Item No. 3(d)
March 11, 2013

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT:
Bellevue Transit Master Plan Status Report

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FISCAL IMPACT:
None

POLICY ISSUES:
Comprehensive Plan:

- Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan acknowledges that responding to anticipated growth in travel necessitates a multi-modal transportation solution that offers the public real choices about how they travel within, to, and through Bellevue.
- Comprehensive Plan Policy TR-50 recognizes the need to "Work with transit providers to implement the Bellevue Transit Plan as an attractive travel option for local residents, employees, students, visitors, businesses and other users of regional facilities."

Bellevue Transit Plan:
On June 2, 2003, Council adopted the Bellevue Transit Plan (Resolution No. 6859). The 2003 Plan was a major step forward in articulating what improvements are needed in transit service and capital investments throughout Bellevue and served as an important reference document for collaborations with the City's transit service providers. The service and capital partnerships resulting from this vision have enhanced transit's role in Bellevue.

Transit Master Plan:

- On July 9, 2012, Council initiated the Bellevue Transit Master Plan (TMP), an update of the City's 2003 Transit Plan. The TMP is being overseen by the City's Transportation Commission whose work is guided by Council-approved project principles (see Attachment 1) and input from members of the Planning, Arts, and Human Services Commissions and the Parks and Community Services Board.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:
___ Action
X Discussion
X Information

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Consistent with the 2003 Transit Plan, the Bellevue Transit Master Plan (TMP) process comprises three elements:

1. **Service Element:** The service element will identify the city's transit service priorities – a refinement of the project principles adopted at the onset of the project – including route-level recommendations that are responsive to differential financial scenarios (reduced, stable, and growing resources) and attuned to different time horizons (short-, medium-, and long-term).
2. **Capital Element:** The capital element will identify strategies to improve access to and circulation of transit service in Bellevue. A secondary purpose is to identify facilities and amenities for passenger comfort and convenience. The capital element will be closely coordinated with Bellevue's station area planning studies and the Downtown Transportation Plan Update and will draw off of other recent plans (Eastgate/I-90 Project, Bel-Red, etc.).
3. **Policy Element:** The policy element will explore different strategies the City could undertake to achieve the maximum benefit from transit. This may include consideration of development guidelines, transportation system management policies, and other actions that help to better fit transit into the Bellevue landscape.

The Service Element, the current phase of analysis, will arrive at market driven strategies based on a detailed review of the existing transit network, an assessment of the attitudes and preferences that drive traveler choices, and an evaluation of future travel markets. Through online surveys, stakeholder interviews, and presentations to interest groups, City staff has heard the priorities of employers, employees, and residents regarding transit service in Bellevue. Key findings from this community engagement effort, along with an extensive assessment of demographic, route performance, and travel demand model data are detailed in the following documents posted on the project webpage (and available in the Council Office):

1. Existing and Future Conditions Report (Attachment 2) – Evaluates existing and future conditions using demographic, route performance, market research, and travel demand model data. http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/TMP_existing_conditions_022013.pdf
2. Market Driven Strategies Report (Attachment 3) – Outlines transit service strategies derived from the Council approved project principles.
   http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/Market-Driven-Strategies-Report.pdf
3. Funding Scenarios Report (Attachment 4) – Details a range of 2030 financial scenarios (reduced, stable, and growing resources) that will inform TMP route-level recommendations. http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/Funding-Scenarios-Report.pdf
4. 2013 Network Profile Report – Provides a comprehensive summary of public transit services in Bellevue as of December 2012 (an update of the 2012 Network Profile Report). http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/TNP2011-12Update_020513.pdf
5. Briefing Report — Details the service and infrastructure improvements completed since the adoption of the 2003 Bellevue Transit Plan and highlights transit usage levels and unmet needs in Bellevue that will be taken into account in the TMP process.
   http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/TransitBriefReport_web10-2012.pdf
6. Forum Report — Identifies the major themes expressed by members of the Transportation, Planning, Arts, and Human Services Commissions and the Parks and Community Services Board at an event held on September 18, 2012.
   http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/TMP_Forum_Full_Report.pdf

7. Improvement Survey Report — Evaluates the opinions of current transit riders, former transit riders, and non-riders in Bellevue regarding service quality and priorities (based on feedback from 4,252 people who took an on-line questionnaire between February and March 2012). http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/TIS_Summary_Report.pdf.
8. Phase 1 Outreach Report (Technical Appendix) – Documents the early public outreach efforts that informed the draft project principles and scope of work. The document includes translations from Chinese, Spanish, and Russian speakers and formal letters received from Bellevue College, Bellevue School District, Hopelink, and others. http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/061112_TransitPlanTechAppendix.pdf
9. 2012 Network Profile Report — Assesses the bus network structure in Bellevue; services provided in terms of miles and hours and services consumed (i.e., ridership). http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/BellTransit NetworkProfile2012Final.pdf.

The Existing and Future Conditions Report (see Attachment 2) is a milestone in the TMP initiative as work progresses from evaluating market conditions to developing a transit service vision. To help us progress into this next phase, staff conducted a half-day transit network design workshop (1/31/13) with Bellevue Board and Commission members and staff from Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, Metro, Sound Transit, and other stakeholders. The workshop included a visioning exercise in which small groups discussed network design principles that should govern Bellevue's long-term transit vision.

On March 11, 2013, staff will provide Council with a status report on the TMP Service Element, including the market driven strategies (see Attachment 3) which are based on input from the transit network design workshop held on January 31, 2013, project principles approved by Council on July 9, 2012, and input from the extensive public outreach and technical analysis completed to date. The Market Driven Strategies Report along with the Funding Scenarios Report (see Attachment 4) – which identifies a range of financial scenarios (reduced, stable, and growing resources) through 2030 – will inform the route-level recommendations detailed in the TMP Service Element.

NEXT STEPS:
By mid-April, the Service Element will be complete, at which point staff will initiate work on the Capital and Policy Elements. By 4th quarter 2013, Council will be presented with the final TMP report, which, upon acceptance, will inform the region's transit service providers of Bellevue's transit priorities and updates to the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Code, and potential City-led transit initiatives.

ALTERNATIVES:
N/A

RECOMMENDATION:
N/A

ATTACHMENTS: [All documents provided under separate cover]
- Attachment 1 – Council Project Principles
- Attachment 2 – Existing and Future Conditions Report
- Attachment 3 – Market Driven Strategies Report
- Attachment 4 – Funding Scenarios Report

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL OFFICE FOR REVIEW:

- Network Profile Report 2011-12 Update (February 2013)
- Briefing Report (October 2012)
- Transit Improvement Survey Report (October 2012)
- Forum Report (October 2012)
- Phase 1 Outreach Report – Technical Appendix (June 2012)
- Network Profile Report (April 2012)
- Project Principles (July 2012)