

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

June 11, 2024
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Robinson and Councilmembers Hamilton, Nieuwenhuis and Stokes

ABSENT: Deputy Mayor Malakoutian and Councilmembers Lee and Zahn

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

2. Roll Call; Flag Salute

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo called the roll and all Councilmembers except Deputy Mayor Malakoutian, Councilmember Lee and Councilmember Zahn were present. Councilmember Stokes led the flag salute.

(a) Pride Month Proclamation

Councilmember Hamilton read the proclamation recognizing June 2024 as Pride Month in Bellevue and reaffirming the City's commitment to standing in solidarity with LGBTQIA+ residents and workers against ongoing discrimination and injustice. He encouraged everyone to celebrate the meaningful, long-lasting impacts of this community on Bellevue's diverse history and culture.

Kenbie Enby said they are a Bellevue resident and local drag artist. They said the introduction of the Bellevue Paws and Pride event last year helped the queer community feel seen and supported. They said it brought them joy to participate in the event again this year at Bellevue Downtown Park. They thanked the City for hosting the event and for the artwork on the street outside the park. They said the local drag community has tried to hold free events such as drag story time and community workshops. However, they are constantly turned down by local businesses and community spaces. They expressed concern that drag artists are politicized, villainized and overly sexualized. They said there is family friendly drag and adult drag, and to group all of it together is misinformed. They said drag is community, advocacy, visibility and an expression of queer joy.

(b) Juneteenth Proclamation

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis read the proclamation recognizing June 19, 2024, as Juneteenth in Bellevue, highlighting its historical importance and calling on the community to join in embracing a commitment to continued reflection and action to advance equity, inclusion and justice.

Regina Glenn, a longtime Bellevue resident, former president of the Newport Hills Community Club and a member of the advisory board for the Seattle Police Department, said Juneteenth is also known as Freedom Day and Emancipation Day. The holiday commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the United States and recognizes the struggles and achievements of African Americans in their quest for freedom and equality. The day serves as a reminder of the resiliency and perseverance of those who fought for their rights and acknowledgment of the injustices they faced. Ms. Glenn said the day highlights the ongoing fight for racial equality and justice and offers an opportunity for reflection and education regarding the history of slavery and the legacy of racism. She thanked the Council for the proclamation.

(c) World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Proclamation

Mayor Robinson read the proclamation recognizing June 15, 2024, as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Bellevue and urged everyone to commit to building safer communities for our aging residents.

Andrea Kline, representing the Bellevue Network on Aging, thanked the Council for the proclamation. She said elder abuse describes a range of behaviors including physical, emotional and sexual abuse; financial exploitation; confinement and neglect; and willful deprivation and self-neglect. It occurs in private homes, institutional settings and within businesses in the community. The abuse is often perpetrated by a known, trusted person such as an adult child, grandchild or spouse. Signs of senior adult abuse include suspicious or unexplainable bruises, sores or weight loss; changes in normal personality; neglect or inattention to hygiene, food, medication or home; and unexplainable financial charges or missing money. Ms. Kline said information is available online from the King County Prosecutor's Office, Washington Attorney General and the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services' Adult Protective Services (Report online or call 1-877-734-6277). She encouraged the public to call 911 in an emergency.

3. Approval of Agenda

- Councilmember Hamilton moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 4-0.

4. Oral Communications

City Clerk Arredondo said the total time for oral communications is for a period not to exceed 30 minutes and topics must relate to City of Bellevue government. Persons speaking to items on the agenda will be called first and if time remains, others will be called. The presiding officer is authorized to give preference to individuals who have not spoken to the Council within the past 60 days or who are speaking to items that will come before the Council in the upcoming 60 days.

