CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

June 25, 2009 Bellevue City Hall
6:30 p.m. City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Northey Commissioners Glass, Jokinen, Larrivee, Simas,

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Kiel, Tanaka

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Krawczyk, Kevin McDonald, Nancy LaCombe, Dave Berg, Department of Transportation

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. by Commissioner Simas who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Chair Tanaka and Commissioner Kiel, both of whom were excused.

3. STAFF REPORTS

Senior Project Manager Paul Krawczyk reported that bids for the NE 8th Street project between 96th Avenue NE and Lake Washington Boulevard were opened recently. He said the bids were very favorable, 30 percent under the engineering estimate.

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

5. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Northey acknowledged the passing of Councilmember Noble. She noted that he began his career with the city serving on the Transportation Commission. She said he was a very fine man and will be missed.

Commissioner Larrivee said Councilmember Noble had significance in the community and his passing represents a huge loss for the community.

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. West Lake Sammamish Parkway Project Update

Mr. Krawczyk reminded the Commissioners that the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project is divided into five segments, any one of which could be constructed under the current budget. The public was asked to indicate which segment should be given priority. The project is focused at expanding the roadway, primarily on the west side, holding the east side fairly close to its current configuration. The project design allows for a four-foot shoulder on the west side with opportunities for buffers of between two and five feet; in some places, particularly in the north section, there will not be any buffers. There will also be a ten-foot-wide multiuse trail. At the intersection with NE 34th Street a left-turn pocket is contemplated; that would require some widening at that location.

Since 2005 there have been several design activities, the most important of which was the Council's action to add a $1 million supplemental budget. That allowed the pre-design analysis to get under way sooner than originally planned. That analysis included the hiring of an engineering consultant, completing a topographic survey of the entire roadway, doing geotechnical and pavement analysis along the roadway, identification of wall locations and major design elements, the drafting of three project newsletters and the conducting of two project open house events. The analysis culminated with the development of a proposed project implementation plan.

Mr. Krawczyk said the most recent newsletter included a call for comments on which segment should be given top priority. The survey results were strongly in favor of the south segment. There was also a fairly broad distribution of support for that section, followed by the north section.

The south end contains several items of importance. It begins north of the intersection with SE 34th Street and continues to the roundabout near I-90. The top reasons given in the survey for supporting the south section were the installation of a traffic signal at SE 34th Street and support for activity centers such as Vasa Park, Sunset Park, Sambica, and Sunset School. The survey also pointed out that the south section has the highest traffic volumes.

Mr. Krawczyk said the pre-design stage is wrapping up and approval is being sought to begin the final design stage of the first phase of the project. The estimates show that approximately $1.5 million is needed to fully fund the first phase, assuming the south end is the first phase.

Commissioner Northey asked if staff believes the funding gap will be less than expected if the trend toward lower bid prices holds. Mr. Krawczyk said staff are looking at addressing the funding gap. Ways to close it include seeking additional funding, identifying cost reductions through value engineering, and reducing the length of the south section. Getting lower bids would also allow help to that end. The schedule calls for finishing the design and permitting phases to allow construction to begin in 2011, by which time the bidding climate may be very different.

Mr. Krawczyk said the results of the survey and the recommendation of the Commission will be taken to the City Council on July 27. There approval will clear the way for final design and permitting. With construction beginning in 2011, the south section will be completed by 2012.

Commissioner Glass asked if the engineering survey resulted in professional recommendations with regard to which phase is most in need of work. Mr. Krawczyk said a pavement expert was hired to study the project length. His report indicated that the pavement in each section needs to be fixed in some way or replaced. Clearly there are some sections that have settled worse than others, but all of the pavement is showing significant signs of wear. The report from the expert did not indicate any areas that are in immediate danger of catastrophic failure.

Commissioner Simas asked what the process will be followed the development of a recommendation by the Commission. Mr. Krawczyk said staff is seeking from the Commission a recommendation to begin the design process. That will usher in a very detailed look at conditions along the roadway from an engineering viewpoint, including structural, access and safety. Assuming approval from the Council to continue, the design process will kick off in August. Some preliminary design work will be wrapped up by the end of the year. By then it should be possible to begin the discussions about how to respond to specific engineering issues. Concrete solutions to address the problems will be developed in 2010 before the plan is finalized and construction is started.

