



DATE: August 1, 2013
TO: Bellevue Transportation Commission
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SUBJECT: Downtown Transportation Plan Update: Miscellaneous Curbside Uses
<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/downtown-transportation-plan-update.htm>

INTRODUCTION

The update to the Downtown Transportation Plan addresses mobility issues and challenges and supports Downtown growth and urban livability looking out to 2030.

On August 8, 2013, a Downtown mobility topic will be **Miscellaneous Curbside Uses**. These uses do not include on-street parking which is addressed separately. This topic does include Freight/Parcel Loading Zones, Taxi Stands, and Passenger Pick-Up/Drop-Off. Staff will review community input and preliminary recommendations for Commission consideration and comment.

Council direction

Council has directed that work on the Downtown Transportation Plan Update consider on-street parking and the related curbside uses of the right of way. Council Principle #1 addresses this scope topic as follows:

Plan for multiple modes of travel within, to and from Downtown Bellevue

*Develop an innovative multimodal transportation strategy for Downtown Bellevue that updates the existing Downtown Subarea Plan project list. The recommended strategy should consider and incorporate the emerging and anticipated mobility needs of **motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, taxi patrons and carpool/vanpool riders, and support the transport, parking and loading needs of employers, residents and businesses.***

Community Input

Through outreach for the Downtown Transportation Plan Update, and the Downtown Livability Initiative, the community has provided comments related to the miscellaneous uses that occur at curbside. Some have observed that parked delivery vehicles and moving vans may block a travel lane or use the center turn lane from time to time; and that in some locations taxi stands are needed to support car-free residents and visitors. Spontaneous passenger pick-up and drop-off occurs throughout the Downtown.

Curbside Parcel & Freight Loading/Unloading

Generally the types of “freight” delivery that occur in Downtown Bellevue are associated with:

- Large scale commercial uses such as grocery stores and department stores – the big Safeway, QFC or Macy’s delivery trucks
- Large scale moving services for residential or commercial customers – large trucks at the curbside for several hours loading or unloading furniture
- Small scale/quick deliveries to commercial uses such as restaurants and convenience stores – picture a bakery truck delivering pastries to a coffee shop, or a newspaper van stopped to stock a paper box
- Small scale parcel deliveries for residential or commercial customers – the UPS or FedEx driver who pulls up to the curb to pick up or drop off a package

Within Downtown, large-scale loading activity typically occurs within designated off-street locations, will smaller deliveries occurring on-street at designated load zones, and also randomly at the curb or in the center turn lane. Typically, the larger the scale of the delivery or the longer the time it takes, the activity will occur on-site and the circulation system accounts for this – and it is required through the development review process.

Policies and Codes

The Transportation Element has only one policy regarding the location of loading activity, and the Downtown Subarea Plan is silent.

Policy TR-102. Require that new private development provide for freight loading and unloading on-site rather than on the public right-of-way.

The **Land Use Code** provides direction on integrating loading facilities onto a development site as part of the development review process.

20.20.590 Parking, circulation and walkway requirements.

K.4. Loading Space.

a. General. A property owner shall provide an off-street loading space which can access a public street. The number and size of loading spaces must be equal to the maximum number and size of vehicles which would be simultaneously loaded or unloaded in connection with the business conducted on the property.

b. Loading Space Dimension.

i. Standard Requirement. Each loading space must be a minimum of 10 feet wide and 55 feet long. Where a loading space is adjacent to an arterial, the property owner shall provide an additional 40-foot maneuvering length.

ii. Reduction. The Director of the Development Services Department may reduce required stall length and maneuvering length if the property owner demonstrates that

known delivery vehicles can park and maneuver within the proposed loading and maneuvering spaces so that no part of a vehicle using or maneuvering into the loading space projects into a public right-of-way, access easement or private road.

*c. Waiver. If the property owner demonstrates that the development has and will have no loading needs, the Director of the Development Services Department may waive the requirements of paragraphs K.4.a through b of this section. **Additionally, the Director of the Development Services Department may waive the requirements of paragraphs K.4.a through b if the applicant has obtained a Right-Of-Way Use Permit approving on-street loading.***

Bellevue City Code (BCC) addresses activities within the City's right-of-way

11.23.025 Stopping, standing or parking.

A. In addition to provisions of the Washington Model Traffic Ordinance adopted by Chapters [11.80](#) or [11.82](#) BCC, no person may park or leave any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, upon the traveled portion of the roadway in such a manner as to block or obstruct the flow of vehicular traffic.