- (a) Christopher Randels, representing Complete Streets Bellevue, expressed support for the RapidRide K Line, which will make transit service available to more people. He expressed support for the proposed guiding principles and infrastructure improvements. He noted that his organization sent a letter to the Council the previous day describing their proposed amendments. He suggested language to more explicitly identify reliability as a key priority and to ensure safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to stations. He asked the City to continue to identify opportunities for improving transit service in Bellevue.
- (b) Matt Jack, Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA), expressed support for the City's participation in the RapidRide K Line planning process. He said the objectives outlined for the project in the guiding principles align with the BDA's downtown access strategy and strategic plan goals in support of a multi-modal transportation system. The project enhances connectivity, promotes sustainable growth and economic activity, includes a community engagement process and strengthens partnerships. He thanked Councilmembers for their leadership and attention to this project.
- (c) Cameron Kast said he is a frequent bus and bicycle commuter. He expressed support for the proposed planning effort related to the RapidRide K Line. He said the guiding principles proposed by staff provide a solid foundation for this planning work. However, he suggested incorporating language that specifically emphasizes feasibility, reliability and local connections. He said the RapidRide K Line will provide a swift, direct connection to Kirkland when it opens in 2030.
- (d) Carol Simpson expressed concern regarding King County's action allowing electric bicycles on public trails. She said her brother-in-law was killed by an electric bike on a Marin County trail in California on August 31, 2022. As a pedestrian, he was hit by an individual riding an electric bike and left unconscious on the trail. A police investigation resulted in a determination to not bring criminal charges against the bike rider, who coincidentally went to the same hospital where her brother-in-law was taken. She said electric bikes do not belong on pedestrian trails as they are too fast and too heavy. She urged the City to adopt a policy prohibiting electric bikes on Bellevue's shared pedestrian trails and to encourage King County to reverse their rule.
- (e) Sue Mercer encouraged the City to ensure that traffic lights allow sufficient time for traffic to pass through. She encouraged the City to finish filling the potholes on SE 22nd-SE 24th Street in the vicinity of 156th Avenue SE. Ms. Mercer commented on her concerns regarding mental health care and said she was not updated while she was out of town regarding the people she houses in her home in Bellevue. She encouraged enhanced efforts to provide mental health care.

Mayor Robinson asked staff to follow up with Ms. Mercer regarding her concerns.

5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions: None.

6. Report of the City Manager

(a) Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) VISION 2050 Award

Acting City Manager Diane Carlson introduced Josh Brown, Executive Director of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). She thanked Community Development Department Director Emil King, Thara Johnson and Brooke Brod for their work on the community engagement strategy related to the VISION 2050 award.

Mr. King said PSRC is a key regional partner and staff is honored to receive this award for community engagement related to the Comprehensive Plan periodic update. He noted that staff expanded its engagement efforts with a focus on furthering equity and innovation. He thanked the community for their time and interest in engaging in the planning effort.

Mr. Brown said the VISION 2050 award recognizes Bellevue for its community engagement process related to the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan update process. He said the award recognizes work that helps to realize the regional collective vision for a thriving, racially equitable and sustainable central Puget Sound region. The City's VISION 2050 award falls under the Planning Ahead category and commends an outstanding example of bringing the community together to create a strong future for everyone. Mr. Brown said the community engagement process was successful in receiving meaningful input from a broad range of diverse communities. He said the City's community liaisons built strong partnerships that will continue to inform the City's work long into the future. Mr. Brown congratulated staff and the Council for the award.

Mayor Robinson thanked Mr. Brown and City staff for their planning efforts.

(b) Bellevue Conflict Resolution Center Housing Accord Program

Ms. Carlson introduced staff's update regarding the Conflict Resolution Center's Housing Accord program. She recalled that the center was the official provider of the Bellevue-Kirkland eviction resolution pilot program, which ended in 2023 based on the state discontinuing the program. Bellevue has established the voluntary Housing Accord program to continue to support housing stability for landlords and tenants.

Marci McReynolds, Conflict Resolution Center Manager, said the previous eviction resolution program was initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic and ultimately worked with 2,800 households to help individuals stay housed. She said the center's mission is to build the problem-solving capacity among the people who live, work and go to school in Bellevue and Kirkland. Community partners include ARCH (A Regional Coalition for Housing), Hopelink, rental assistance agencies, King County Library System and Resolution Washington.

Julia Devin, Housing Accord Program Coordinator, said the purpose of the program is to help ensure safe and stable rental housing by empowering housing providers and tenants to resolve conflicts and strengthen their communities. The program: 1) facilitates voluntary conflict resolution regarding disputes about rent, maintenance, lease violations and tenant relationships, 2) provides referrals to resources including rental assistance and social services organizations, legal aid and City services, 3) offers workshop in communication, handling difficult conversations, listening and de-escalation, and 4) strengthens connections by facilitating collaboration around shared needs and creating opportunities for achieving common ground.

