CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

July 12, 2012
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:	Chair Simas, Commissioners Bishop, Lampe, Larrivee, Tanaka
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:	Commissioners Glass, Jokinen
STAFF PRESENT:	Paul Krawczyk, David Berg, Eric Miller, Kevin McDonald, Judy Clark, Sean Wellander, Kristi Oosterveen, Department of Transportation
OTHERS PRESENT:	None
RECORDING SECRETARY:	Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:23 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 Bishop, who arrived at 6:56 p.m., and Commissioners Glass and Jokinen, both of whom were excused.

3. STAFF REPORTS

Senior Project Manager Paul Krawczyk said he was continuing to work on putting together a tour of the Bel-Red corridor for the Commission. He asked the Commissioners to confirm their available dates, and urged them to watch the July 16 City Council meeting at which the development group will provide an update with regard to the different developments that are under way in the corridor. Those developments will be highlighted during the field trip as well.

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

5. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Chair Simas reported that he would be attending the July 16 Council meeting to provide an update on the Transportation Facilities Plan.

6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Bruce Nurse, spoke on behalf of the Kemper Development Company, 575 Bellevue Square. He reminded the Commission that he provided input earlier in the year when the work on the downtown transportation plan update began. He said he shared some major ideas for separating cars and pedestrians, including connecting tunnels under streets for cars between parking garages, and underground usage of the Pedestrian Corridor along NE 6th Street. Some have been working to preserve the opportunity to create a portal to an underground passageway starting on NE 6th Street in front of the convention center , passing under the existing transit terminal, and daylighting somewhere on the westerly portion of the street. The potential exists for almost 40,000 vehicles per day to enter the downtown via the tunnel. The approach would allow for HOV, vanpools and possibly even buses to access the center of the downtown without using surface streets. Skybridges offer pedestrians the opportunity to avoid sharing the streets with cars. There should be some development incentives in the Land Use Code to help promote skybridges. The city should be prepared to talk about such options in preparing for the next building boom; at the very least the concepts should be developed and in place when growth occurs.

Ms. Jessica Powers with Wright Runstad and Company, 1201 Third Avenue, Suite 2700, Seattle, encouraged the Commission to prioritize in the TFP a key multimodal project from the citywide 2009 mobility plan. Project RI-131 is not currently recommended for full implementation in the TFP. The project will create an important multimodal connection between downtown, the hospitals, and Sound Transit's East Link nodes in the Bel-Red corridor. The project will compete favorably for outside funding sources and will leverage resources. The Spring District project is moving forward, and Write Runstad recently submitted its Phase I design review package to the city. Other projects in the area include the East Link light rail extension and improvements to the 148th Avenue NE ramps on SR-520. The risk of deferring full implementation of the NE 15th Street project from 116th Avenue NE to 120th Avenue NE under after the TFP window includes increased construction costs, increased congestion for all vehicles at the critical NE 8th Street/I-405 interchange, and undermining growth in the downtown. Right-of-way acquisition for the project is carried in the Sound Transit memorandum of understanding, and by not earmarking the project for full implementation undermines the ability of developers to deliver the highest value projects to the citizens of Bellevue. The Commissioners were urged to consider the benefits the project will provide to the system, and to consider the risks of deferring the project, and to modify the recommendation accordingly.

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

8. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. 2013-2019 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan Update

Transportation Director Dave Berg reminded the Commission that under the Budget One process various results teams have been reviewing proposed budget items. The CIP results team, which is comprised of eight department directors, have come to consensus on a set of projects to be forwarded to the city manager for consideration in his preliminary budget. He noted that over the past couple of years revenues have underperformed the forecasts, so the next CIP will start some $30 million in the hole. Two years ago the same revenue issues were prevalent and it became necessary to reduce all ongoing program levels, and with one notable exception none of the programs have been restored to pre-2011 levels. Caution has been the byword in submitting new project proposals.

Mr. Berg said the package of mobility and infrastructure initiative projects represent a separate package given that they come with a separate revenue stream. When adopted, the package totaled some $299 million, but the revenues have also underperformed the forecasts. In November 2011 the Council signed the East Link memorandum of understanding, committing the city to fund specific property acquisitions; that is putting yet another pressure on the capital resources going forward.

The CIP results team used specific criteria in working through and prioritizing all of the different proposals from all the different departments. Clearly the city must pay off the debt service on the funds borrowed from the Public Works Trust Fund for a couple of projects, and those funds come right off the top. The Sound Transit MOU with its up-front contribution of $100 million is also a high priority.

Capital Programming Manager Eric Miller said the city has applied for a $3.5 million low-interest loan to help with the cash flow issue on the NE 4th Street extension project. It is quite certain that the loan will be approved, and that will change the debt service numbers somewhat.

