CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

March 13, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:	Chair Simas, Commissioners Bishop, Jokinen, Lampe, Larrivee, Tanaka, Zahn
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:	None
STAFF PRESENT:	Kevin McDonald, Kristi Oosterveen, Eric Miller, Andreas Piller, Department of Transportation
OTHERS PRESENT:	None
RECORDING SECRETARY:	Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Simas who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Larrivee who arrived at 6:34 p.m.

3. STAFF REPORTS

Senior Planner Kevin McDonald called attention to a map and a spreadsheet included in the desk packet indicating the location of human service providers in the city and the region. He said the intent is to overlay the locations on the Frequent Transit Network to see the ease with which people can access the providers by transit.

Mr. McDonald reminded the Commissioners that at the end of the work on the Downtown Transportation Plan there were a number of items referred to the Downtown Livability Initiative for further discussion. He noted that one of those items, the integration of bicycles and other wheeled users into the pedestrian corridor, will be discussed by the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC at its March 19 meeting.

Mr. McDonald invited Marina Arakelyan, project manager for the NE 4th Street extension project, to provide the Commission with an update regarding the project. Ms. Arakelyan said the project has been in design for quite some time. The project involves a five-lane roadway with two lanes in each direction, a center two-way turn lane, sidewalks and a planter strip on each side, and bike lanes. The first phase of the project, the section between 116th Avenue NE and the Burlington Northern/Sante Fe corridor, is in construction. The second phase of the

project will connect NE 4th Street with 120th Avenue NE.

Ms. Arakelyan said the first phase construction is going well. One constraint that has had to be addressed is the 72-inch King County sewer line that runs along the west side of the rail corridor. The need to maintain a certain clearance above the pipe is what has determined the profile of the roadway. Even though the rail corridor profile is being lowered by four feet to accommodate the new roadway, there will be a 13 percent grade.

The city is still negotiating for the right-of-way needed for the second phase of the project.

Answering a question asked by Chair Simas, Ms. Arakelyan said the intent is to have pedestrians on the rail corridor trail cross over NE 4th Street via a bridge.

Ms. Arakelyan said the Phase II project will impact a part of the Best Buy building. They intend to expand to the north to accommodate for what will be lost and they have submitted a permit application.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bishop, Ms. Arakelyan said the 120th Avenue NE project will pick up again in April and is scheduled to be completed by June.

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

5. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Lampe reported that he and Chair Simas met recently with Councilmember Lee to talk about the Commission's work plan. He said Transportation Director Dave Berg and Mr. McDonald attended the meeting as well. Councilmember Lee encouraged the Commission to consider new ideas while moving into the CIP process, including an increased emphasis on bicycle facilities.

Mr. McDonald said in looking forward to the Commission's annual retreat consideration has been given to having a representative from Puget Sound Bike Share to talk about the program currently being implemented in Seattle, and a representative from the Cascade Bicycle Club to talk about the outreach efforts the club is doing on the Eastside.

Commissioner Bishop said he is a member of the Institute of Transportation Engineers and noted that lately there has been a lot of consideration given to how transportation planners should think in the coming years about the idea of autonomous vehicles, particularly how they will change views about safety, capacity and parking.

Chair Simas reported that he attended the March 4 meeting of the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce where the focus was on King County's transportation initiative that will be on the

ballot in April. He said that is another area that is ripe for education and review. The legislature has failed to act so King County is stepping up, though many feel the solution should rest with the state. If the initiative fails and the state does not act, King County Metro will be making service cuts.