Commissioner Simas opened the floor to comments from the public.

Ms. Jan Holler, 3273 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, said her house faces the proposed new signal. She said it will be very difficult to get in or out of her property safely with the light in place. She agreed that the signal is needed for the greater good of the community, but since the proposal was first made there has not been a meeting with property owners who will be affected by the stoplight to explain just how they will be impacted. She volunteered her home as a place to hold a meeting with affected property owners. The process should not go forward until everyone in the community has a chance to understand what the project will mean for them personally.

Ms. Helen Mandic(?) said she is a neighbor of Ms. Holler's and has the same concerns.

Mr. Mike Rose, 3273 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, said he had been awakened earlier in the day by a survey crew that was working all the way down next to the fence, not in the roadway. When asked, they indicated that they had been asked to survey beyond the 30-foot right-of-way on private properties, which is what they were doing. He voiced concern over possible motives not known to the residents and the possibility of having property taken away from local property owners for the roadway project.

Ms. Kathleen Hodge, 10047 Main Street, spoke representing most of the residents at the Astorian condominiums, and the Meydenbauer Bay Neighborhood Association. She noted that both groups are in favor of the waterfront park. She noted her appreciation for the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement with material that is fairly easy to understand. She said she has lived on Main Street for the past eight years and has watched the traffic grow steadily. Attempting to turn left onto Main Street at any time during the day has become an increasingly difficult challenge. Many elect to drive around to the intersection of 100th Avenue SE and Main Street where there is a signal. Regardless of which plan is chosen for the park, 100th Avenue SE must be kept open. The traffic numbers in the EIS are suspect, especially in regard to street usage by vehicles. She said her own survey indicates far different numbers during the peak hours. Fridays have the heaviest traffic flow, and the numbers are nearly twice those shown in the EIS. It must be concluded that the report underestimates the traffic count. It would be an interesting exercise for the Department of Transportation to simply close 100th

Avenue SE for a day and observe the results. Traffic gridlock from day one of the park will give the park a bad reputation. There is no mention in the EIS of the additional traffic on Main Street that will result when tolls are imposed on SR-520 and when the property at Main Street and Bellevue Way is redeveloped. There is also a condominium building under construction on Main Street, the traffic from which is not shown in the EIS. Traffic on 100th Avenue SE can neither turn left or right due to gridlock. The closure of 100th Avenue SE would only add two cars per minute to the intersection of Main Street and 100th Avenue SE, according to the report; the report goes on to say that would cause no appreciable or significant delay, but the fact is the intersection is already gridlocked. Using the signal at 102nd Avenue NE is not a viable alternative as a right-turn there must wait for pedestrian traffic; often only one vehicle per signal cycle can facilitate the turn. The diagrams and studies do not account for any pedestrians crossing at that intersection, but the number of pedestrians will increase as the new condominiums are completed. A traffic count was done in April 2008 on Lake Washington Boulevard, which becomes Main Street at 100th Avenue SE; the traffic count was made during spring break for the Bellevue School District and cannot be considered accurate. Current traffic counts must be used, and the city should be honest with local residents regarding future expectations. Improvements must be added for the traffic users who will want to use the park. There should be no closure of 100th Avenue SE. Parking should be developed on the Bayview site that is owned by the city.