Mr. Berg said the panel considered ongoing programs in two categories, those related to maintenance or safety, and new infrastructure. In the first category are projects such as major safety improvements, street overlays, minor capital traffic operations, major maintenance, minor capital streets and lighting, and wheelchair ramps programs. In the second category are the neighborhood traffic calming, ped-bike access improvements and neighborhood sidewalks programs. The major maintenance program was scaled back two years ago, but because of the long list of such projects in the queue, the recommendation of the panel is to restore the program to its pre-2011 level.

Several of the discreet projects that are recommended to move forward into the CIP have already been started. The list includes the West Lake Sammamish Parkway Phase I project, the Northup Way corridor, the next phase of the SCATS implementation, East Link analysis and development, and the Downtown Transportation Plan Update.

Mr. Berg shared with the Commission the list of new projects added to the base CIP by the panel. All of the new projects are included in the recommended TFP. A couple of placeholders are included to do some early implementation work in the downtown and in Eastgate. Some funds are earmarked for advancing design work for the HOV lane project in conjunction with East Link along Bellevue Way SE from 112th Avenue SE to the park and ride. One project included on the CIP but not shown in the TFP is annexation area capital. When the city annexed the Eastgate area, King County had a road fund that had been specifically earmarked for the annexation area; those funds were turned over to the city and will be used for near-term transportation capital improvements. The intersection improvements at Lakemont Boulevard and Cougar Mountain Way project is on the list for funding, and funds are included to advance the design work for the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway. Dollars for pre-design work for ped-bike facilities on 108th Avenue NE and 112th Avenue NE, and SE 16th Street between 148th Avenue SE and 156th Avenue SE, are also included.

Turning to the list of mobility and infrastructure initiative projects, Mr. Berg shared with the Commissioners a colored map indicating which projects will see full design, right-of-way acquisition and construction, and which will see only some design work, within the timeframe of the next CIP. Implementation of the development envisioned for the next seven years, including East Link, is the driving factor behind earmarking the mobility and infrastructure initiative projects. Leveraging the East Link investment in conjunction with city investment will reduce costs generally.

Answering a question asked by Chair Simas regarding the mobility and infrastructure initiative projects, Mr. Berg said NE 4th Street extension will come online first. The idea is to be able to bring traffic in from the Bel-Red area and to have multiple entry and exit points to and from the downtown. The city is working with the state on designing ramps to and from the east on SR 520 at NE 24th Street, and is working with the state, Redmond and Microsoft on the SR-520 corridor to the east of I-405. As the Bel-Red area and the downtown continues to develop, other segments will come online, including NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street and NE 6th Street. There is no crystal ball that shows the timing for the various projects. Chair Simas said he has concerns with Phase I of the NE 15th Street/NE 16th Street project, especially given the understanding that Wright Runstad is expected to begin its development soon. The project should be given top priority as things move forward. Mr. Berg said money is earmarked for purchasing needed right-of-way, and there is design money in the mix as well for the near term.

Commissioner Tanaka asked if the funding model is set up to coordinate with Sound Transit and the East Link project. Mr. Berg said the proposal is for the design work to start right away.

Where East Link crosses under the roadway it will be particularly important to make sure all of the horizontal and vertical profiles fit together. The actual construction could happen in conjunction with East Link, but that is less critical than the design work in the near term.

Commissioner Tanaka commented that there are some heavily used roadways serving the downtown area and wondered if new traffic from all the predicted developments may happen much sooner than the timeline indicates. Mr. Berg said the city in fact hopes the development will occur sooner rather than later. That is one reason why design money is being proposed. Projects that have been designed compete better for grant funding.

Mr. Berg shared with the Commissioners the list of projects that did not make it above the funding line in the CIP and included work on the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe corridor, the north/south bike corridor on 164th Avenue NE, master planning work on 148th Avenue NE in conjunction with Redmond, and some preliminary design work on the second phase of the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project.

Mr. Berg said the second public hearing before the Council will be held on July 23. On July 30 the Council will dedicate its entire meeting to hearing the preliminary recommendations from all of the results teams, both operating and capital proposals. The city manager will develop a preliminary budget and present it to the Council in the October timeframe. The Council will then hold a third public hearing in November, and will adopt the final budget in December.

The Commissioners were asked if they would like to weigh in with the Council regarding the recommended leadership team package of projects, and suggested the question could be discussed at the Commission's September meeting in time to inform the city manager's budget.

Answering a question asked by Chair Simas regarding the second phase of the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project, Mr. Berg said the team was reluctant to begin the design process without having an inkling of when there will be enough money to do construction. It has taken a long time to get the project off the ground, and steps should be taken to avoid getting hopes up prematurely.

