzil comment letter (September 22) on Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan
Update Comprehensive Plan Amendment (File Number: 07-123138-AC)**

September 22, 2008

Dennis Neuzil
2307-94th Ave NE
Clyde Hill, WA 98004

City of Bellevue Council
City of Bellevue Transportation Commission
✓ City of Bellevue Transportation Department – attention Mr. Franz Loewenherz

Re: Comments on the Pending Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update Comprehensive Plan Amendment (File No. 07-123138 –AC) Memo to the Transportation Commission from Senior Transportation Planner Franz Loewenherz, dated September 11, 2008

I offer the following comments and recommendations regarding the pending adoption of the **Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan 2008 Update**, noting that the referenced memo included three attachments:

A. *Draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Policy Framework (Transportation Commission: March, 2008.*

B. *Proposed Amendments to Comprehensive Plan (Volume I) text, policies, and network maps, http://www.bellevuewa.gov/comprehensive_plan.htm and the attachment includes the entire Transportation Element with amended language.*

C. *Proposed Amendments to Comprehensive Plan (Volume II), Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Facility Plan text, policies, project lists, and project maps [http://bellevuewa.gov/pdf/PCD/CompPlan Vol 2 TFP6.PedandBike.pdf](http://bellevuewa.gov/pdf/PCD/CompPlan_Vol_2_TFP6.PedandBike.pdf)*

With the exception of the first comment item below, my comments mainly address bicycle plan elements.

1. Policy PB-2 includes an objective that “*Within 10 years of plan adoption, increase trips by bicycle and foot by 10 percent (over 2007 levels)*”. I strongly encourage the City to adopt a far more aggressive growth target for pedestrian and bicycle trips than what amounts to a mere nominal 1 percent increase per year. Surely a much greater growth rate will be needed for the City to be on track to effectively and sustainably meet its fundamental transportation, community development, environmental, and livability goals. **At a minimum a goal of doubling or tripling of ped-and-bike trips over the next 10 years or so should be adopted.**

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Comments on the Pending Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Update
Comprehensive Plan Amendment (File No. 07-123138 --AC) Memo to the
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2. Several bicycle routes in *Figure TR-12 -- Bicycle Network*, designated as "**Other Bicycle Network**" routes are of regional-class interest and importance as identified and recommended by the Cascade Bicycle Club and other members of the region's bicycling community, and instead should be included in the City's "**Primary Bicycle Route Network**". This includes all of Coal Creek Parkway, and 116th Avenue NE from NE 12th St to Northup Way NE. (Comprehensive documentation and the full report on the Cascade Bicycle Club's Regional-Class Bicycle Route Network Study was provided to the City's Departments of Planning and Transportation in 2006).

3. The Downtown street network continues to suffer in this latest bicycle plan update from too few high-prioritization designations for bicycle improvement projects relative to its urgent and longstanding need for improved downtown access and internal circulation for bicycles. **The improvement priority for projects for NE 12th St and 108th Avenue in Downtown should be raised from the pending "medium" -- to "high".**

Improved bicycle accommodation in the NE 6th Street "pedestrian corridor", which, despite some current obstacles to convenient bicycle usage, is the only nominally friendly central east-west linkage from the transit center to Bellevue Way. It should be established as a "high" priority (the corridor's pending priority rating is "medium").

(It should be noted that despite its substantial cycling deficiencies and needs Downtown accounts for only approximately 10 percent of the City's "high"-prioritized projects and 10 percent of the City's "medium"-prioritized projects.)

4. *The EW-2 Downtown Overlake Connection Bicycle Corridor* is essentially the sole planned East-West bicycle route corridor across most of the central tier of the city. **This bicycle corridor and its component improvement projects should be given "high" priority status, and should undertake and exploit interim bicycle accommodation improvement opportunities.** Item 2 regarding NE 12th St improvement for bikes and item 5 below addressing a needed 140th to 148th link and a 156th to 164th link are also critical elements here.

5. **An east-west bicycle linkage between 140th Ave NE and 148th Avenue NE to connect Crossroads with the EW-2 Downtown Overlake Connection corridor is a critical need.** This gap is so vividly apparent from even a most cursory look at the Bicycle Network map. Bel-Red Rd and NE 8th are and continue to be inadequate in bicycle accommodation under the plan, and the SR 520 Trail is too far north to meet

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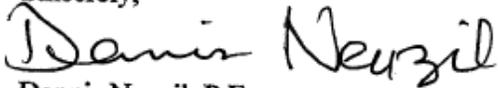
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this need.

Project O-113 – the addition of a 10-14 foot-wide trail south of Highland Middle School connecting 148th to 156th Avenue is also critical here and should be elevated from its pending “Low” priority designation to “High” priority. An interim alternative – or substitute/combining alternative for all or a portion of the O-113 Trail alternative involves utilizing existing street segments in the NE 15th and 16th Streets corridor and warrants consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this input.

Sincerely,



Dennis Neuzil, P.E.

425-455-1419

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