1. Subsection A of this section does not apply to the driver of any vehicle which is disabled in such a manner and to such extent that it is impossible to avoid stopping and temporarily leaving the vehicle in such a position. The driver shall nonetheless arrange for the prompt removal of the vehicle as required by subsection B of this section.

2. Subsection A of this section does not apply to the driver of a public transit vehicle who temporarily stops the vehicle upon the roadway for the purpose of and while actually engaged in receiving or discharging passengers at a marked transit vehicle stop zone, or to the driver of a vehicle when actually engaged in the collection of solid waste, recyclables, or yard waste under authority of the city, so long as the vehicle is not parked or left for a longer time than reasonably necessary.

11.24.090 Permits for curb loading zones.

The traffic engineer is authorized to issue special permits for the purpose of allowing a vehicle to load or unload merchandise at a curb loading zone used exclusively for that purpose or at other locations where parking, stopping, or standing is prohibited subject to the terms and conditions of such permit. Such permits may be issued either to the owner or lessee of real property alongside the curb or to the owner of the vehicle and shall grant to such person the privilege as therein stated and authorized by this section. It is unlawful for any permittee or other person to violate any of the special terms or conditions of any such permit. (Ord. 2922 § 20, 1980; Ord. 2533 § 23, 1978.)

14.30.080 Right-of-Way Use Permits. D. Type D – Long-Term and Permanent.

1. Type D permits may be issued for use of right-of-way for activities for extended periods of time but which will not physically disturb the right-of-way.

Curbside Passenger Pick-Up/Drop-Off

Part of the messy urbanism of a vibrant mixed-use urban center is the transfer of pedestrians to and from vehicles. While there is no specific “best practice” guidance for managing this activity, some major cities and especially airports provide for active loading or unloading in designated curbside areas with signage indicating that unattended vehicles will be cited and/or towed. In other urban centers, particularly in the Bay Area, the phenomenon of the “casual carpool” is taking hold. A casual carpool forms when drivers and passengers meet – without specific prior arrangement at designated locations, although Twitter is catching on to connect drivers and riders. Sfcasualcarpool.com describes a good casual carpool location as having a combination of features including: near public transit, close to common commute routes, high population density, and room for parking.

Currently Bellevue has no policy or code provisions that address personal vehicles used for passenger pick-up and drop-off activity. For hire vehicles are covered in **BCC 11.23.026**. On a case-by-case basis in the process of development review, pick-up/drop-off space may be designated in a curbside pullout.

Curbside Taxi Stands

In Bellevue City Code; **Chapter 11.23 Parking**, there is a section regarding taxi stands:

11.23.026 For hire vehicle stopping, standing, parking.

The operator of a for hire vehicle shall not stop, stand, or park such vehicle upon any street at any place other than in a designated taxicab stand. This provision shall not prevent the operator of a for hire vehicle from temporarily stopping in accordance with other stopping, standing, and parking regulations at any place for the purpose of and while actually engaged in the expeditious loading and unloading of passengers. This provision does not apply to vehicles or companies that have leases or other such agreements with the city for use of its rights-of-way. (Ord. [6082](#) § 2, 2012.)

Currently there are no designated on-street taxi stands in Downtown Bellevue, although there are some known locations where taxis congregate - on the east side on 108th Ave NE north of NE 6th Street for instance. The practice of “...temporary stopping...for the expeditious loading and unloading of passengers...” appears to meet the current needs of the community without significantly impacting vehicle traffic in most situations. This current practice relies on a combination of thoughtfulness of the taxi drivers who use good judgment in stopping to pick up passengers, and the patience and courtesy of other drivers who yield a few seconds or go around during loading and unloading of passengers.

The question arises as to whether this practice will remain viable as Downtown Bellevue grows and there is a greater demand for taxi service. Typically, taxi queuing areas – taxi stands - are established where taxis wait to pick up passengers, particularly at major attractions such as

hotels, convention venues, shopping/entertainment centers, and transit/light rail stations. Taxi stands generally work as a first-come, first-served queue, with the taxicab at the front of the line serving the first passenger to arrive, then each taxicab behind it moves ahead.