Commissioner Bishop suggested the critical thing will be to select the next phase so a construction budget can be developed for the next round of funding.

Commissioner Lampe asked if the $100 million in the memorandum of understanding with Sound Transit includes purchasing the Teledesic property. He asked if anything else in the proposed CIP is included in the same bucket of funds. Mr. Berg confirmed that the Teledesic property acquisition is included as are the King County Metro site needed for staging, a parcel along 110th Avenue NE, and some additional property in the Mercer Slough area.

B. Downtown Transportation Plan Update

Modeling and Analysis Group Manager Judy Clark noted that the number of person trips that flow out of the model is based on land use. For the base year, the year-end data from 2010 is being used. At each area of the zone structure within the BKR modeling area, trips from the home end are calculated and assigned to the commercial areas to which they are attracted; distribution is according to the gravity model across the internal area mainly but also to grosser areas outside the BKR area. The total daily person trips are delineated as those internal to the downtown, those attracted to the downtown, and those produced by the downtown. Baseline conditions in the 2030 model includes roadway and transit projects reasonably foreseeable.

Ms. Clark said mode connection is chosen in the theoretical sense by the opportunity. If a person does not have a car, they will most likely be transit dependent. Those with cars have a choice, but they are more likely to take transit if parking costs offset the extra time required to ride transit. The trips are run through the model and assigned to roads or transit, but where there is too much congestion it takes longer for drivers and they may elect to take transit. The model is used to mimic travel volumes in the base year, and the results are compared against actual counts.

Commissioner Bishop noted from the materials that the 2030 daily trips were down. Ms. Clark said some of the internal trips previously counted as vehicle trips were changed to pedestrian trips because of short trips within the downtown.

After being shown the transit figures for the downtown, Commissioner Bishop suggested it would be helpful to also see transit figures for cities comparable to Bellevue.

Ms. Clark shared with the Commissioners the modeling figures for various categories, including home based/other trips, shared ride trips, drive alone trips, transit trips, and attracted daily trips for the horizon year. She noted that trip patterns overall are consistent, but both vehicle and person trips will increase substantially. The vast majority of trips to the downtown are non-work trips.

Senior Transportation Planner McDonald reminded the Commissioners that the Council principles talk about a multimodal strategy for ensuring mobility in the downtown. He said pedestrians certainly are a part of the strategy. There has been a lot of conversation on the part of the Council regarding walking and biking in the downtown. Pedestrian mobility is one of the key principles, and within that topic are roadway intersections along segments or corridors, and in the downtown as a whole. One measure of effectiveness is the intersection crosswalk rating, the components of which are pedestrian delay while waiting for a walk sign, the width and length of crosswalks, the speed and volume of traffic, and the size of the queuing area at the curb.

The community outreach indicated issues and opportunities related to four components of being a pedestrian in the downtown: the experience at intersections, midblock crossings, the sidewalks themselves, and the through-block connections. With regard to intersections, some

of the general comments portrayed the pedestrian as victims of encroaching and right-turning vehicles, the time allowed to cross the street, maintenance of crosswalk striping, and the dimensions of the crosswalks. A focused outreach occurred during the two walking audits which resulted in precise feedback. There was some interest expressed in having an automatic walk phase that would obviate the need for pedestrians to first push a button. Those with mobility challenges look at the wide streets and long crosswalks and would prefer to see an increase in the available walk time.

With regard to existing conditions at intersections, the standard established for downtown crosswalks is two parallel bars eight feet apart. There are some piano key crosswalk markings in Old Bellevue area.

Most of the pedestrian signals in the downtown are pushbutton activated. Signals operators say one reason for taking that approach is to improve pedestrian awareness. The push buttons are also important because under the SCATS system all signals are coordinated and communicating with each other, and when a pedestrian button is pushed the system knows about it; when a button is not pushed, the signal allocates vehicle time differently. An automatic walk phase could be problematic where emergency vehicles are concerned in that it would take longer to cycle through the phase and clear the intersection.

The walk cycle is established to accommodate a walk rate of about three and a half feet per second; some walk faster and some walk slower, and it is the latter group that voices a need for more walk time.

Commissioner Tanaka asked why traffic engineers do not like all-way stops. Mr. McDonald said all-way walks are not overly efficient for moving vehicles. SCATS could probably accommodate all-way walk intersections, and one is being considered for the intersection of 110th Avenue NE near the transit center where there are a lot of pedestrians. It is all about allocating the scarce resource of time, and there are standards to be met relative to levels of service, which are based on vehicles moving through an intersection. A full analysis has not yet been done so there is no recommendation regarding the reallocation of time.

