

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

February 12, 2009
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Kiel

STAFF PRESENT: David Cieri, Goran Sparrman, Jen Benn, Chris Dreaney,
Eric Miller, Franz Loewenherz, Department of
Transportation

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Chair Northey who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Kiel who was excused.

3. STAFF REPORTS

Transportation CIP Construction Manager Dave Cieri reminded the Commissioners that the process to fill the vacant Commission seat is under way. Five applications have been received to date.

Mr. Cieri mentioned that bids for the Northup Way project were opened on February 5. He said the bids were about 34 percent below the engineering estimate. The Council is set to award the project on February 17 and construction is anticipated to start in late March.

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

5. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Chair Northey said she participated in a community workshop put on by the Department of Planning and Community Development focused on educating the public about how to make presentations to boards, commissions and the City Council.

6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

8. STUDY SESSION

A. Local Improvement Districts Past and Future

Program Manager Jen Benn said the successful implementation of a Local Improvement District (LID) strategy could open the door to some future opportunities.

Department of Transportation Director Goran Sparrman allowed that the city has not used LIDs for about 20 years, but the practice may have significant implications down the road. Whether or not to use them at all will be up to the Council, but there could certainly be a role for the Commission to play in the future.

Ms. Benn said LIDs serve as a funding mechanism for projects. Every LID must have a defined boundary based on the properties that gain a special benefit from a particular project or set of projects. The properties are levied assessments based on their special benefits, and the levies become liens on the properties. The assessments serve as securities against which bonds can be issued to finance projects.

The special benefit is determined on a with and without analysis of each property and the proposed project. For example, the NE 4th Street extension project will trigger the unlocking of additional zoning opportunities, from which the local properties will benefit. An LID assessment cannot exceed the special benefit determined by analysis, and the assessments across the LID must be proportional.

Commissioner Larrivee asked who conducts the analysis of each property, and Ms. Benn explained it is all done by independent appraisers with particular expertise in LID benefits.

Ms. Benn said state law allows for the use of LIDs, and the city used them extensively in the past for both roadway and utility projects. The use of LIDs fell out of favor for a number of reasons, including economic factors, issues with some specific LIDs, and the introduction of a more aggressive impact fee program. The Commissioners were shown a map depicting projects

historically accomplished through LIDs.

Commissioner Larrivee asked if the political drawbacks to using LIDs will resurface if they are once again introduced. Ms. Benn said there were several lawsuits associated with LIDs which resulted in changes to the assessments. Lawsuits take time and energy and therefore the city leadership at that time decided to reduce the use of LIDs. The city learned a great deal from those experiences about how to establish cost/benefit ratios, factoring in the public benefit, and ways and methods for allocation.

The Mobility and Infrastructure Initiative represents an attempt by the City Council to aggressively look at what is needed to support the projected growth. Under the Growth Management Act, infrastructure must be balanced with growth. The project list developed totals \$299 million and represents what is needed as a baseline infrastructure.

The Council approved the initiative in January 2009, triggering the need to identify funding sources. Of the whole package, \$56 million has been earmarked to come from LIDs. The plan calls for two LIDs. Initially it was thought that the Bel-Red/west node set of projects would be first, including improvements to 120th Avenue NE and 124th Avenue NE, and construction of the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street corridor. The second set of projects included the NE 4th Street extension and the 120th Avenue NE improvements to the south of NE 8th Street. By the time the plan was approved, however, the order of implementation of the two LIDs was switched, and the realignment of the NE 8th Street/120th Avenue NE intersection was shifted from one LID to the other.

The first LID is anticipated to be formed, or close to being formed, by the end of 2009. The Bel-Red/west node LID will be formed a couple of years later.

Chair Northey asked if the Wright Runstad project will be constructed before the LID gets put together. Mr. Sparrman said the Spring District project will benefit from the Bel-Red/west LID and as such will be required to participate.

Ms. Benn said there are a number of steps involved in establishing an LID. First is a feasibility phase that will be launched in about a week; it involves drawing the first boundary lines and looking at special benefits by land use category. The information will be brought back to the Council to consider before moving into the formation phase. A public involvement process will run through the entire formation process to engage the property owners and businesses that operate on the involved properties.