6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Phil Moser, 4420 145th Avenue SE, spoke on behalf of the Newport Way Sidewalk Committee. He asked the Commission to assist in prioritizing the sidewalks along Newport Way from Somerset to 150th Avenue SE. The project is currently in the Transportation Facilities Plan as TFP-255. Currently there are sidewalks that connect Factoria with Somerset, but the sidewalk ends at Somerset. What is needed is a sidewalk that will connect Tyee Middle School, the Newport Way library and the South Bellevue Community Center, all of which are important public facilities that generate foot traffic. Sane adults are afraid to walk there, and sane parents will not let their kids walk there. The segment is also unsafe for bicyclists. If the city wants the public to use public facilities, and if the city wants to encourage people to get out of their cars, then the city has the responsibility of providing safe walking facilities. While the project has a high priority rating in the pedestrian/bicycle plan, the problem is there are 69 other projects in the plan that are also rated high priority. Bellevue has no mandated prioritization scheme. Policy TR-79 serves as a guiding policy as it lists the elements to be used in setting priorities, the first four of which are safety, access to activity centers, linkages to transit and school buses, and completion of and connection to planned pedestrian facilities. Those elements put the Newport Way sidewalk project at the top of the list. Other jurisdictions have a system that assigns points to projects to assist in prioritizing them. Kirkland's active transportation plan assigns points to about 20 specific conditions, including access potential, missing sidewalks and school walk routes, existing conditions, and fiscal considerations. Seattle's pedestrian master plan has three main components: pedestrian demand, corridor function, and equity. The segment of Newport Way that lacks sidewalks is an accident waiting to happen and TFP-255 should not just be a high priority, it should be the highest.

Mr. Jim Baker, 13314 SE 42st Place, voiced his support for the comments made by Mr. Moser. He said the need for sidewalks along Newport Way has been a priority from his standpoint for the past 40 years. He said he previously served as scout master at the Methodist church and the troop were safer riding their bikes on 285 miles along Oregon Highway 101 than they are riding on Newport Way for a mile and a half.

Mr. Eric Dawes, 15365 SE 49th Place, said he sits on Santa's lap every few years to ask for sidewalks on southbound 150th Avenue SE to the south of SE 46th Street. He suggested that the Newport Way sidewalk project should be ranked higher on the list, but the need for sidewalks on 150th Avenue SE is also great. Traffic on the roadway travels faster than it should and those who walk along the roadway are not safe.

Mr. Randy Brown, 14018 SE 42nd Street, agreed with the comments of Mr. Moser. He said

the Somerset Community Association is anxious to see the sidewalk project completed. Nineteen of the homes in the Community Association abut Newport Way and the property owners understand that the city will likely need to acquire some of what they own to create a sufficient amount of right-of-way. The property owners will not be a roadblock or barrier to accomplishing what needs to be done, which is to widen the roadway and include a bike lane and sidewalk.

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Larrivee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tanaka and it carried unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. 2015-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Capital Programming Programming Administrator Kristi Oosterveen explained that the TIP is updated annually. She sought from the Commission an endorsement of the list as the proposed 2015-2020 TIP for the April 10 public hearing.

The Commissioners were reminded that the projects for the TIP list come from the Comprehensive Plan, long-range facility plans, the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP), the Capital Investment Program (CIP), regional projects in which the city may want to participate provided funding is available. The TIP is not revenue constrained. The adopted TIP is sent to the Puget Sound Regional Council and to the Washington State Department of Transportation for coordination of local and regional transportation programs. Projects in the TIP are eligible for state and federal grants.

Ms. Oosterveen said the projects on the list are divided into four categories: Section I, projects included in the adopted 2013-2019 CIP; Section II, unfunded projects included in the 2013-2024 Transportation Facilities Plan; Section III, other unfunded local projects identified or scoped by completed alternative analyses and planning or pre-design studies; and Section IV, other regional or outside agency led projects in which the city may choose to participate financially.

The proposed TIP list includes six new projects, including the Newport Way sidewalk project highlighted during Petitions and Communications. The project was adopted into the TFP after the TIP was approved in 2013. The other five new projects staff would like to see included as they are candidates for the next TFP and CIP updates.

Ms. Oosterveen said nine projects on the list were proposed for deletion: five in Section I which are slated to be substantially complete by the end of 2014; and four in Section III, some of which are being combined with other projects and some of which are no longer necessary

for one reason or another. One project is highlighted for transfer from Section I to Section II because funding for the second phase of the project has not been secured.