Ms. Devin said next steps include continuing to build relationships with housing providers and tenant organizations, mentor volunteers, train landlords in problem solving and to coordinate the Be Connected pilot program in one housing community.

Ms. McReynolds said the public may contact the Conflict Resolution Center by emailing bcrc@Bellevuewa.gov, calling 425-452-4091 and online through bellevuewa.gov/resolve.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives

- Councilmember Stokes moved to excuse Councilmember Nieuwenhuis from the June 18, 2024 Regular Meeting. Councilmember Hamilton seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 4-0.

8. Consent Calendar

- Councilmember Hamilton moved to approve the Consent Calendar, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion to approve the Consent Calendar carried by a vote of 4-0, and the following items were approved:
 - (a) Council Minutes
Minutes of May 21, 2024 Regular Meeting
 - (b) Motion to reject all bids for Bid No. 24001, NE 8th Street and I-405 Crossing Improvements and Beautification Project (CIP Plan Nos. NEP-2, PW-R-199, PW-M-20, CD-22 and CD-37). This project is partially funded by the Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity and Congestion Levy.
 - (c) Resolution No. 10390 authorizing execution of an agreement with Hughes Fire Equipment, Inc. to purchase four replacement ambulances for the Bellevue Fire Department, in an amount not to exceed \$1,244,672, plus all applicable taxes.
 - (d) Resolution No. 10391 authorizing execution of an Interlocal Agreement between the City of Bellevue, South Puget Sound Fire Defense Board; and Central Region

Fire Defense Board, for participation of the Bellevue Fire Department in the South Puget Sound Fire Coordinating Group.

9. Public Hearings: None.

10. Study Session

(a) King County Metro RapidRide K Line Overview and Guiding Principles

Acting City Manager Diane Carlson introduced staff's update regarding planning for the King County Metro RapidRide K Line between Bellevue and Kirkland. Staff is seeking direction regarding the proposed guiding principles to represent local needs and priorities.

Ms. Carlson introduced the following King County Metro staff: Pierce Canser, System Expansion and Integration Supervisor; Lluvia Ellison-Morales, Senior Community Engagement Planner; Ryan Whitney, RapidRide K Line Lead; and Amanda Pleasant-Brown, Government Relations Jurisdictional Lead.

Andrew Singelakis, Director, Bellevue Transportation Department, recalled that the Council previously adopted a frequent transit network as a key part of the City's strategy to accommodate growth. He noted the opening of the light rail 2 Line serving the Eastside in April. The RapidRide K Line was last discussed with the Council in 2019 before the project was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Canser said the RapidRide B Line currently runs between downtown Bellevue and the Overlake area bordering Redmond. He said the program represents Metro's highest level of investment in service, facilities and passenger comfort to provide fast, frequent and reliable service. Metro's goal is to provide a 15-30 percent reduction in travel times compared to current bus service. Mr. Canser said the implementation last year of the RapidRide H Line between Burien, Delridge and downtown Seattle resulted in a year-over-year increase in ridership of approximately 30 percent. He said there are currently seven RapidRide lines and Metro is actively working with community partners to add five more routes over the next six years.

Mr. Canser said that following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the project budget was eliminated from the 2021-2022 biennium budget. Metro staff worked with the King County Executive, King County Council and city partners to reestablish the K Line project in the 2023-2024 budget and to plan for the opening of the line in 2030. Mr. Canser said the RapidRide K Line is in Metro's 10-year financial plan with an estimated investment of \$120 million.

The RapidRide K Line covers an 18-mile corridor with key connections to Sound Transit's I-405 bus rapid transit (BRT), Sound Transit's light rail and Metro's existing B Line in Bellevue. It connects major regional growth centers including the Totem Lake area in Kirkland, downtown Kirkland, downtown Bellevue and the Wilburton area, Bellevue College and the Eastgate Park and Ride facility. Mr. Canser described the downtown Bellevue alignment options under consideration.

Mr. Canser thanked Bellevue staff for their work with Metro staff. He noted ongoing discussions with the City of Bellevue and the City of Kirkland to review planning level assumptions, address speed and reliability concepts, confirm alignment with local Comprehensive Plans, identify multimodal improvements and to discuss the transit facility design. He said Metro anticipates completing the current planning phase by the end of the third quarter this year. After that, staff will return to the Council with a draft vision for the project.