Commissioner Simas asked if residences within the boundary of the LID will be obligated to pay a proportional share of the LID. Ms. Benn said if a residential property receives a special benefit that exceeds the threshold, it will be included and will receive a proportional share of the overall assessment. The outreach process will engage anyone who might be affected; it will

include a series of topical workshops.

The formation aspect of establishing an LID involves a more detailed appraisal study that defines the final boundary. The parcel-by-parcel study looks specifically at special benefits and yields information from which a preliminary assessment role can be created. All property owners included within the boundaries are notified, and a public hearing is held with regard to whether the LID should be formed and whether the boundaries are appropriate. If the boundaries are changed based on an objection by a property owner and the recommendation of a hearing examiner, a whole new public hearing must be conducted before the Council can issue a formation ordinance. Once the formation ordinance is issued, there is a 30-day protest period during which the LID will be divested if the property owners holding 60 percent of the total assessed value within the boundaries protest out. Even with a protest, there is a way open to the Council to move forward with declaring an LID, but most jurisdictions elect not to take that approach.

Ms. Benn said if everything were to go exactly on schedule without any problems, the Council ordinance and 30-day protest period could be wrapped up by December. That does not, however, tie into any of the project developments, which will need to be done in order to have solid cost estimates before the preliminary assessments are done.

Once the LID is formed and the project is closed out, the appraiser is brought back in to verify that all of the assumptions were correct. At that time, the final assessment is confirmed and another public hearing is conducted, at which property owners can protest their assessments. The LID then goes into maintenance mode with bills going out annually for 20 years or until the bonds are retired.

Ms. Benn said staff has done some work on the Bel-Red LID. Not surprisingly, the impact of participating in an LID along with incentive zoning and impact fees will be less for those properties that are planning to take advantage of their full development potential. For the properties that are looking at redeveloping more in the future, the impacts will be greater as the assessments get passed on to the existing businesses.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Simas, Ms. Benn said one of the challenges the City Council will have to address is setting the right cost/benefit level, one that will preserve existing businesses while promoting development. They will not be able to assess a full dollar for every dollar of special benefit; that would be taking all of the benefit back. A margin of benefit will need to be left with the property owner to use to their advantage.

Commissioner Simas asked if there is any precedence for establishing assessments that are based on actual usage rather than the highest and best use. Ms. Benn said there are some scenarios that incorporate that approach, but they are complicated by actually being able to anticipate what the property owners' intentions are. The practice has been to look at the highest and best use, which treats every property the same way.

Chair Northey asked what protects the city from getting stuck with the full price tag if the project is constructed before any dollars are collected, especially since property owners can challenge their assessments after the project is completed. Ms. Benn answered that there are some protections in the way the process is developed. Once the LID is formed following the initial protest period, which is prior to the project being constructed, there are protections in place for the city. Protests of the actual assessments, which occur after the project is built, result in adjustments to the assessments, but the assessments cannot just go away. The overall share from the LID could shrink, making it necessary to increase spending from the city's coffers.

Ms. Benn said staff conducted some stakeholder interviews and found a lot of support for getting the projects done in a timely fashion. They also found support in general for the concept of having private participation. Higher degrees of concern were voiced with the specifics.

Commissioner Glass asked if school district property would be exempt from the LID. Ms. Benn said the city would have the option of making that determination.

B. Transportation Development Code

Development Review Manager Chris Dreaney brought to the table the proposed update to the Transportation Development Code. She said in the coming weeks the Commission will be asked to review the changes and provide direction and feedback to staff. A full review by legal has just begun, and a SEPA application is in to development review. There will be public outreach to the general public, the business community, and the development community. The Transportation Commission will conduct a public hearing before formulating an official recommendation to be forwarded to the Council. The update is the first since the Transportation Development Code was created in 1995.

