

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

April 11, 2024
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Hybrid Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Stash

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: Vice Chair Helland, Commissioners Magill, Ting

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Kurz, Marciante, Rebhuhn

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Paula Stevens, Andrew Singelakis,
Mike Ingram, Kristi Oosterveen, Department of
Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Nieuwenhuis
Chris Breiland, Taylor Whitaker, Fehr & Peers

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

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

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners Kurz, Marciante and Rebhuhn.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Vice Chair Helland. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ting and the motion carried unanimously.

3. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Craig Speizel thanked the staff for the proposal to reduce speeds in the majority of residential neighborhoods from 25 mph to 20 mph. While the reduction may appear trivial, it will actually reduce the stopping distance by up to 26 percent, which is significant and will help support the city's Vision Zero effort to reduce serious injury and fatal collisions. The Lochleven Neighborhood Be Safe group will host a community forum on April 24 at 7:00 p.m. John Murphy, a senior planner for the Department of Transportation will present an overview. The Commissioners were invited to attend. With regard to Bike Bellevue, the Council and specifically Councilmember Nieuwenhuis was thanked for listening and helping to reset the project. Council's direction to minimize the repurposing of vehicle lanes is the right approach. The Commission was asked to recognize that not all arterials are the same. For example, BelRed, Northup Way, 116th Avenue NE and 140th Avenue NE are uniquely different from 100th Avenue NE, which is Corridor 8 and which is called a minor low-volume urban arterial rather than a primary high-volume arterial. 100th Avenue NE has some of the highest levels of pedestrian and bicycle traffic, in part due to the proximity to the Boys & Girls Club, Downtown Park, and adjacent residential neighborhoods. There are very few driveways

between Main Street and NE 10th Street, which minimizes potential traffic disruption and safety for pedestrians and cyclists. 100th Avenue NE offers connectivity between two of Bellevue's largest amenities: Downtown Park and Meydenbauer Bay Park. Only half of the corridor would require any repurposing of lanes, and in support of traffic calming, 100th Avenue NE already has a four-way stop ready to be installed. The Commission was asked to fast-track implementation for 100th Avenue NE, or to consider a pilot project as part of Bike Bellevue.

Mariya Frost, transportation director for Kemper Development Company, reminded the Commission that the Council had provided direction for the categorization of the Bike Bellevue corridors. The first category calls for implementing as soon as possible the corridors that do not remove travel lanes, specifically Corridor 7 and Corridor 9. In addressing the Council on March 25, Department of Transportation Assistant Director Paula Stevens said when the design concept guide was introduced the public began to realize what Bike Bellevue represents and what it means practically speaking, which is the repurposing of travel lanes on every corridor, with the exception of two. It is surprising now to see a third project added to the list, a portion of NE 2nd Street, or Corridor 6B, which is not consistent with Council direction in that the project would eliminate the westbound through lane at the NE 2nd Street approach to Bellevue Way, and the westbound right-turn lane at the NE 2nd Street approach to the 106th Avenue NE intersection. The project would also eliminate most of the center lane between 110th Avenue NE and 112th Avenue NE. The project also does not align with Council's direction that corridors that repurpose travel lanes should only be done as a last resort, and using data to inform the decision. There are ways to modify and redesign the project so that the travel lane capacity will not be removed, and Kemper Development Company and Wallace Properties have identified those potential solutions in a letter provided to the Commission. The project should be removed, modified to preserve road lanes, and presented to the Commission again at a later date for categorization.

Jon Zulanis spoke in support of Vision Zero. On March 23 a sedan cut the intersection of 156th Avenue NE and Northup Way and barely missed hitting the speaker while riding a bike. On March 30 while on the sidewalk of 156th Avenue NE, an SUV exiting the McDonalds driveway hit the front of the speaker's bike and drove off without stopping. On April 17, the speaker reported watching as a sedan blew through a yellow light at the intersection of BelRed and NE 24th Street at 45 mph in the right hand lane, passing through the crosswalk seconds after the walk light came on. Such events are not uncommon in Bellevue. It statistically and literally happens every 15 days at locations that are not surprising as they are all in the eight percent of roads identified as the high-injury network. There has been opposition voiced to road diets and lane reallocations, with claims that that would reduce speeds and cause congestion, but the city of Hoboken, New Jersey, implemented the addition of bike lanes and road diets and the results were the exact statistics Vision Zero arduously chases. They have not had a single traffic fatality in seven years. The Council has made it clear that the solution to pedestrian injuries and fatalities is implementing infrastructure on streets that are on the high-injury network. In many instances, the only way to implement the infrastructure in line with the 2030 Vision Zero timeline is to relocate lanes to bring on safety features such as buffered bike lanes. Projects like Bike Bellevue are vital. Bike Bellevue is not just about bikes, it is about Vision Zero.