Mr. Rod Binden, 8424 NE 6th Street, Medina, spoke representing the Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club. He stated that 100th Avenue SE provides a vital traffic link to the shoreline residents of Meydenbauer Bay and the south Bellevue community. It provides a traffic bypass for the extreme congestion on Main Street and the intersection of Main Street and Bellevue Way. The EIS does not address that. The upcoming imposition of tolls on SR-520 will increase the congestion levels significantly as residents of West Bellevue, Clyde Hill and Medina choose to take I-90 to avoid the tolls. In addition, the utilities located under 100th Avenue SE include the grange sewer pumping station and its lines, which pumps sewage from the entire north side of Meydenbauer Bay up to Main Street, as well as storm sewer, fire mains, water and gas lines. Estimates from competent underground utility contractors indicate that the relocation of the important utilities associated with the closure of the street would add some $5 million to $10 million to the cost of the park. The EIS barely touches on that fact and does not address cost at all. The tax dollars would be better spent on the park itself or elsewhere in the city budget. Historically, 100th Avenue SE was one of Bellevue's first streets, providing access to and from the Meydenbauer Bay shore for arriving and departing ferry passengers prior to construction of I-90 and SR-520 bridges. One of the stated goals of the City Council's planning principals is to recognize the heritage of Meydenbauer Bay from the time of the Native Americans, explorers and early settlers to the industries of whaling, ferrying, and the current residential and pleasure boat moorage. By keeping 100th Avenue SE open, access will be retained for the easterly portion of the Bayview Apartments property, which would make an excellent parking lot for park visitors. The citizens of Bellevue and the properties with direct access to 100th Avenue SE have been enjoying the access since well before the city even existed. The closure of the roadway would be a taking of property rights of the affected individuals by diminishing their rights of access. In effect it would represent the exercising of eminent domain by the city, which is contrary to the city's own statements that it will not use the process in the building of the park. The vital link to the waterfront should be preserved and enhanced, not closed.

Mr. Craig Berlingame, a resident of West Lake Sammamish Parkway, said he shares a driveway with the Holler family. He said he had the same questions previously raised by them. He said he was not aware of another example in the city where five driveways enter an intersection that is about to be controlled by a signal. He said one of the improvements needed

on West Lake Sammamish Parkway is noise reduction; the concrete surface is very loud, and overlaying it with quiet asphalt would be appreciated by the local residents. That is the approach Redmond took with their section of the roadway and the difference was very noticeable. The south section of the Parkway was overlaid with asphalt about five years ago and the residents there have enjoyed some noise relief as a result. The next section north might be moved higher on the priority schedule and be allowed the same treatment.

Ms. Anita Scoug-Neal, 9302 SE Shoreline Drive, reminded the Commissioners that the Comprehensive Plan calls for the preservation of capacity. It is interesting to note that 100th Avenue SE above Main Street is considered a minor arterial, and it is surprising that consideration would be given to closing that street. There have not been any recent traffic counts; the ones in the EIS cannot be relied on. Residents have been wondering all along where the consultant got the data included in the EIS. With regard to safety, what is needed is a pedestrian overpass at 100th Avenue SE. The parking-related information in the EIS was taken from a survey done in 2007; that survey was conducted between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. and completely missed the peak periods. More needs to be known about the possible future development of the area. If the Chevron area gets redeveloped, an additional 500 or so parking spots will be needed; the Kentucky Fried Chicken location on Bellevue Way would need about the same. All of that will increase traffic flow in the area. Most who live south of Main Street have 101st Avenue SE and Main Street as the primary access. When 100th Avenue SE is removed from the grid, the LOS rating degrades from C to F at 101st Avenue SE and Main Street. The proposal shows a signal at every intersection along Main Street which would only increase the gridlock. The proposal to eliminate the left-turn lane at Main Street and Bellevue Way is unacceptable. Removal of the existing parking on Main Street is also unacceptable and Old Bellevue would no longer be Old Bellevue.

Mr. Krawczyk noted for the record that he had received and made available to the Commissioners an email received from Pauline Fox.

Commissioner Simas asked the residents living near the intersection of SE 34th Street and West Lake Sammamish Parkway if they would prefer to see the south segment addressed first or at a later time. By show of hands, the majority indicated they would prefer to see the segment addressed in a later phase of development.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested that regardless of what action the Commission recommends regarding the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project, staff should be asked to look at what has been done with regard to the SE 34th Street intersection, explain why the outreach efforts taken do not appear to have worked, and to outline what can be done moving forward. Mr. Krawczyk said the outreach effort was originally intended to gain consensus. The process ultimately reached conclusions that everyone could live with. Since then, the focus has been on actual design based on the conclusions. That is why the topographic surveys and engineering reports have been done. There is support for the signal at SE 34th Street but there remain concerns over the mitigation that will need to be included. Staff are committed to working with the residents to address the impacts. They survey teams have been directed to work only within the right-of-way; there are no ulterior motives in play.