Ms. Dreaney said the Transportation Development Code can be found in BMC 14.60. Its purpose is to codify and provide authority for the policy requirements of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. It also provides authority for the standards spelled out in the Design Manual, which are engineering standards that have been in place for a long time.

The intent behind updating the Transportation Development Code is to expand the definitions, remove conflicts between the code and the standards resulting from updating the standards, clarifying in general the design requirements, to increase consistency with other codes, and to recognize alternative travel modes such as bike lanes.

Commissioner Glass asked if the changes will cause any additional burden to be placed on businesses and property owners. Ms. Dreaney said the vast majority of the update involves cleanup and clarifications. Section 14.60.090 clarifies the circumstances for dedication of rights-of-way, but does not change the preexisting requirements.

Commissioner Glass noted that there are changes relative to sight lines and speed limits and asked what will govern them in place of the code. Ms. Dreaney said the sections in question are proposed to be moved to the development standards section because they involve dimensions; the requirements are not proposed to be deleted or revised.

Commissioner Simas referred to page 4 of the memo and the issue of private roads and asked what the driving philosophy is behind the proposal. Ms. Dreaney said the intent is to clarify that if something is private it is a road and if something is public it is a street. In the same sentence, the reference to adjacent lots is increased to nine to reflect state law. Short plats, under state law, can have up to nine lots, so any road within a short plat is a private road; the city does not want public streets within a short plat.

Answering a question asked by Chair Northey regarding section 14.60.090, Ms. Dreaney said the city has not previously required the dedication of right-of-way to accommodate franchise utilities. The city cannot simply require the dedication absent a nexus with an identified need. Typically, franchise utilities are located well within existing easement areas. Chair Northey questioned taking land from private developers for the benefit of franchise utilities, which are not government entities. Ms. Dreaney said she would look into that issue further.

Commissioner Larrivee asked why the landscape and buffer requirements were proposed to be taken out of the same section. Ms. Dreaney said she was unsure what the buffer requirements were, but agreed to research it and come back with an answer.

Commissioner Simas noted that the definitions section does not include a definition of franchise utility. Ms. Dreaney agreed that there should be one.

Chair Northey suggested that the question of discretion relative to when the city seeks to ask for the improvements and when it does not is begged somewhat by including the word “may” in 14.60.090. She asked about the logic of keeping the general as opposed to saying “shall” or specifying under what conditions the city will require the improvements. Ms. Dreaney said the issue is one of the top three most difficult issues for Development Review to deal with. Requiring developers to give something to the city is important, but is always done with a great deal of legal review. She said she has asked the city attorney for a special review of the section for that reason. Using the word “may” gives the city some leeway, though all underlying constitutional requirements must be met before imposing such conditions.

Chair Northey observed that in the same section reference is made to “official city documents.” She asked what constitutes an official city document, and which takes primacy in the event of a conflict. Ms. Dreaney said official city documents would certainly include anything adopted or officially recognized by the City Council. Chair Northey suggested there should be a clearer definition included.

Chair Northey referred to Section 14.60.100 and the proposed deletion of the dedication requirements for sensitive areas and asked why. Ms. Dreaney said the requirements are covered by the Land Use Code.

Chair Northey called attention to Section 14.60.180 and the requirement to accommodate site loading needs onsite. Ms. Dreaney said that also is consistent with the Land Use Code. The Land Use Code allows for a waiver of the requirement under certain circumstances.

Chair Northey also referred to Section 14.60.210 and the allowance made to waive the requirement for underground wiring in conduit for street lighting. Ms. Dreaney explained that in the case of a lot under application is bordered by lots that are developed with lines above ground. It does not necessarily make sense to require undergrounding for a single lot.

Chair Northey suggested that by codifying bike lanes and shared bike lanes as a potential use, which would require setbacks and the like, along with broadening the range of potential mitigations to include transit and traffic control devices, property owners and developers could find themselves facing additional costs and complexities.

Commissioner Larrivee asked if commercial use as a term includes multifamily residences, and Ms. Dreaney allowed that it does.

Commissioner Larrivee called attention to Section 14.60.060 and the phrase "...the director may impose conditions necessary to mitigate..." and asked what it means. Ms. Dreaney explained that the city does not require conditions, rather it requires the imposition of conditions.