State law requires a public hearing be held for the proposed TIP. The TIP must be adopted by the City Council by the end of June and submitted to the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Puget Sound Regional Council before the end of July.

Commissioner Bishop called attention to project 70, Transit Now/Downtown Circulator, and said it was his recollection that the project is no longer part of the plan for the downtown. Mr. McDonald said an interlocal agreement between the city and King County is still on the books, and the Downtown Transportation Plan has not yet been adopted. Technically, the project is still part of the plan and will be until such time as it is repealed by the Council. Ms. Oosterveen stressed that the project is listed in Section III, which houses projects the city may want to be involved in if funding is available. It likely will be marked for deletion in the 2015 update of the TIP.

Commissioner Bishop referred to project 77, NE 6th Street subsurface arterial, which was added to the list by the Council in 2013, and asked why it is shown for deletion. Ms. Oosterveen said the proposal to delete the project from the TIP is based solely on the fact that it lies outside the six-year window of the TIP.

Capital Programming Implementation Planning Manager Eric Miller added that the Commission is free to recommend deleting project 70 and retaining project 77. He noted that the subsurface arterial project is not in the adopted TFP.

Commissioner Bishop proposed retaining project 77 on the list. Commissioner Lampe agreed with the recommendation of the staff to delete it given that it falls outside the six-year TIP window, unless the project is anticipated to be the subject of a study in the next five years. Mr. Miller said the TIP is often referred to as a wish list and as such it can include a wide range of projects. There are no dollars tied to project 77 and it could be retained on the list. It is in the adopted TIP and it would take a recommendation of the Commission to pull it out.

Mr. McDonald said the project is in the beyond 2030 category, in the draft Downtown Transportation Plan, as a capacity project, but allowed that an analysis of the project could be done at any time between now and then. Commissioner Bishop said his position all along has been that something will need to happen during the current development cycle or the project will be preempted forever. It should be retained on the list.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested that if the project is retained it should be shown as a study or feasibility analysis. Commissioner Bishop concurred.

Chair Simas said the subsurface arterial concept is intriguing but is so amorphous it would be unfair to ask the city to do a study on it. There is no specific idea yet of what the project is

intended to accomplish and how it would operate, nor is there any idea of how it would fit into the overall network.

Commissioner Lampe agreed that little is known about how the subsurface arterial might function or even what it might look like. NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street in the downtown area are heavily used for getting traffic in and out. To the extent the subsurface arterial might provide a significant amount of relief, it would be premature to dismiss the project out of hand.

Commissioner Zahn said it was not clear to her how to determine which projects should be included on the list, or how to decide what number should be put into the unsecured funding column. She asked if there is a protocol to be followed in assigning a dollar value to projects. Ms. Oosterveen said the numbers represent staff estimates of project cost. Having dollars attached to projects helps the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Puget Sound Regional Council to understand the magnitude of the various projects. The TIP is not financially constrained, so projects can be shown in full Cadillac build out format. By way of illustration, it was noted that the $10 million shown for the Newport Way sidewalk project represented all the bells and whistles, including a sidewalk and bike lanes on both sides, turn pockets, and retaining walls; that may not be the project description that ultimately gets built.

There was consensus to remove project 70 from the TIP and to retain project 77 for purposes of the April 10 public hearing.

B. 2015-2021 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Update

Mr. Miller explained that the CIP is updated every two years and coincides with the city's biennial budget process. The budget survey conducted every two years has been completed and the information is slated to be shared with the Council at its budget workshop on March 24. The finance department has led the Council through a revalidation of the Budget One outcomes in a recent study session. The Council will hold three public hearings on the budget, the third of which will follow release of the City Manager's preliminary budget and the preliminary CIP in the early October timeframe. The budget and the CIP are typically adopted by the Council at its first meeting of December at the end of the year.

Commissioner Bishop asked if the Council has separate public hearings for the general budget and the CIP. Mr. Miller said in the past there has been one hearing for all things budget related.