Mr. McDonald stressed the importance of having clearly differentiated paving materials to make the pedestrian areas stand out. Pedestrians will walk where they want to, but such markings highlight the area in which they should be. Intersection geometry is important as well. Curb extensions push the sidewalk into the street, yield a shorter crossing distance for the pedestrian, and allow for more pedestrian queuing space. In the downtown, however, it is not possible to have curb extensions in many locations because the area immediately adjacent to the curb is dedicated to moving traffic; where there is on-street parking, some of the space can be reallocated to pedestrians. Countdown and audible pedestrian signals are being implemented in the downtown in conjunction with phasing out the old style push button signals.

Mr. McDonald said the list of project ideas includes wider crosswalk bars where there is justification for them in terms of demand; enhancing crosswalks with special pavement treatments in select locations; installation of stop bars to provide more space between vehicles and crossing pedestrians; the continued use of SCATS to minimize pedestrian wait times; and incorporate curb extensions where possible.

Commissioner Larrivee commented that at regular intersections there will also be conflicts between pedestrians and right-turning vehicles. Where midblock crossings are concerned, however, there are only the two movements to be concerned with. He suggested that to the extent the usability of midblock crossings, including the use of sky bridges and the like, can be enhanced, overall usability and safety will be improved. He asked what other cities have done to enhance the awareness of drivers making right-hand turns across a pedestrian crosswalk. Mr. McDonald said the Council has directed staff to look worldwide for solutions, and their findings will be reported to the Commission once they are in hand.

C. Neighborhood Sidewalk Program

Program Administrator Kristi Oosterveen explained that a neighborhood sidewalk is any kind of pedestrian facility that can access various neighborhood destinations, including housing, parks, community centers and transit stops. Neighborhood sidewalks address safety and help to promote healthy lifestyles. The initial Neighborhood Sidewalk Program was established in 2007 during a supplemental CIP process and was given an initial funding of $3 million. A list of 29 candidate projects were brought before the Commission to review, the majority of which were projects that had not fared well under the CIP ranking process, or which were too expensive for some of the smaller programs. Three of the sidewalk projects on the list were completed with the initial available funding. The 2011-2017 CIP includes just over $1.5 million that needs to be allocated to sidewalk projects. The proposed CIP includes continued funding of the Neighborhood Sidewalk Program.

Ms. Oosterveen shared with the Commissioners details about the first three projects completed under the program: SE 26th Street/SE 24th Street to West Lake Sammamish Parkway; Somerset Avenue SE/SE Somerset Boulevard to 136th Place SE; and 128th Avenue SE/SE 25th to SE 32nd Street. She noted that the current candidate list includes 37 projects, 26 of which were on the original list; three of the projects are in newly annexed areas. The list of candidate projects included a six-foot sidewalk along the west side of 140th Avenue SE; missing sidewalk segments on 128th Avenue NE between NE 2nd to SE 7th Place; and a five-foot sidewalk on 123rd Avenue NE in front of the International School.

The project scoring criteria are much the same as used for the CIP and TFP with the addition of housing density destination network and balancing factors. Ms. Oosterveen reviewed the criteria with the Commissioners.

With regard to public involvement opportunities, Ms. Oosterveen said staff would like to post a

page on the intranet regarding the Neighborhood Sidewalk Program, include an article in the monthly *Neighborhood News* publication, and include something on the new traffic safety services blog called *Safe Streets are Safe for Everyone*.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested there could be some confusion on the part of the public among the various programs. The Neighborhood Enhancement Program and its associated criteria are well defined, as is the big formal TFP process. The Neighborhood Sidewalk Program appears to be somewhere in between those and there could be confusion as to how the public can be involved. He said he favored the idea of having a more formal prioritization process with set criteria used to rank projects, and opportunity for public comment that could shed additional light on project needs.

There was agreement in favor of the criteria as presented. There also was agreement to focus on the projects that scored 49 or more points in the ranking exercise.

D. SR-520 Tolling and Local Monitoring Update

Commissioner Bishop noted that West Lake Sammamish Parkway was closed for about three months and asked if the information in the memo represented the time after the reopening. Mr. Krawczyk said counts were taken after the roadway opened again. The chart on the last page of the memo compares those counts against those taken in 2011. He added that West Lake Sammamish Parkway residents have noted that traffic levels after the reopening have been much lower than before the road closed.

9. OLD BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

12. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None

13. REVIEW COMMISSION CALENDAR AND AGENDA

The Commission reviewed its calendar and upcoming agenda items. They particularly discussed the role the Commission should play in updating the transit plan.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Simas adjourned the meeting at 9:48 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission — 9/13/12 Date

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission — 9/13/12 Date