Commissioner Simas said the phrase sounds very unilateral. In a situation where there is a development that needs traffic mitigation, there may be a series of options that could be used, and the section as worded makes it appear that the conversation will be one-sided.

Commissioner Tanaka said ultimately the decision made will be a political one. Where an impasse is reached, someone will have to break it, and that person should be the director. The city has an excellent track record of negotiating with developers, but where an agreement cannot be reached, there must be a method for moving forward. Ms. Dreaney added that there are appeal processes in place, and said developer may appeal any condition. The approach is only rarely used, however, because the city as a practice seeks to find a solution that can work for everyone.

Commissioner Larrivee called attention to Section 14.60.100.B and asked if "non-motorized easements" is a legal term. He was told by Ms. Dreaney that it is and that it includes everything that is not for vehicle easement access.

Referring to Section 14.60.110.G, Commissioner Larrivee asked why frontage improvements

would even be required if they will cause significant adverse environment or safety impacts. Ms. Dreaney said the city has an obligation to keep careful records and notes relative to what is required and why; the section gives the city the authority to waive actions for environmental or safety reasons.

Ms. Dreaney said the process of outreach will run concurrent to the review by the legal department. Traffic Operations Division Assistant Director Laurie Gromala suggested it would be a good idea to schedule another study session with the Commission following the legal review and the public outreach process prior to the public hearing.

C. EIS Consideration for 2009-2020 TFP

Capital Programming Implementation Manager Eric Miller informed the Commissioners that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Transportation Facilities Plan was filed on January 22 and discussed it with the Commission the evening of that same day. The comment period will extend through February 23; to date no comments have been received, but some are expected before the comment period ends. Staff intends to comment on the DEIS.

Chair Northey said there were some findings expressed in the DEIS that are significant and which may affect the project list.

Commissioner Larrivee referred to page 1.2.1 and the statement made that the scope of the environmental analysis should focus on the potential impacts on several resource areas. He asked why an environmental justice component is not included in the EIS process, suggesting that it would be in the best interests of the city to move in the direction of tying all transportation efforts more closely to other issues going on in the city. Mr. Miller pointed out that the DEIS includes a Title VI assurances section that covers how those types of issues are addressed in the review of transportation projects. Beyond that, there is a required scoping period associated with the drafting of the document, which is done every two years or so; any specific comments received or direction handed down to take a stronger look at environmental justice would warrant a specific section.

Commissioner Larrivee said the DEIS presents a good opportunity to integrate transportation efforts more with what else is going on in the land use planning arena. Too often social justice is overlooked as an integral part of the overall process and seen just as something to be overcome.

Chair Northey observed that the environmental justice element came out the concern that major infrastructure projects could have disproportionate negative impacts on economically disadvantaged groups. It brings more awareness to the process.

Department of Transportation Director Goran Sparrman said the city has historically done a very good job of integrating transportation and land use planning, but has not always done as

good a job in looking at some of the social issues. The process to update the TFP occurs every two years, and social justice should be addressed more fully in the next update.

Commissioner Larrivee pointed out that the city's Needs Update, which is produced every two years by the human services division, has consistently identified the lack of transportation as a barrier to services in the community.

Commissioner Tanaka called attention to the second page of the memo and the statement made that one way to address potential future concurrency conflicts would be to change the concurrency methodology. He suggested that the statement as written makes it appear that if the city does not like the answer it gets with the current method it will simply change the method. Mr. Miller explained that the methodology for determining concurrency is outlined in city code; the standards are predicated on policies housed in the Comprehensive Plan. The city could elect either to change the methodology or the policies, both of which require a public process. The projection is that in four MMAs growth by 2020, even with the proposed projects, congestion will exceed the standards. Changing the methodology would be just one way of dealing with the issue.