Kyle Sullivan voiced support for Bike Bellevue. As someone who primarily drives to get around, Bike Bellevue will increase the number of places accessible by bike. The direction from the Council to start implementing the corridors that will not involve removing travel lanes is good, as are the priorities outlined by staff. The rapid implementation plan has been in discussion for over a year. The immediate next step for Bike Bellevue is clear. It is also clear

that the city should continue to expand its outreach process to hear from all aspects of the community. It is not clear, however, what implementation will be done after the first step. The direction given by the Council programs such as the Mobility Implementation Plan makes things very clear. The Council has emphasized a priority for corridors that will create connected routes, and corridors that are part of the high-injury network. The criteria include all of the Bike Bellevue corridors as the project was designed to be a connected network that will also prevent deaths and serious injuries. Moreover, the 2022 Mobility Implementation Plan already calls for bike facilities on all of the Bike Bellevue corridors. The city has already determined those facilities should be constructed. There has been concerns about removing car lanes to accomplish the goal, and to that end the Council's latest direction says travel lanes should be repurposed as a last resort. If there is no way to achieve the city's LTS goals without removing travel lanes, then travel lanes must be removed. Bike Bellevue is about more than just bikes. By including much of the high-injury network, the project is a crucial part of reaching the city's 2030 Vision Zero target. Protected bike lanes remove bikes from streets and from sidewalks, improving things for pedestrians. Reallocating space on streets has been shown time and time again to improve safety for everyone. Changing how the streets are designed will have to be addressed in order to meet the Vision Zero target and save lives. Safety alone should be enough justification for the Bike Bellevue project, but for those who are concerned about car travel times, continuing to build Bellevue as a car-first city will only make problems worse. Tens of thousands of housing units are planned for Wilburton, BelRed and Downtown, and if all those new households drive everywhere, there will be a traffic disaster. Infrastructure is needed to provide existing and future residents with alternatives to driving.

Arman Bilge, a Bridle Trails resident and someone who commutes by bike only, noted being excited to see Bike Bellevue getting back on track. The staff have done great work and are asking the Commission move forward with the bits for which there is funding and motivation. Bike Bellevue was before the Council recently where the complications of how to implement the project were discussed. The Council focused on building a network of bike infrastructure on high-injury roads, but they also focused on reducing injuries overall, not just for bicycles. Bellevue has committed to achieving Vision Zero by 2030, but it will be necessary to work hard to achieve the goal. A printout from the Federal Highway Administration on the topic of road diets was distributed to the Commissioners. The document showed how to reallocate vehicle lanes, the result of which is accident reduction. The Bike Bellevue concepts guide shows an almost identical reconfiguration to the federal printout. While it may look like it is about bike lanes, it is really about achieving Vision Zero. The city must say yes to every opportunity to achieve Vision Zero by 2030. Even those who do not bike are in favor of more safety.

Jaqueline Kimzer asked the Commission to fix the streets in Bellevue that are high risk for people walking and biking. The Council unanimously directed the prioritization of corridors of connectivity from the Bike Bellevue plan. Streets with the greatest risks as shown by the data relative to cyclist and pedestrian injuries and deaths must be implemented quickly to meet Vision Zero goals. The Commission was urged to prioritize people's lives over car convenience. No one should have to risk their life to get to work or to go grocery shopping simply because they do not own a car. In implementing badly needed infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists, the city should incorporate the recommendations from the community. Intersections need daylighting to enhance the visibility and safety around crosswalks. Road diets are needed to improve safety and traffic flow in busy areas. Complete Streets allow users to choose their preferred form of transportation in a way that is safe for everyone. The group rides that have included Councilmembers have made clear how difficult it is to bike in Bellevue. The city only has six years to make the community safe for future generations. That

is why it is so important to implement the corridors now.

Alex Tsimerman began with a Nazi salute and called the Commissioners dirty garbage rats and Councilmember Nieuwenhuis a Nazi pig and a barracuda. With regard to Ordinance 6752, the rules, the speaker explained how criminal the government of Bellevue is, including the Commission. The document repeats the same rules six times over its 26 pages. It was done by Mayor Robinson and by the city attorney. The question asked was how that is possible. They are such a degree of crooks and criminals. The Commission enforces the rules. There is talk about Bellevue court that controls the rule, which is another crime because city court cannot control decisions made by the constitution, the first amendment and freedom of speech, and the Ninth circuit and other courts. The Commissioners are not only crooks they are criminals by enforcing illegal rules. The Commission should dismiss Ordinance 6752 and put it in the garbage because it is a fraud and a crime.