Commissioner Larrivee said there should be full transparency with regard to the actions taken by the city. To that end, the residents should have been informed about the survey teams and their specific task. Mr. Krawczyk said the city typically sends out letters to affected residents to notify them about survey activity. However, the current survey work has been ongoing since 2008. Mr. Krawczyk agreed that an updated notice could have been sent out.

Commissioner Simas asked if staff had a recommendation as to which segment should be addressed first. Mr. Krawczyk said the estimates and evaluations were all based on the survey results which favored the southern segment. For all stated reasons, staff sees the logic in first addressing the south end.

Commissioner Northey said she uses the Parkway every day she drives her daughter to school and both jogs and rides bikes along the roadway. She said the project is essential. At the same time, it will be essential to make sure property owners maintain access when the traffic signal at SE 34th Street is installed. While that may be a major challenge for the engineers, there is reason to think that a good solution will be found. The Commission should recommend an action that will keep the momentum of the project moving forward by asking the Council to provide funding that will facilitate final design.

Motion to recommend the south segment as the first segment for which to begin final design was made by Commissioner Northey. Second was by Commissioner Jokinen.

Commissioner Glass indicated his support for the motion. He said of the approaches outlined by staff for reducing the project costs, value engineering should be avoided. There is already approval for the cross section and there is little if anything value engineering could yield. He said he would support seeking more funding or shortening the segment if need be.

Commissioner Larrivee echoed the comments of Commissioner Northey. He urged staff to come back to the Commission with information regarding specific plans and proposals for the intersection at SE 34th Street.

Commissioner Simas added his support for addressing the south segment first. He suggested it could be the more complex and beneficial segment. He urged the public to remain engaged in the discussions as the project moves forward through the design phase.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. Meydenbauer Bay DEIS Transportation Elements Briefing

Capital Project Manager Nancy LaCombe observed that Main Street is already a congested roadway that will become more congested in the future with or without the park. She said there are limited mitigation options available and that for each one there are tradeoffs. The tools are focused on vehicles, and just what the park timeline is remains an unknown. Nothing of what is being addressed will be implemented very soon; there are budgeting issues, the master planning process, and specific project elements to be worked out.

Ms. LaCombe said at the public hearing held on June 23 residents expressed the same concerns voiced during Petitions and Communications: 100th Avenue SE is an escape route when 101st Avenue SE cannot be used; 100th Avenue SE was one of the first streets in Bellevue; community concerns are not being heard; emergency access must be addressed; there should be a plan for diverting traffic if 100th Avenue SE is closed; there are concerns about how the traffic has been studied; Main Street could become a bypass route if tolls are imposed on SR-520; 100th Avenue SE should remain open to provide access for watercraft down to the water; 100th Avenue SE should be open for ADA access; the EIS fails to recognize that traffic is already bad; and the traffic impacts are understated.

Currently there are signals on Main Street at the intersections of 100th Avenue SE, 102nd Avenue SE, and Bellevue Way. The signal at Wolverine Way does not include a leg for traffic to come out on SE 3rd Street.

Ms. LaCombe said the No Action alternative does not envision everything left as it currently is. It is predicated on the park being developed, retaining some of the public piers and increasing the size of the park to about eight and a half acres. Alternative 1 is considered to provide the most environmental benefit given that it daylights most of the creek. It also removes some of the over-water coverage, providing better habitat for fish. Alternative 1A has 100th Avenue SE open, while alternative 1B has the roadway closed.

Alternative 2 daylights less of the creek, and reduces over-water coverage but to a lesser degree. The alternative includes some additional community buildings, cafés and vendor kiosks. As with Alternative 1, Alternative 2A has 100th Avenue SE open, while alternative 2B has the roadway closed.

Ms. LaCombe said several tools are available for assessing traffic congestion, including traffic delay, level of service, and vehicle queue. Level of service is an overall intersection performance measurement. Signalized intersections are rated A if they have traffic delays of less than ten seconds, and F if they have delays of more than 80 seconds. Stop controlled intersections are rated A if traffic waits for less than ten seconds and F if the wait is longer than 50 seconds.