Commissioner Zahn asked what criteria is used by the staff in deciding which projects to recommend for inclusion in the CIP. Mr. Miller answered that criteria endorsed by the Commission is used in establishing the project list in the TFP; the criteria is reevaluated every cycle and include roadway and intersection projects, level of service, safety, multimodal factors, whether a project is identified in a regional plan or an interlocal agreement with another city, and the competitiveness of a project to generate outside funding. In addition to

the rankings based on the criteria, input from the public and the Commission are weighed before any final decision is made. The 12-year TFP serves as the primary pool of projects for consideration in the CIP Update.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Larrivee, Mr. Miller said in the past the Commission has used a variety of options for seeking input from the public, including an open house event.

Mr. Miller said the news with regard to the early revenue outlook is not overly encouraging. There are, however, several caveats. If King County Proposition 1 is approved by the voters in April, the sales tax will be increased by one-tenth of one percent for a ten-year period, and there will be a $60 vehicle license fee. The revenues from those sources would be used largely to support transit but also to fund roadway and other transportation improvements. The distribution would fall to the city level and Bellevue's allotment would be as much as $3.4 million per year, or $34 million over ten years. While not insignificant, it is not enough money to fund all of the projects on the TFP. The Council could also take action to raise property taxes. Absent passage of Proposition 1 or local Council action, no new revenues for transportation projects are expected until 2018 and beyond. The CIP budget is traditionally heavily front loaded, and the Council has borrowed funds to make that possible. In 2013 the Council issued $80 million in general obligation bonds and the funds were used in part to pay off some short-term line of credit borrowing and in part to address some of the front loading. The bonds will, of course, have to be paid back. There have been some program and project cost increases, and some grant monies may be lost if projects are not executed in a timely manner. With East Link ramping up there are some synergistic opportunities to get some projects accomplished.

Commissioner Lampe asked if the Bellevue Way HOV lane falls into the category of synergistic opportunities. Mr. Miller allowed that it could have. He said about a year ago there was a lot of conversation about doing that project jointly with Sound Transit. The Council, however, chose not to join the HOV project to the East Link project so the opportunity is gone.

Commissioner Bishop asked if there has been any initial cost estimating for the HOV lane from the Y to the park and ride. Mr. Miller said the full project is indicated as fully funded in the TFP and is project 54 on the TIP list. He noted that the total project cost is estimated at $23.4 million, with Sound Transit's contribution to the project $4.5 million. Commissioner Bishop said he could not see how Sound Transit could construct the trench by the Winters House without closing a lane on Bellevue Way, and if that is the case there could be a mitigation issue under which the HOV lane would be built first and used as a general purpose lane during the construction phase.

Mr. Miller explained that there are 39 projects and programs in the current CIP, 13 of which are ongoing programs for which the staff is proposing the status quo with an inflation

adjustment to the annual allocation. The major maintenance program received an enhancement in the last update that took it from $600,000 per year to $900,000 per year, plus inflation, but staff intends to seek an additional increase to the allocation given some big ticket items that need to be addressed, including some signal replacements and some failing rockeries. The ongoing program that addresses ADA issues in the city currently is funded at $100,000 per year, and the staff intends to propose an increase in the allocation. Of the 26 discrete projects in the current CIP, four have been or will be completed in 2014. Another four are in a holding pattern having completed their scoping, one of which is the NE 6th Street extension. The work done to date has made it clear that the city will not move ahead with the project without state or other outside funding. Not all of the $1 million allocated to the study has been spent; the balance of the funds will be held back to address questions that might come up down the road.

Commissioner Zahn noted that some projects are under way but not yet completed and asked if the total project budget shown in the CIP continues to be listed or if only the amount left to be spent is shown. Mr. Miller said the total cost is shown for all active projects until they are completed. As project costs are updated, the new numbers are shown.