Nicole Myers voiced appreciation to the community for responding to the Bike Bellevue proposal. The February and March comments were great. The idea of having just NE 2nd Street east of Bellevue Way set up for cyclists sounds great; it will prevent having to make a funny crossing at an angle across Bellevue Way to get to the north side of the street. Projects of importance in the Transportation Improvement Program include Downtown light rail station access for pedestrians and bikes; the growth corridor bike network; the Main Street safety improvements; the 130th Avenue NE bike facilities; 120th Avenue NE bicycle facilities; 143rd Avenue NE extension with bicycle accommodations; and the 148th Avenue NE master plan. There are many things the city is doing to support cycling that are not included in the Bike Bellevue proposal but which can be pushed forward. The high-injury map is subject to periodic update. There is a huge need for pedestrian safety. Over the last ten years there was only one serious cyclist injury in the Northrup Way and BelRed corridors combined, but in that same time there were three pedestrian deaths and serious injuries. Near the intersection of NE 12th Street and 110th Avenue NE there have been three cyclists serious injuries.

Kate Sayers said many citizens of Northeast Bellevue feel completely ignored by the proposals for the bikes. If it has not yet happened, the Commissioners should have one-on-one conversations with Betsi Hummer. The residents are vastly outnumbered by an organized network of bikers. They have not been surveyed, no one has asked their opinions. The road diets will put tremendous stress on those who drive to Overlake Hospital with a medical emergency. The Commission should seriously consider the citizens who live in Northeast Bellevue, who pay taxes, and who feel as though they never get the attention they deserve in a direct way. It feels like the Commission is not doing its job. There are lots of ways to make places safe for bicyclists, and a lot of the studies the bike community is citing are different from the studies the people in the neighborhood have brought up. The Commission has not offered the neighborhood a delicious diet of data-driven information before making major financial commitments. Many need to be able to get around in their cars, especially the older folks. If there were circulator buses serving the neighborhoods, the little old ladies would all be jumping up and down. It would also be great to have shelters so those waiting for a bus do not get drenched in the rain. There needs to be as much emphasis on the needs of the aging community as on the biking community. The Commission should come and drive around with Northeast Bellevue residents as they go to the doctor's office or the hospital.

Karl Helmgren voiced the concern that the bicycle corridors may cause real traffic tie-ups. In the Northrup Way corridor during rush hour, most drivers would be stuck behind any bus because there is a single lane. It is immensely important to make it easier to bicycle in Bellevue. There is a clear need to protect the lives of riders and pedestrians, but there needs to

be a balance with those who must drive.

Betsi Hummer, a resident living next to Bellevue College, asked the Commission to remember TR-2 of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, that was unanimously ratified by the City Council a year or two ago. The policy calls for aggressively reducing traffic congestion through investments in traffic congestion reduction. That needs to be at the forefront of every decision having to do with existing or future roads, especially in light of the projected 70,000 new jobs coming to Bellevue, most of which will be centered in Wilburton and BelRed. If half of those new employees do not live in Bellevue, they will likely commute by vehicle because the transit needed to accommodate them near their homes in Sumner and Sultan does not exist. It is not just Bellevue that forces them to commute, it is the overall transportation system. There is a need to finish the I-405 master plan and improve the arterials and wayfinding. Increased congestion will result in more deaths, more disgruntled drivers and more dangerous driving. Nearly every neighborhood experiences speeding and cut-through traffic that makes them feel unsafe. Vision Zero is a laudable goal, but it starts with everyone being cognizant of safety, driving the speed limit, and paying attention to all the rules.

Valentina Vaneeva, a resident on the border between Crossroads and Northeast Bellevue where there are many inexpensive condominiums and apartments, stated that many who live in the area have only one car, yet they need to get to different places in the city where they can shop, eat and work. If one car is taken by someone in the family, the rest of the family has no options apart from taking a bus or riding a bicycle. Many end up riding bicycles where it is very unsafe. Buses in Bellevue are not great in that they take long, winding roads and those who ride them must really plan their time. Many talk about traffic congestion without taking into account that not everyone can afford a second car. Even if they do have a second car, there is usually no place to park, especially in the older communities with just one parking slot per unit. Such people are not often asked their opinions of what it is like to get around Bellevue.

Michelle Wannamaker, a resident of Eastgate, reiterated the issue raised by Mariya Frost. The Council directed staff to proceed with the two proposed corridor designs that do not involve repurposing travel lanes. However, staff will be telling the Commission that three corridors meet that qualification, with the third being NE 2nd Street where the turn lanes will be turned into way center turn lanes. That will affect traffic trying to turn into the garages and businesses along NE 2nd Street. Traffic will back up behind the vehicles trying to turn. The businesses in the Bellevue Downtown Association may have opinions about the concept. Those are questions the Commissioners should ask themselves during the discussion.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, AND MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis clarified Council direction for the Bike Bellevue project during that discussion.

5. STAFF REPORTS

Principal Planner Kevin McDonald noted having attended the April 10 Planning Commission meeting and reviewed the Transportation Commission's recommendations on the transportation policies for the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, and for the BelRed subarea. A number of questions and comments were directed to staff and the responses will be provided to the Planning Commission in May.