Miscellaneous Uses of Curbside Space

Park(ing) Day

Parkingday.org describes PARK(ing) Day as an annual worldwide event where artists, designers and citizens transform metered parking spots into temporary public parks. A number of creative temporary PARK(ing) Day installments have popped up in Seattle and Vancouver in recent years. In San Francisco, and coming soon to Seattle, some of the most popular PARK(ing) Day locations have become “parklets” and are permanent components of the streetscape that include bicycle parking and café seating. In Bellevue there have been no Park(ing) Day installations, but a Right-of-Way use permit would be required for the temporary use of a parking space.

Bicycle Parking Corrals

On-street bicycle parking corrals - popular in Seattle, Portland, Tucson, and many other cities - can accommodate several bicycles in a consolidated location. Studies have noted that bicycle corrals may generate more economic activity than a single car parking space because of the greater number of potential customers on bicycles that can fit into a single car parking space.

Bicycle corrals in the place of an on-street parking space would be potential sites for future bike-share docking stations if the Puget Sound Bike Share program comes to Bellevue. Phase of bike share will be implemented in Seattle in 2014. A Right-of-Way use permit would be required.

PRELIMINARY STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff will seek Transportation Commission comments on the following preliminary recommendations:

Curbside Parcel/Freight Loading/Unloading

Recognize that most large-scale and loading occurs on-site, but that some parcel delivery and other quick loading/delivery activity may involve the short-term use of the public right-of-way. The latter is an enforcement issue addressed on a case-by-case basis rather than a policy or code issue.

Status quo provides for integrating on-site loading space and/or creating designated curb space through the process of development review.

- Provide for loading to occur on-site
 - Policy support exists: Policy TR-102

- Code requirements exist: BCC 20.20.590 Parking, circulation and walkway requirements
- No additional policy support or code provisions needed. However, the development review process should ensure that the on-site location of loading docks and circulation provide for expeditious loading. This recommendation would be forwarded to the Downtown Livability Initiative.
- Integrate curbside loading space in development frontage improvements
 - Right-of-Way use permit required for on-street loading
 - Bellevue City Code 14.30.080 covers right-of-way use permits
 - No policy support or additional code provisions needed

Curbside Passenger Pick-Up/Drop-Off

Continue to designate curbside space through the process of development review

- No additional policy support is needed for this administrative requirement
- No additional code provisions are needed
- Monitor “casual carpool” activity
- Encourage integrating 3-minute (or other short time period) curbside pick-up/drop-off zones as frontage improvements for major development projects. This recommendation would be a “handoff” to the Downtown Livability Initiative

Taxi Stands

Establish policy support in the Downtown Subarea Plan and incorporate location criteria for taxi stands. To designate specific locations for taxi stands through the Downtown Transportation Plan is not anticipated, but the policy language and discussion would incorporate locational criteria that would be considered in designating a taxi stand. Preliminary staff recommendations regarding Downtown taxi stands are as follows:

- Establish policy support and location criteria for taxi stands:
 - Located proximate to significant generators of pedestrian traffic, such as a hotel, convention facility, shopping destination, or light rail station
 - Located in the place of on-street parking space(s) where on-street parking would otherwise be permitted or in a designated taxi-stand pull-out
 - Consider off-peak taxi-stands along a street to support the nearby entertainment uses
- Code provisions:
 - BCC 11.23.026 For hire vehicle stopping, standing, parking
 - No additional code provisions needed

Other Curbside Uses

- Allow temporary Park(ing) Day use of a permanent on-street parking space on a case-by-case basis as requested by nearby businesses
 - Policy direction/support desirable
- Allow for permanent bicycle parking corrals to be installed in a permanent on-street parking space on a case-by-case basis as requested by nearby businesses, or as a bike share docking station.
 - Policy direction/support desirable
- Recognize that the temporary curbside parking of maintenance vehicles will occur as needed and where needed
 - No policy direction or code provisions needed
- Moving vans staging at curbside are covered by BCC 14.30.080 Right-of-way use permits and 11.24.090 Permits for curb loading zones.
 - No policy direction or code provisions needed

NEXT STEPS

At the City Council study session on September 23, 2013, staff and representatives of the Transportation Commission will provide a comprehensive overview of preliminary recommendations for Downtown transportation.