Mr. Sparrman said if the concurrency standard is not met, the city must deny building permits for additional growth. The projection shows that by 2020 the city could have problems in four MMAs. Changing the standard would not be done just to get to a number the city would like to see. The previous changes to the methodology were done to better reflect the environment the system was operating under. Looking down the road, there are a lot of unknowns. The state legislature has already approved legislation that requires cities to start moving toward a multimodal concurrency system; Bellevue's current system is based entirely on motorized vehicles passing through intersections. The current work program does not include making changes to the concurrency system, but likely will be in the next few years.

Chair Northey commented that 2020 is not as far away as it used to be and the issue will need to be addressed sooner rather than later. There is heavy congestion coming and the city will need to tackle it head-on as a quality of life issue.

Mr. Sparrman clarified that congestion problems in one MMA does not equate to systemwide congestion problems. Some MMAs have very few intersections, so an MMA could fail based on issues with a single intersection that is bad for two hours per day. At the same time, failure of an MMA could in fact reflect a systemwide failure. That is a strong argument in favor of taking the broader multimodal perspective. The current approach limits the city's response to building capacity improvements. In residential areas, it is known the people would rather have more bicycle lanes and better sidewalks rather than additional turn lanes at intersections, which is why staff recognizes the need to take the wider view.

Chair Northey said the finding that the Bel-Red area could see a one hundred percent increase on some roadways should not be taken lightly. She said she would like to know which

roadways are referenced.

Chair Northey observed that the DEIS indicates noise will exceed the city thresholds along certain roadways under both alternatives; that is another quality of life issue the city should be paying attention to. Some capital investments may be necessary to provide protections against noise.

Chair Northey also noted the DEIS states that eleven projects may impact wetlands or wetland buffer areas. She said it would be good to know if the impacts will be big or small.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Larrivee, Chair Northey suggested the Commission could take a couple of different approaches. One would be to ask staff to add some of the issues to the Commission's work program. She said her preference would be to write a letter to the Council outlining the issues of concern to the Commission. A third approach would be to seek more specifics about the issues and use the information to potentially modify the TFP recommendation.

Commissioner Glass asked where comments on the DEIS go. He was told by Mr. Miller that comments on the DEIS itself are formally submitted to the city's environmental coordinator in the Development Services department. The comments are often copied to the transportation department which drafts responses to the comments, which are built into the FEIS.

Commissioner Larrivee said it appeared that the Commission could submit a formal comment regarding the DEIS, or outline concerns in the transmittal memo that goes directly to the City Council. Mr. Sparrman pointed out that comments submitted regarding the DEIS must be responded to and included in the FEIS. Ultimately, a final decision will be made by the Council.

Commissioner Larrivee expressed interest in drafting a transmittal memo that would at the very least outline the Commission's concerns.

Mr. Miller said there are multiple planning processes ongoing in the city at any given time. He said staff is preparing to comment on the DEIS with the suggestion that a project be added to the TFP project list. The project at the intersection of 156th Avenue NE and NE 24th Street was on the candidate project list, but staff in July 2008 recommended that it not go forward because of the ongoing BROTS update work with Redmond. The project was a recommendation of the Bel-Red corridor study.

The specific project staff now wants to see included is an eastbound right-turn lane on NE 24th Street to 156th Avenue NE. Redmond and Bellevue are still negotiating a successor to the BROTS agreement, but it appears that none of the projects will be recommended for inclusion in a new agreement. For the most part, BROTS appears to be headed toward becoming a series of projects that fall right on the city limit line, primarily on 148th Avenue NE.

The intersection in question is fully within Bellevue, and the LOS benefit is significant in that it moves the intersection from a failing grade to something that is just under the failing mark. The key point is the great reduction in intersection delay. There are eleven Metro transit routes using the intersection. There is also a high potential for redevelopment on the Uwajimaya property to the south; having the project on the list will help the city make its case during the development review process.