Kevin McDonald reminded the Commissioners that the annual election of officers is on the calendar for the June meeting, noting that nominations could be made at any time leading up to that meeting by sending a message to staff.

The City Clerk's office is currently conducting recruiting to fill a vacancy on the Transportation Commission that is about to occur.

Vice Chair Helland allowed being the Commissioner who is not seeking to be reappointed.

Kevin McDonald noted having sent to the Commissioners a message about the April 27 opening celebration of the 2 Line, adding that all Commissioners are invited to attend the public event.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Transportation Improvement Program

Program Manager Kristi Oosterveen reminded the Commissioners that state law mandates updating the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) annually and that a public hearing be conducted. The TIP is not revenue constrained.

Kristi Oosterveen noted additions to the draft list of projects had been made since the Commission's last study session on the TIP in February. Some new projects were proposed for the Capital Investment Program plan update and all those were added to the draft. The city has received grant funds for both 10a and 23a; they are actually sub-projects within programs. Projects 106, 107 and 108 are new proposals that are not currently in the existing TIP or any other adopted plan.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Ting and absent disagreement Chair Stash declared the public hearing to be open.

Nicole Myers referred to item 43, TFP-190, NE 2nd Street, one of the Bike Bellevue corridors. The project description calls for widening the roadway from three lanes with parking and turn pockets to five lanes. A design report is cited as the reason for the project. The vision for the LTS-1 along NE 2nd Street is not aligned with the TIP item. More justification is needed.

Anne Coughlin asked for information about items 23, R-205, Safe Access for Everyone, and 106, NE 12th Street.

Valentina Vaneeva asked about item 10a, R-156, the Real Time Traffic Signal Safety Interventions project, which sounds like a very fancy intelligence center program involving vulnerable roadway users. While it sounds great, it also sounds very expensive and it may not be what the city should be spending money on. The issues could possibly be fixed using something simpler.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Ting. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Helland and the motion carried unanimously.

There was consensus to amend the agenda to take up item 7B next.

7. STUDY SESSION

B. TIP Discussion and Recommendation

Kristi Oosterveen said the Commission's recommendation on the TIP will be forwarded to the Council, and once approved it will be sent on to the state as required.

Kristi Oosterveen explained that item 23a, R-205, Bellevue Safe Access for Everyone, is a project for which the city has already received a grant from the United States Department of Transportation. The program will allow for conducting some additional studies and safety audits, including speed safety camera procedures, some demonstration activities, and some testing of safety mechanisms, including treated crosswalks, cellular vehicle-to-everything technologies.

Item 106, NE 12th Street between 108th Avenue NE and Bellevue Way NE multipurpose path, involves a 12-foot path on the north side of the street accommodating pedestrians, bicyclists and other users. The project could be extended to 102nd Avenue NE.

Item 10a, R-156, Real Time Traffic Signal Safety Interventions, is a program for which a grant has been received from Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART), also from the United States Department of Transportation. The \$1.4 million grant will be used to improve safety at signalized intersections in the Crossroads area.

Kristi Oosterveen explained that the Comprehensive Plan is the overarching long-term goal that looks out 20 years. The long-range plans and the functional plans in the Comprehensive Plan contain the projects that are fed into the Mobility Implementation Plan framework for prioritization and from there into the TFP and then the CIP for implementation. The projects in the long-range and functional plans, the TFP and the CIP are all brought into the TIP. The CIP currently is a seven-year funded plan, but going forward it will be a ten-year funded plan. The projects in the TIP can become eligible candidates for grants.

The city's local TIP is forwarded to the Puget Sound Regional Council for inclusion in the regional TIP. Concurrently, it goes into the state TIP which is managed by the Washington State Department of Transportation.

The 2025-2030 TIP contains 113 projects divided into four sections. Section I has 39 projects from the adopted 2023-2029 CIP. Section II has 37 projects from the adopted 2023-2033 TFP. The 32 projects in Section III that come from other analyses and planning or pre-design studies. Section IV has only five projects that are for regional or outside agency-led projects in which the city may choose to participate financially.

Kristi Oosterveen explained that a couple of changes are proposed to the list as previously published. The new projects 10a and 23a have been added to Section I. One project is earmarked to be transferred to Section III, given that a portion of the project was completed through another grant, leaving a section the city would like to see finished. Four projects are set to be removed from Section I because they are complete.

For Section III there are three new projects – the NE 12th Street project, a new program for Safe Routes to School, and a new arterial sidewalks program – and one project is set to be removed because it has been added into the concepts for the Bellevue College Connections project.

There are no changes for either Section II or Section VI.

Commissioner Ting referred to item 43, TFP-190, and asked if TFP-190 is exclusive of the work being done relative to Bike Bellevue. Kristi Oosterveen confirmed that it is. If modifications are made to NE 2nd Street, the TIP can be updated later. TFP-190 can be left on the TIP list as is even if later changes are made. Projects are not removed from adopted plans until the next update. Changes to projects can be highlighted by including a note.