On Main Street the distance between intersections is very close, ranging from 150 feet and 350 feet. The distance on 100th Avenue SE between NE 1st Street and Main Street is approximately 350 feet.

With regard to how traffic counts are done, Ms. LaCombe said typically count tubes are put down at three different times of the year; an attempt is made not put down tubes when kids are out of school and there is less traffic, and they are not put down during the holidays. The tubes are in place for a full week. These three counts are used to calculate the overall average traffic.

The existing delay for the Main Street corridor is about 175 seconds. That takes into account all the legs on all the intersections. Without the park project, the projected traffic increases will move the delay up to 203 second. Under the No Action plan, by 2020 overall delay will increase to 222 seconds. If 100th Avenue SE is closed, the delay will increase to 277 seconds.

Ms. LaCombe shared with the Commissioners graphics depicting existing conditions at the intersections in the corridor and compared them to the projected 2020 levels of service under the various alternatives. The Commissioners were also shown snapshots from the sim modeling for the alternatives.

Ms. LaCombe stressed that to date no mitigation measures have been recommended to be put into place, but several have been reviewed. The list includes installation of a signal at NE 1st Street and 100th Avenue SE to improve the level of service; all-way stops at different locations, including Main Street and 101st Avenue SE, and Main Street and 102nd Avenue SE; a signal at Main Street and 101st Avenue SE associated with the closure of 100th Avenue SE; elimination of the left-turn lane at Main Street to northbound Bellevue Way; extending the right-turn lane at Main Street and Bellevue Way; adding westbound turn lanes at Main Street and 101st Avenue SE; extending the through/right lane at Main Street; installing a roundabout at Main Street and 101st Avenue SE; and turning 100th Avenue SE into a one-way northbound street.

The DEIS does not include any mitigation measures other than installing a signal at 100th Avenue SE and NE 1st Street. Possible mitigation measures would help with traffic flow but each movement would take away from the character of the street. The DEIS does not specifically recommend closing 100th Avenue SE or leaving it open. The purpose of the DEIS is to review the various alternatives, some of which do contemplate closing the street.

Ms. LaCombe said the environmental document concludes that traffic on Main Street will increase with or without the park. There will be some increase in traffic related to the park improvements. The document also states that modifications made to improve traffic flow will degrade the character of Old Bellevue.

Comments on the DEIS are due by July 20. The anticipated date for the issuance of the EIS is November 2009. The Commission's continued involvement will occur in the fall after the EIS is released and into 2010 through review of the alternatives and the development of a recommendation.

Commissioner Larrivee asked if there is an easy way to describe the motivation for closing 100th Avenue SE beyond the obvious of affecting the character of the park. Ms. LaCombe said there are a variety of tradeoffs that that must be considered. The closure of 100th Avenue SE, while it will take away some access, will provide a different non-motorized environment for the park, specifically fewer motorized/non-motorized conflicts.

Commissioner Glass asked if having tolls on SR-520 was taken into account. Ms. LaCombe said the 2020 horizon does not contemplate any tolls on SR-520.

Commissioner Glass said his experience with the intersections in question does not mesh with the snapshots taken from the modeling work. He said congestion in the area is quite intense, but the modeling work does not indicate that. Southbound traffic on Bellevue Way can back up to the north of Main Street at times. Ms. LaCombe allowed that the individual snapshots do not necessarily capture the flavor of the area congestion. Traffic backups will increase or decrease as the signals change from green to red. She said the best way to show what the peak hour backup looks like would be to run the model live for the Commission. The model is based on existing volumes and projections for future volumes along with calculated assumptions relative to where people will want to travel.

Commissioner Jokinen said from his experience directing traffic in high-volume areas the modeling is accurate. Sometimes backups occur on one leg but not on another. If additional signals are installed in Old Bellevue, pedestrian access could be improved across Main Street.

Answering a question asked by someone in the audience, Ms. LaCombe explained that Main Street is not the vehicular-focused corridor; that role belongs to NE 2nd Street. With NE 2nd Street taking the load, Main Street can become the primary pedestrian and bicycle corridor while still allowing for vehicular traffic. The same applies to Main Street in Old Bellevue proper.