D. Ped-bike Transportation Plan Draft Report

Senior transportation planner Franz Loewenherz explained that the plan formulated by the Transportation Commission was forwarded to the City Council. The Council then forwarded it on to the Planning Commission for the Comprehensive Plan process. With that process completed, the plan is now before the Council for a final decision. On February 9 the Council reviewed one of the last topics of discussion, namely the 140th Avenue NE project. Alternative alignments and preliminary design concepts have been discussed. The Council made it clear to staff that their desire was to delete the entire project from the list. On February 17 when staff goes forward with the full Comprehensive Plan amendment, of which the ped-bike plan is one component of the package, the project list and maps will reflect that direction.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested the project will end up happening one way or the other in time because the route is very desirable. The efforts put in by staff will not be in vain. Mr. Loewenherz allowed that the project will remain on the network map, but will be removed from the project list.

Mr. Loewenherz said the report itself is not something the Council will be adopting and is not a regulatory document. It will serve as a means for staff to bring together what resides in a number of areas of the Comprehensive Plan, including the Transportation Element Volume 1, and the Pedestrian/Bicycle Transportation Facilities Plan Volume 2, into a standalone document that will be easier to use by both staff and the public.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested there should be a process by which the more user-friendly document will be synchronized with the various elements that feed into it. He suggested including in the introduction section a picture of a bicycle commuter as opposed to pictures of recreational bike riders.

E. Pro Walk/ Pro Bike Reporting

Mr. Loewenherz said the annual Pro Walk/Pro Bike conference took place recently in Seattle. Bellevue helped to sponsor the event and sent nine transportation department staffers to attend the conference. Commissioner Larrivee attended as well. A great deal of valuable information was presented.

Mr. Loewenherz said engineering, education, encouragement, evaluation and enforcement are

the five “E’s” of transportation planning; they are commonly used in the ped-bike profession to describe how one marries different activities into a single cohesive program.

The staff who attended the conference were looking to see what other jurisdictions are doing to address the ped-bike topics that are of interest to Bellevue. The topics included how to fit facilities into constrained rights-of-way; what should happen at intersections; and how to construct a cohesive network.

Mr. Loewenherz said there is a lot of good work being done in Bellevue and suggested it should be acknowledged. The first of three demonstration sharrows has been created and evaluated on 161st Avenue. On 156th Avenue SE just to the north of Eastgate an advanced stop bar has been installed along with improved signage and a flashing light system that alerts drivers to pedestrians. Bike-actuated signals have been installed throughout the city, allowing bicycles to trip the signal. A rubber sidewalk pilot project has been implemented on NE 10th Street; it has more give to it and hopefully will have a long life. Bellevue does a very good job in construction zones of accommodating all pedestrians by creating temporary ADA facilities.

Attendees got a sneak peak of what is going on at the national level. The last time the AASHTO guide was published was 1999, but in the last ten years a lot has happened by way of design treatments for cyclists. The overarching national principle is that unless otherwise prohibited, accommodations should be made for cyclists.

Seattle has made significant strides in recent years. They recently were acknowledged by the League of American Cyclists as a gold level city. At the conference, it was noted that there have been three important components to the Seattle effort: strong political leadership that resulted in adoption of a complete streets ordinance; an action strategy that includes innovative approaches; and a robust funding package.

The overarching message of the presentation on lane widths was not to be afraid of narrowing lanes. Several examples of 12-foot travel lanes being narrowed to 10.5 feet to add accommodations for bicyclists were shown.

Portland is an exemplary city in a lot of respects, and their efforts were highlighted at the conference. The city has been nationally recognized as a platinum level city, one of only two in the country. The notion of bike boxes, something that is widely used internationally, offer a way to minimize right hook conflicts at intersections by getting cyclists to the head of the line. In some cities, though not in Portland, cyclists are given their own signal systems that allow them extra time to get across. Painted pavement helps to draw attention to cyclists as well and is being shown to make a significant difference.

Portland has implemented some bicycle boulevards that take up the entire travel lane. They include a number of different treatments packaged together, including diverters that force cars to go right or left; wayfinding; and high-intensity activated crosswalk signals.

Both New York and Chicago have mayors that travel the world with an open mind looking to see what works, then come home and are not afraid to implement new ideas. In New York, 9th Avenue is a major Manhattan corridor that has had a buffered bike lane installed; the buffer will ultimately be landscaped rather than just striped as it is currently. Pedestrian islands have been created making the crossing widths only 40 feet instead of 70.