Commissioner Magill referred to item 106 and expressed the understanding that the project on NE 12th Street could be extended to 102nd Avenue NE. Kristi Oosterveen said the project could potentially be extended. Currently, the proposals for the update to the CIP have not been submitted and there are ongoing conversations about extending the project to 102nd Avenue NE. The project can be left as is in the TIP and addressed in the next iteration.

Commissioner Magill asked if the project would involve taking a lane away from the roadway or if it would simply add a lane to the sidewalk. Kristi Oosterveen said the multipurpose path will widen the sidewalk area but not into the roadway.

Commissioner Ting noted the deletion of item 277 and the comment about looking for alternative solution and asked if there is a replacement project in mind. Kristi Oosterveen said project is part of the Congestion Reduction levy. After the evaluation of the project, it was found that it would not improve conditions. It was removed from the implementation list in favor of continuing to look at how the intersection performs and possibly coming back later with an alternative.

A motion to approve the TIP project list as presented was made by Commissioner Magill. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Helland and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the transmittal letter was made by Commissioner Magill. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ting and the motion carried unanimously.

Kristi Oosterveen said the TIP and transmittal letter will be on the Council's consent calendar on May 7. Once adopted by the Council, it will be sent off to the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Puget Sound Regional Council prior to the June 30 deadline.

A. Bike Bellevue: Discussion and Recommendation

Kevin McDonald shared with the Commissioners the suite of Bike Bellevue corridors that were in the draft concept design guide that served as the foundation of the Bike Bellevue discussion and the repository of design concepts and the associated data. The corridors provide a relatively complete and connected network of bike facilities within the urban core, and they largely correspond with the high-injury network.

Kevin McDonald said Department of Transportation Director Andrew Singelakis and Transportation Assistant Director Paula Stevens met with the full Council to discuss the Bike Bellevue project and to outline the staff recommendation for categorizing each of the corridors.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis allowed that there has been a great deal of discussion on both sides of the argument, but overall there has been agreement on the need for great bike facilities. The Commissioners were encouraged to bike or drive the corridors and around Bellevue to

facilitate making more informed decisions. The Council wants to move as quickly as possible on the areas where implementation will not require eliminating travel lanes. Bike Bellevue has morphed somewhat to the point where the city is now looking to develop world-class bicycle facilities that meet the principles of safety and comfort. Putting a high value on prioritizing the high-injury network projects is the right approach to take.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis said there have been great questions raised around the issue of “last resort” for repurposing a vehicle travel lane, something that was never clearly defined. The notion of last resort rests on having looked at all possibilities to provide the bicycle network facility before eliminating a travel lane. It could mean giving consideration to removing a center turn lane; taking away a parking strip; moving a sidewalk over; or narrowing roads to include a bike lane on one or both sides. Every consideration will be given to making sure vehicle throughput will not be impacted in line with the principle of policy TR-2. By the same token, care will be taken to assure that emergency vehicles will be accommodated, especially on busy arterials. From a high level, that is the direction from the Council relative to Bike Bellevue. Everyone wants better bike facilities, but everyone wants to go about it the right way. The Council is reticent to take interim steps or build facilities that will not be safe. The Council wants world-class and safe facilities that will get used.

Andrew Singelakis added that the Council also directed that in instances where a travel lane is repurposed, it should first be treated as a trial or demonstration project.

Paula Stevens explained that the draft language coming out of the March 25 Council meeting will not be final until the Council meeting minutes are issued. While some of the language might change, it will not be significant.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis allowed that there is some overlap between Bike Bellevue and the TIP. Item 106 could be a great option for Segment 2. Item 218 which covers 130th Avenue NE from Bel-Red Road to NE 20th Street should also be looked at. If the Commission agrees, consideration will need to be given to the process for prioritizing the projects before it comes to the Council.

Paula Stevens pointed out that 130th Avenue NE is already funded, and the idea of building a multipurpose pathway on NE 12th Street from where it ends at 108th Avenue NE to 100th Avenue NE is being explored. The NE 12th Street corridor would fall into the seventh category from the Council’s March 25 meeting.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis asked if the datapoint metrics tracked for the 108th Avenue NE pilot project will carry over to other projects, or if different metrics would need to be identified. Andrew Singelakis said the 108th Avenue NE project serves as a good place to start. The tracking metrics will be very similar.

Chair Stash stressed that the Commission was being asked to develop a recommendation based only on the first Council category. The other categories still need to be clarified based on the approved minutes of the March 25 Council meeting.

Commissioner Magill voiced appreciation for the clarification, and for the Council for providing direction on policy that will allow the Commission to move forward with implementation. The Commission’s task is to put the Bike Bellevue corridors into the categories handed down by the Council. The words “category” and “priority” have been somewhat interchanged and that needs to be clarified. There has been a lot of emphasis on

Category 3 relative to data, but the word “criteria” has also been used, which also needs to be clarified, specifically as to which data elements will be used to establish the criteria.