Mr. Miller said enhancements will be proposed by staff to six projects. For some the funded phase has been completed, such as pre-design. One of the projects, SE 16th Street, is currently funded through 60 percent design and the enhancement to be proposed is to advance the project to at least full design. Two projects that were previously shown as early implementation projects need additional funds to keep them moving forward.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Zahn, Mr. Miller explained that prior to initiation of the Budget One process, a base allocation number would be determined and then projects were selected that fit within that number. Under Budget One the focus is more on priorities and is far more iterative. Chair Simas added that even so the Commission has the responsibility of coming up with the best list possible within reason. Often projects on the list are broken into component elements, and at times the scope of projects gets changed. Commissioner Zahn suggested that approach is very inefficient.

Commissioner Lampe noted that a number of projects in the Bel-Red area relate to the East Link project. Mr. Miller agreed and noted the need to get ahead of East Link given that many of the projects will be far more expensive to accomplish once the rails are in place and active. Projects associated with East Link are not just in Bel-Red, however, and in each case there will be some negotiation with Sound Transit regarding funding.

C. Comprehensive Plan Update: Transportation Project List Consolidation

Assistant Transportation Planner Andreas Piller briefly reviewed the reasons behind consolidation of the transportation projects. He explained that there are a total of 779 projects in the six Transportation Facilities Plans and the Bel-Red subarea plan, excluding the downtown subarea plan projects that will be included after the fact, and the pedestrian/bicycle

projects.

Mr. McDonald said adoption of the Comprehensive Plan updates is not anticipated to occur until the first quarter of 2015. It is likely that the Transit Master Plan will be completed first and the projects from that plan will be housed in the Transportation Master Plan the consolidation work is intended to create.

Mr. Piller explained that the intent of the matrix in the memo was to show to the extent possible the full range of actions being considered. He highlighted the projects that have been completed and therefore proposed to be removed; the one project that is outdated and therefore proposed to be removed; and the ongoing projects and the projects not yet complete that are proposed to be consolidated, conditionally removed, held up for further review, or retained without change.

Mr. Piller said the large project list means that a detailed assessment of each project is not feasible in the timeframe that has been set out. He said some of the columns will likely be removed and not included in future spreadsheets, and the texts and notations associated with the recommendations will be truncated. He asked for comments on how to approach the volume of projects.

Chair Simas voiced support for management by exception. He said the process as laid out is logical and straightforward, so the projects brought to the attention of the Commission should simply be those about which staff are conflicted. The Commissioners concurred.

Mr. McDonald said the Planning Commission will be presented with the final product along with the Transportation Commission's recommendation for approval.

D. Comprehensive Plan Update: Transportation Element Policy Amendments

Mr. McDonald said the Comprehensive Plan update process will include working through all 156 policies contained in the Transportation Element. He explained that his memo outlined the major areas in which staff was recommending making changes. The changes fall primarily into two major categories: changed circumstances since the current plan was adopted, and the need for forward thinking approaches such as consolidating projects into a Transportation Master Plan that can be updated independent of the Comprehensive Plan, and the concept of multimodal mobility level of service and concurrency. The Transportation Element is on track to be forwarded to the Planning Commission during the summer months.

Commissioner Bishop pointed out that Puget Sound Bike Share is a specific non-profit organization focused on sharing bikes. He questioned the appropriateness of including in the Comprehensive Plan the name of a specific organization. Mr. McDonald agreed, noting that all references to transit agencies in the Comprehensive Plan are generic and not specific. Using a more generic reference to the bike share program would be in order.

9. OLD BUSINESS

With regard to the Newport Way sidewalk project highlighted by the public, Commissioner Zahn explained that the issue came to the front at the Life of a Transportation Project workshop held at the library. Those who attended were very appreciative of having a better understanding of the process and being able to engage in some Q&A dialog at the end. Many went away from the meeting armed with knowing how to advocate for projects.

10. NEW BUSINESS - None

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

12. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None

13. REVIEW COMMISSION CALENDAR AND AGENDA

Mr. McDonald reminded the Commissioners about the March 27 Transit Master Plan workshop that will be led by Senior Transportation Planner Franz Loewenherz. Members of other boards and commissions have been invited to attend. No Commission business will be conducted at the meeting.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Simas adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission — Date

Kevin McDonald — April 10, 2014

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission — Date

Ernest Simas — 4-10-14