San Francisco has done a lot in a number of areas. They are using the sharrow concept in a variety of different contexts. In some areas they are used where a bike lane would continue if there was sufficient right-of-way; the lanes are narrowed and are well marked to assist in route finding.

In Chicago a number of robust treatments have been implemented. They include ten-foot travel lanes in the downtown area with bike lanes; green-colored bike lanes; bus/bike lanes; rush hour bikeways, and bike route guide signage.

Montreal has twice been voted the best city for cycling in North America. They are using the sharrow template across intersections to alert drivers to cyclists. Through the heart of the downtown where there is a lot of traffic on-street parking stalls were removed to accommodate bike lanes. The city has also implemented a public bike rental program that has helped match demand with supply.

Mr. Loewenherz said a key component of implementing projects is evaluation. Bellevue is making use of counts on off-street paths and is looking at ways to better track ped-bike usage in line with Comprehensive Plan policy PB-2. In California a number of different strategies are being used, including infrared counters for pedestrians and in-lane automated counters for bicycles. Portland State University conducted a study that concluded people will go out of their way to use bike infrastructure. Bicyclists were given GPS units to track their travels. Although only eight percent of the city's streets are equipped with infrastructure for bicycles, the study found that almost half of the trips were taken on those streets where the facilities are located. The study suggests that once facilities are created they will be used. Another study done by Portland State showed an increase in the number of bicycles crossing the city's bridges; when indexed against the number of crashes from 1991 to 2005, it was found there was an decrease in the trend line. The conclusion reached was that the more bikes there are using the grid, the more drivers will be aware of them, improving overall safety.

Bellevue has produced a bike map and other kinds of maps, including a downtown pedestrian map. Seattle has produced a number of neighborhood maps; they have also given out free collapsible carts to people for use on pedestrian and transit shopping trips. The interactive school share program identifies walks to nearby schools from any given starting point.

In Washington, D.C. a bike share pilot program has been launched. King County is also exploring the potential for a similar program. In Portland, those who call the city seeking

assistance with how to get around by bicycle are visited by someone on a bike who helps show the person how to get around.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested it would be helpful for the Commissioners to have in hand all the workshop documents referenced in the presentation.

Commissioner Glass commented that Seattle has made a great deal of progress in improving its bicycle network. They are now engaged in converting some parking stalls on some streets to bike parking. The action is needed because parked bikes are taking up too much space on the sidewalks.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Chair Northey said she was approached by a citizen at a recent workshop focused on how to influence boards and commissions. The person said it is difficult to get a point across in only three to five minutes when issues are complicated. The Council has initiated a limited timeframe to keep their meetings to a reasonable length. The Commission, however, should consider extending the per-person communication period.

Commissioner Larrivee observed that the Commission already has the right to extend any person's speaking time. He recommended continuing with that option instead.

Chair Northey asked to have the issue added to the agenda for the next Commission meeting.

Chair Northey alerted staff to the fact that the I-90 trail has some serious root buckling issues that could be a potential safety matter.

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. David Plummer, 14414 NE 14th Avenue NE, noted that during the presentation on LIDs did not include any information about how costs for projects are determined, nor any information about whether the costs are for acquisition or ownership. Neither the RCW or the Bellevue city code require or exclude the inclusion of ownership costs. The staff also did not explain how it is determined what portion of the total project costs should be assigned to the property owners within the LID and what portion should be assigned to the general public. How the ratios are determined should be made very clear to the public. One question to be answered is whether or not the public becomes members of a separate LID if any portion of the cost of a project are assigned to the public, thereby having the right of participating in the LID and filing appeals. Staff should more clearly explain how the total project costs are determined, whether the costs are lifecycle costs, and how the total project costs are allocated to the LID participants, the general public, and other entities or funding sources.

12. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None

13. REVIEW CALENDAR

A. Commission Calendar and Agenda

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

B. Public Involvement Calendar

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Northey adjourned the meeting at 9:18 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

Date