Commissioner Ting said it sounds like there is concern on the part of the public that travel lanes include things like turn lanes. That needs to be clarified. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis said the Council did not differentiate a turn lane from a travel lane. Kevin McDonald added that when it comes to reviewing the final design for the corridors, the width between the curbs will be considered along with the opportunities to embed bicycle facilities while maintaining the vehicle throughput capacity for the corridors. In some last resort cases it may be that a part of a center turn lane or a shorter right-turn or left-turn lane may be needed to include a full length bicycle facility. Those details will come out as part of the final design work; the preliminary draft design guidelines offer a place to start, but those designs will be refined given the Council’s direction.

Commissioner Ting asked if the Commission could approve the three projects conditionally based on being able to create the bicycle facilities without removing travel lanes, including turn and center lanes. Kevin McDonald said the staff recommendation is for the Commission to give the direction to proceed in that way toward final design and implementation.

Kevin McDonald clarified that the Commission will have opportunity to review the final design once it is complete.

Commissioner Ting asked if it would be possible to include Segment 6B with modifications to some of the right-of-way that is not being used in order to put in a bike facility without impacting the travel lanes. Kevin McDonald said that is a possibility. Segment 6B is part of the NE 2nd Street corridor. The TIP project for the corridor describes the curb-to-curb width of the roadway, which is used differently in different segments: some segments have parking, some segments have a center turn lane, some segments have right-turn or left-turn lanes. The entire available width of NE 2nd Street can be looked at with an eye on figuring out a way to insert bike facilities on the corridor. Commissioner Ting urged leveraging the right-of-way that is not being used for travel lanes in order to put in a bike lane that satisfies the Bike Bellevue requirements, while at the same time not impacting the vehicular capacity.

Commissioner Ting asked if Corridors 7 or 9 involve the removal of center or turn lanes as proposed. Kevin McDonald said it does not appear so, but the work of getting toward final design will clarify whether or not the vehicle capacity can be maintained without removing travel lanes.

Commissioner Ting noted the data showing seven severe or fatal crashes on the corridors and asked if it is known what caused the accidents. Paula Stevens said staff has that information and could provide it to the Commission. Commissioner Ting said it would be good to have the data for all of the city, with the Bike Bellevue corridors prioritized. If a pattern can be identified, it might be possible to identify changes that could prevent future accidents. Paula Stevens said the raw information is available, but to do the analysis work would take time. Commissioner Ting agreed to just review the raw data with an eye on comparing types of facilities with types of crashes. Paula Stevens said staff would share the raw data with all the Commissioners.

Kevin McDonald clarified that the staff recommendation was to proceed toward final design and implementation for three corridors: the Wilburton route, which is 120th Avenue NE, NE 4th Street and Main Street, and which involves narrowing the travel lanes to provide for a

buffered bike lane; Lake Washington Boulevard where by the removal of a few parking spaces a connected bike facility can be achieved between the entrance to Meydenbauer Bay Park at 99th Avenue NE and 100th Avenue NE where it intersects Main Street; and Segment B of the NE 2nd Street corridor between Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue NE where the available curb-to-curb space can be used to provide for bike facilities. Segment A is different and will be discussed at the Commission's meeting in June. Those projects can be implemented without seeking additional funding.

Vice Chair Helland asked if the three segments are the only ones that fall into Category 1. Kevin McDonald said there is one additional segment that could possibly be added to the list. Segment A of NE 2nd Street between 100th Avenue NE and Bellevue Way, which was slated for the two-way road being turned into a one-way road with the remainder for a two-way bike lane, could implement an intervention that allows for sharrows lane markings as a directional bike corridor without removing a travel lane in line with the definition of a bike corridor with the recognition that it would be a shared space.

Chair Stash asked if that would be an interim or permanent step. Kevin McDonald said that would be the permanent configuration unless or until a back-of-curb facility is identified. Admittedly it might be difficult to get a back-of-curb facility in that segment because on the south side are the condominiums that also front on Main Street, and on the north side is Downtown Park for the most part. There is also a private sector development proposal at the corner of NE 2nd Street and Bellevue Way that is not providing for an off-street facility. Shared facilities on what is a low-speed, low-volume roadway segment would provide a reasonably accommodating bike facility for most users.

Chair Stash asked why the project had not been included in staff's recommendation. Paula Stevens admitted to not having thought about sharrows being an element of Bike Bellevue, which is intended to provide greater protection. Chair Stash suggested using sharrows on that segment as outlined makes sense, due to the available real estate, the adjacent developments, the configuration of the road, and the fact that no lane would be removed.

Paula Stevens said one thing staff will be doing to button up the project before transitioning the next phase of the work will be to update the design concepts guide. Once the draft stamp is removed, it will serve as the final documentation for the initiative.