Noting that the Meydenbauer Bay park is intended to be a city park and not a neighborhood park, Commissioner Larrivee said people coming to the park from outside the immediate Old Bellevue area will likely come by car. He said combining that thought with the notion of taking away capacity and giving Main Street a non-motorized focus could be problematic. Ms. LaCombe commented that there is no off-ramp on I-405 at Main Street, so traffic coming from

out of the area to the park will be using NE 2nd Street or Bellevue Way. The 2020 traffic volumes in the modeling account for an increased level of traffic coming through Main Street to access the park amenities based on the various alternatives.

C. Downtown Bellevue Wayfinding Kiosks

Senior Planner Kevin McDonald said three or four years ago the city developed the downtown wayfinding manual and a series of sign types appropriate for different locations in the downtown. The wayfinding signs are intended guide pedestrians, bicyclists and motor vehicles through the downtown and to various destinations. Directional signs have been installed that point pedestrians to various attractions. Public access signs have also been installed that indicate public easements through private developed parcels, sometimes called midblock connections.

Wayfinding kiosks have also been installed. They are somewhat larger in size and are intended to include quite a lot of information such as maps. The downtown wayfinding kiosks include a unique art component approved by the Arts Commission. The new kiosks are located in four locations in the downtown: 1) by the Bellevue Arts Museum; 2) in front of the California Pizza Kitchen; 3) in Compass Plaza; and 4 in front of Meydenbauer Center. The new kiosks replaced those installed ten or fifteen years ago that proved difficult to maintain and were dated.

Commissioner Larrivee asked if the wayfinding manual is intended for use in the downtown only or if similar signs could be used outside the downtown. Mr. McDonald answered that while the manual was developed for the downtown, there is nothing preventing similar wayfinding signs from being installed in other parts of the city.

Mr. McDonald said the maps contained in the kiosks in the downtown are the same in each kiosk. On the side of the kiosk opposite the map is an information panel that contains unique text and photos that relate to the specific kiosk location.

Mr. McDonald said the maps are printed with north at the top, which is the traditional method. He asked the Commissioners to comment, however, on whether the maps should in fact be printed with a focus on the direction the viewer is looking. Commissioner Glass said his preference would for the traditional maps with north at the top. Commissioner Simas concurred, but Commissioner Larrivee indicated support for the “heads up” approach. Commissioner Jokinen said it did not matter to him one way or another.

Commissioner Glass asked how easy it is to update the panels in the kiosks. Mr. McDonald said that can be accomplished quite easily, though updating them will not necessarily be inexpensive. The idea is to change out the panels periodically as new development and attractions come to the downtown.

D. Multimodal Concurrency Pilot Project Briefing

Mr. McDonald reminded the Commissioners that the city along with King County Metro and the Puget Sound Regional Council is concluding a multimodal concurrency pilot project with downtown Bellevue as the focus. The concept is to explore new ways and measures to incorporate transit, non-motorized transportation, and telecommuting into the concurrency management program. The work was been funded by the state legislature in 2008; the legislature directs the PSRC to look at transportation concurrency in growth centers with an eye on incorporating a multimodal approach during the peak hours.

As currently regulated, concurrency relates to whether development permits should be issued based on whether or not the trips generated by the new development can be accommodated by the city street system. The work done would expand the definition of concurrency beyond what has been called regulatory concurrency to include planning concurrency, or a wider look at the relationship between land use and transportation, and implementing multiple modes of transportation to move people within the area of study.

The primary focus of the work relates to transit and how it can be integrated into concurrency. The current approach in Bellevue does not explicitly take transit service into account, though transportation modeling assumes background levels of transit service. Currently, concurrency is determined by calculating the volume to capacity ratio of certain intersections and comparing that ratio to the adopted level of service standards.

Integrating transit has been a challenge. The report that will be issued soon uses seat capacity and transit service frequency as measures. A methodology has been developed for integrating the transit service metrics with calculations for concurrency. One of the problems found, however, is that many jurisdictions, including Bellevue, would be hesitant to utilize transit as part of the regulatory concurrency process given that transit services are outside their control. The study has found that the city can be a good partner with transit providers by working to ensure good traffic flow that will improve the speed and reliability of transit; that can be done by installing transit signal prioritization, the creation of HOV lanes, and enhancing pedestrian facilities to assist in getting to and from transit services.

