



Transportation Commission

TRANSMITTAL

August 5, 2019

RE: Main Street Bike Lane Project

Honorable Mayor Chelminiak and City Councilmembers:

Transportation Commission members are honored by your trust and confidence in selecting us to oversee the implementation of the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan. In this capacity, we have been guided by Council's direction as we collaborate with staff and the community to "advance the implementation of Bellevue's planned Bicycle Priority Corridors to facilitate continuous bicycle travel along a connected grid of safe facilities throughout the city and the region."

The Commission reviewed relevant policies, planning context/development trends, community input, and mobility data analysis during three meetings including March 28, May 13, and July 11. Our review and discussions indicate that Alternative 2.1 serves as a reasonable interim facility in providing a continuous east-west connection on Main Street to the 108th Avenue bikeway. At our July 11 meeting, with a vote of 10 in favor and 2 opposed, the Commission approved the implementation of bicycle facilities as follows:

- In the eastbound direction, Alternative 2.1 extends the eastbound buffered bike lane on Main Street from 105th Avenue NE to 107th Avenue NE by repurposing one eastbound travel lane. At 107th Avenue NE, the eastbound buffered bike lane begins tapering away from the curb, becoming a striped bike lane (no buffer) for about 200 feet between the eastbound travel lane and a new right turn lane being added for eastbound-to-southbound turns onto 108th Avenue NE.
- In the westbound direction, Alternative 2.1 extends the existing striped bike lane on Main Street from 106th Avenue NE to 108th Avenue NE. Alternative 2.1 maintains two westbound travel lanes.

Alternative 2.1 will also include modifications to the east leg of the intersection of Main Street and 108th Avenue NE to ensure safe lane alignment through the intersection. This may include repurposing approximately 250 feet of the eastbound curb lane east of 108th Avenue NE to reinforce the lane revisions on the west leg.

Specific items that we discussed include:

- How existing policy, project, and development context shape the role of the Main Street segment and how the Main Street bike facilities align with the planning and development context including the East Main TOD, Grand Connection, Eastside Rail Corridor Trail, Wilburton Commercial Area visioning process, Downtown development, transit circulation, and I-405 access projects.
- Detailed analysis on the existing Main Street bike lanes and the neutral impacts to traffic operations at the Bellevue Way intersection.
- Modified proposal to reduce projected vehicle delay experienced at the 108th Avenue NE intersection.

- Assessment of NE 2nd Street as an alternative east-west bicycle connection through Downtown as compared to Main Street.
- The timing of this project does not seem to interfere with other relevant projects such as WSDOT's I-405 Bellevue to Renton project.
- Bellevue staff will conduct a limited before-and-after assessment of the Main Street bike lane project.
- The implications of the new Vulnerable user/Safe passing legislation on vehicle capacity.
- The city is legally allowed to repurpose travel lanes for bicycle lane purposes without being required to reimburse Washington State for any constitutional trust funds it might have received when it originally constructed Main Street.

Commissioners voting in favor of the Main Street bike lanes determined that: [REDACTED].

Commissioners voting against the Main Street bike lane determined that: [REDACTED].

In the final analysis, the Main Street bike lane project is a modest improvement relative to the ultimate vision for the corridor (both in scale and length). In the future, people riding bicycles on Main Street will benefit from an off-street path in the eastbound direction and a separated bike lane in the westbound direction. As such, today's Main Street bike lane project should be regarded as an interim quick-build bicycle facility that delivers improved safety and connectivity in the near-term – per Council direction through the Bicycle Rapid Implementation Program and more recently at the briefing on May 13 - while larger scale land use and transportation projects gradually come to fruition. Over time there will be opportunities for both the public sector (in the form of capital projects) and the private sector (in the form of conditions of development approval) to improve/upgrade the Main Street bike lane – enhancing the facility to promote Downtown Bellevue's high-density, mixed use urban environment.

Sincerely,

Lei Wu
Chair, Transportation Commission