Commissioner Ting voiced the understanding that the motion on the floor would direct staff to move forward with the three corridors based on the fact that no travel lanes, right-turn/left-turn lanes, or center lanes will be removed. Kevin McDonald offered that the staff will strive to not remove any center turn lanes. In the case of NE 2nd Street there is a continuous center turn lane and there are no corresponding driveway entrance points, so there may be opportunities to use some of that space for different purposes. The primary mission is to not repurpose any travel lanes.

A motion to direct the city to move ahead with final design for making bike facilities for situations in which a travel lane will not be repurposed was made by Commissioner Ting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Magill and the motion carried unanimously.

The Commissioners clarified that the motion specifically applied only to Corridors 7, 9 and 6B.

Kevin McDonald said the Commission's recommendation will be forwarded to the Transportation Director. The Council will also be advised of the Commission's

recommendation for the three corridors in the form of a management brief. A recommendation on the rest of the Bike Bellevue corridors will be before the Commission on June 13.

Kevin McDonald reminded the Commissioners that the Commission held a special meeting on December 14 to look at staff responses to Commission questions regarding Bike Bellevue. During the special meeting only about half of the questions were addressed. Staff has since sent written responses to the Commission. The question asked was if an in-person meeting should be scheduled to discuss the second half of the questions asked.

Chair Stash supported having the meeting.

Commissioner Ting agreed there should be a discussion on the topic, and if the public is interested in the answers, a meeting should be scheduled.

Commissioner Magill added that the request to discuss the data collected on the 108th Avenue NE project and how that data might be used going forward should be included.

Kevin McDonald said there may be opportunity to schedule a meeting for the fourth Thursday of May.

C. Transportation Demand Management Plan Update

Given the time, there was consensus to amend the agenda to defer the TDM Plan Update to a future meeting.

D. Mobility Implementation Plan

Kevin McDonald reminded the Commissioners that the MIP was recommended by the Commission and approved by the Council in 2022. The MIP works to inform the TFP update by identifying performance target gaps in the transportation network for most modes; by identifying project concepts to address those performance target gaps; and by developing a prioritization within each mode to inform the TFP.

Within the MIP there is a new key component of the planning process that helps support the Comprehensive Plan land use vision by providing mobility for those who live, work and visit in Bellevue. The MIP helps identify and prioritize project concepts, and informs the TFP update work, which is set to kick off soon. The MIP provides performance metrics for each mode. There are established performance targets for each mode; in some cases the performance targets vary by location, namely the Performance Management Areas. The most intensely developed PMA, and the one with the most mobility options, is PMA 1, Downtown, Wilburton and BelRed. PMA 2 is made up of the activity centers Crossroads, Eastgate and Factoria. PMA 3 is the rest of the city. Within PMA 3 there are pedestrian destinations that warrant special attention as reflected in the performance targets, though largely on a site-specific basis within the residential areas.

There is a four-step process in the MIP for delivering project concepts to the TFP. Consultant Chris Breiland with Fehr & Peers said the first step involves identifying the performance target gaps by determining where the documented existing performance of the transportation network does not meet the adopted performance targets for each mode. This first step has been completed by the Comprehensive Plan draft EIS, so all the existing performance target gaps have been identified.

The second step is to screen the performance target gaps relative to the goals in the MIP, namely equity, growth, safety and access. The screening is done for each mode and the outcome is a prioritized list of network performance target gaps for each mode. The transit performance target gaps are not evaluated, even though they have been identified, and those individual projects will not be advanced to the TFP because they are done in partnership with the lead agencies King County Metro and Sound Transit.

The support growth target generally looks at where growth is expected to be concentrated. The denser areas PMA 1 are where more growth is occurring and is planned. That does not mean that a project in a residential area is not warranted. Safety is organized around the high-injury network where it is known there is a disproportionate number of crashes of severe or a fatal nature. The purpose of prioritization, equity is focused on the areas of the city that have a higher concentration of low-income residents. The goal of improving access and mobility includes a recognition that in PMA 1 and PMA 2 there are more areas people are looking to access.

Chris Breiland said in the MIP there is a scoring rubric for each mode, and the prioritization work is cognizant of the mode and the desired attributes. Projects are scored based on the four goals. In addition, there is a supplemental score that is essentially a degree of how significant the performance target gap is. Bigger gaps get a heavier weight. Scoring for each mode follows a similar scoring exercise.

Once all the performance target gaps are identified and prioritized against the MIP goals, project concepts are developed to address or improve the gaps toward meeting the actual performance targets. It is not always possible to come up with a project concept that will necessarily meet the performance targets. Sometimes there are constraints related to adjacent land uses or environmental constraints. Once that is done, the project concepts are screened with the public ahead of the Commission advancing them to the TFP for each mode.