Mr. McDonald said the pilot project has made it clear that the region itself, because of its connected relationship between transit and where people live and work, could do a better job of planning for and accommodating growth and transit services. The project also found that the analytical tools that quantify pedestrian and bicycle modes are limited; no good model exists to determine how many people will use a section of sidewalk or a bike lane if constructed.

The PSRC is scheduled to deliver the final report to the legislature's joint transportation committee in July. The PSRC will appear as the author of the report, though King County Metro and Bellevue were significant partners.

Commissioner Larrivee agreed that having transit services outside the control of local jurisdictions is problematic when it comes to planning and determining concurrency, and determining how transit operations and capital costs are allocated throughout the region. If a city is willing to invest in transit infrastructure, some preference should be given by the transit authority to that city relative to how the transit vehicles are allocated. Mr. McDonald said that issue is identified in the report as a major issue. Transit services require adequate funding to maintain desired levels of service, and one of the things talked about was having an impact fee paid by developers to secure transit services to be used by the residents or employees of developments as they come online.

Commissioner Jokinen asked if there are any cities that use transit as a planning tool. Mr. McDonald said there are some. Redmond has a similar multimodal approach in determining total trips and concurrency. Bellingham and Spokane have both taken a stab at a similar approach. Some cities in Florida and California utilize a multimodal concurrency approach; San Francisco has a transit impact fee.

Mr. McDonald said he would make a copy of the final report available to the Commission

when it is available.

9. OLD BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Glass recalled that when the Commission worked on the ped-bike plan there was talk of including an education aspect focused on educating people about available routes and different aspects of being a pedestrian or bicyclist in Bellevue. He asked what has happened to that idea. Deputy Director Dave Berg said his recollection was that the Commission had made a recommendation for a capital education project. He allowed that verbiage within the plan itself focuses on the need for education and enforcement. The capital portion did not make it through the budget process. Since then the budget has continued to ratchet down and some significant budget cuts have been implemented. The work to update the bicycle route map has been completed.

Commissioner Glass said his preference would be to focus on an education program that would make motorists aware of how to behave around bicyclists; too few motorists understand or fully appreciate the laws in that regard. Mr. Berg indicated his appreciation for such a program, but stressed that there simply is no money available for implementation. If grant dollars become available, Bellevue will certainly go after them; traditionally, grants focused on ped-bike safety have been used for elementary school education programs.

Commissioner Larrivee commented that Bellevue is at a pivotal point in trying to move to a more ped-bike friendly environment, including in its urban areas, and away from the traditional focus on vehicular movements. Educational programs would be a good match with the new direction.

Commissioner Larrivee shared with the Commission the experience of a colleague of his who recently as a bicyclists was struck by a car at the 148th Avenue NE/SR-520 interchange. He said his friend was at the time using the only available bicycle facility in the area, which is the sidewalk; he was crossing with the right-of-way but was hit by a vehicle whose driver was not paying attention. His long-term prognosis is in doubt in that a brain injury was involved. Commissioner Larrivee encouraged the Commission to remain steadfast in keeping 140th Avenue NE in focus as a north/south bicycle corridor. The 148th Avenue NE corridor is fundamentally incompatible with serious bicycle throughput.

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

12. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 14, 2009

Commissioner Larrivee called attention to the fourth paragraph on the second page and noted that the reference to “I-4” should read “I-405.”

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

13. REVIEW CALENDAR

A. Commission Calendar and Agenda

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

Mr. Krawczyk reported that the passing of Councilmember Noble triggered the canceling of the Council's regular meeting on June 22. The Council intends to let its calendar slip to include the fifth Monday of the month, June 29. Accordingly, a Commissioner will need to be present to present the recommendation regarding the Traffic Development Code.

B. Public Involvement Calendar

14. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Simas adjourned the meeting at 9:13 p.m.

_____ _____

Secretary to the Transportation Commission Date

_____ _____

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission Date