Taylor Whitaker, consultant with Fehr & Peers, shared with the Commissioners a table showing nine system intersections that do not as of 2019 meet the V/C performance target gaps. Using the identified approach, the TFP identified project concepts to address the performance target gaps at seven of the nine intersections; for the other two intersections, project improvement concepts were identified. For 148th Avenue SE at SE 16th Street, the proposal is to widen the east curb line of 148th Avenue SE from 300 feet of SE 16th Street to Lake Hills Boulevard. For 116th Avenue NE at Northup Way, the proposal is to widen the southbound approach to add a dedicated right-turn lane. Both projects will need to be vetted internally before providing final recommendations.

With the project concepts identified for each of the system intersections where a performance target gap exists, consideration should be given to whether the project concept is actually feasible to implement from the perspective of environmental impacts, cost, adjacent land uses, and impacts to other modes. With the prioritization scoring applied to all nine of the system intersections identified as not meeting the performance target gap, the result is a matrix showing the MIP prioritization score for each of the four goals and the supplemental, along with the composite score. To help explain how the results are used, it was noted that the system intersection V/C scoring for 148th Avenue NE at NE 8th Street, it was noted that the growth goal score was four because the intersection is located in PMA 3 where performance target gaps receive a higher prioritization since other modes are less available to access destinations. For the access and mobility goal, a score of zero was given because the project is not located in

an area where the city is seeking to aggressively expand non-vehicle access capacity. The safety goal score was also zero, even though the project is located on the high-injury network, because the project would require widening the intersection, increasing exposure for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the street. The MIP guide specifically states that vehicle performance target gaps are not prioritized relative to equity since vehicle access is not as critical to the transportation disadvantaged population relative to pedestrian and bike access. Given that the performance target gap at the intersection is 16 percent above the target, the supplemental score was two. The composite score was therefore six.

Using the same approach for each of the intersections, two of the projects, 148th Avenue NE at Main Street, and Lakemont Boulevard SE at SE Newport Way, had high composite scores. The higher scoring projects were all in Performance Management Area 3, and each received a positive safety score by virtue of being on the high-injury network. The lower scoring projects were all either in PMA 1 or PMA 2, which is consistent with the city's aim to balance investments in vehicle capacity against investments to expand capacity for other modes. A lower tier ranking should not, however, be taken as a suggestion that the project should be excluded from the TFP, but they might be deferred in favor of other higher scoring projects where funding is limited.

On the question of equity, Commissioner Ting voiced the understanding that there is the notion of access versus mobility, with access being defined as the infrastructure that exists, and mobility being defined as the experience or performance of the system. Chris Breiland said that was a fair summary.

Commissioner Ting indicated being a bit confused as to why equity is not looked at with regard to the performance or the experience of the transportation system for vehicles, given that the majority of people of lower income status use their car to get to where they need to go. Chris Breiland stressed the need to keep in mind that the notion of equity is housed within each mode. Car trips tend to be longer and they tend to serve a broad base of uses; pedestrian trips tend to be a lot shorter and serve a narrower base of uses. The reason no plus weighting is applied in the equity category to vehicle trip types is that it would tend to add more vehicle capacity projects within low-income areas. There is no reason why vehicle capacity projects should not be built in those areas, it is just that the amount of utilization of improving the mobility for vehicles for low-income areas is not necessarily as concentrated around those parts of the city as it is for the other modes. By way of example, it was noted that for pedestrian trips for low-income portions of the city, where low-income residents to walk more to reach non-recreational destinations than higher income people, the benefit of having infrastructure addressing performance target gaps near where people live is higher than for vehicle trips. That is why for vehicle trips the decision was made not to weight investment higher around low-income neighborhoods as is done for the pedestrian and bicycle modes.

Commissioner Ting said one could conclude given that reasoning that the city does not really care how congestion is in the low-income neighborhoods and would rather invest vehicular infrastructure dollars in other places. It will be necessary to be crystal clear about that messaging. Chris Breiland noted that the city is not interested in adding more capacity to push more vehicles into low-income neighborhoods, which is a commonly voiced concern. Equity is not a weighting factor for lower-income or higher income parts of the city. The weighting is focused on where congestion is more severe, and it favors the lower-density parts of the city where there are fewer modes than in the higher density parts of the city.

Commissioner Ting agreed that there are other factors that go into determining the score, but

from purely an equity lens, care should be taken in being very clear about the message being sent.

Chair Stash sought a motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes, but Commissioner Magill reported having to leave the meeting. Chair Stash allowed that would mean no quorum would exist.

Chair Stash said the continued discussion on the MIP would be rescheduled to a future meeting.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 14, 2024

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Ting. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Helland and the motion carried unanimously.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. REVIEW OF COMMISSION CALENDAR

A. Upcoming Agenda Items – As Noted

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Ting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Magill and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Stash adjourned the meeting at 9:01 p.m.



May 23rd, 2024

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date