Ms. Ellison-Morales described the community engagement process for the project that began in 2019. The current phase of this effort is phase two and a third phase will be launched later this fall. Ms. Ellison-Morales said postcards are being printed now and information will be available through the web site, social media and other advertisements. Letters will be sent to property owners and rider outreach includes transit alerts and bus signage. Community briefings are planned, both in person and virtual, as well as tables with printed materials at various community events. Ms. Ellison-Morales said an online survey will provide the best information for the community through maps and responses to questions.

Mr. Canser said next steps include continued technical coordination and refinement of the project scope, robust community engagement, identifying how best to deliver the project and establishing agreements related to the project. A draft vision will be presented later this year. Conceptual design work is scheduled for 2025-2026 with final design in 2027-2028 and construction during the 2028-2030 timeframe.

Mr. Singelakis said staff is seeking feedback and approval of the draft guiding principles representing local needs and ensuring that Bellevue's transit interests are effectively represented in the K line planning. The Bellevue Transit Master Plan adopted by the Council in 2014 reflects the City's priorities for frequent bus service, easy connections, and attractive and safe connection facilities. Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan includes policy TR-68: Support planned growth and development with a bold transit vision that provides efficient, useful, attractive services for most people to most destinations, most of the time, serving maximum ridership. The Mobility Implementation Plan adopted in 2022 calls for taking advantage of light rail, bus rapid transit and the Frequent Transit Network that form the spine of the transit network to support growth.

The proposed guiding principles are organized around the topic areas of convenient, attractive, direct, regionally connected, efficient, growth-oriented, community informed, safe and environmentally sustainable.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, liaison to the Transportation Commission, thanked staff for the update and work to date. He expressed support for the guiding principles. However, he added that reliability and consistency are important priorities as well. Mr. Singelakis said the guiding principles incorporate comments that staff has received. However, he said those topic areas could be added if desired.

Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Ellison-Morales said the current phase two of the community engagement process will solicit input on route options, including through the online survey.

In further response to Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, Mr. Canser said the local preferred alternative to be presented to the King County Council for adoption will include a map of the route and anticipated station locations. The phase this fall will involve staff working through the technical issues to determine the feasibility of the options and identify a preferred alternative. However, adjustments will be made as necessary based on continued input and refinement.

Ms. Ellison-Morales said the goal is to achieve a design that is feasible in terms of securing funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Councilmember Hamilton said it is important for employers to know that transit options are available for current and future employees. With the anticipated increase in housing, transit-oriented development and transit services such as the K Line are a critical part of that planning. He expressed support for including pedestrian and bike infrastructure where possible. He expressed support for the guiding principles. He encouraged adding a focus on investing to improve multi-modal access to the K Line and ensuring that the service is appealing to travelers.

Mayor Robinson expressed support for adding the concepts of reliable, consistent and appealing. Referring to alignment option D.1 reflected in Metro's presentation, she asked about multimodal enhancements at SE 8th Street. Mr. Canser said he would follow up with potential projects and access options for that area. Ms. Robinson asked whether the project includes pedestrian and bike investments. Mr. Canser suggested that those improvements will be made in partnership with the City. Mayor Robinson said it is critical to provide those improvements. She suggested that the guiding principles include a reference to connecting to the multimodal transportation system.

Ms. Robinson said she is pleased to see the connection to Bellevue College.

Councilmember Stokes expressed an interest in moving forward as quickly as possible, especially given the significant growth since the planning process began in 2019. He said he looks forward to working with the City of Kirkland on this project and is eager to move forward. He thanked staff for their good work to date.

Mayor Robinson recapped Council input so far regarding the priorities of reliable, consistent, appealing, and new and improved connections to the multimodal system.

→ Councilmember Nieuwenhuis moved to direct staff to use Bellevue's RapidRide K Line Guiding Principles to represent local needs and to ensure that the community's transit interests are effectively represented in K Line planning. Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, staff confirmed that the Council's input tonight would be incorporated into the planning process.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 4-0.

At 7:25 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared a short break. The meeting resumed at 7:39 p.m.

- (b) Streamlining the permitting process and implementing provisions of the Local Project Review Act, RCW 36.70B, as amended by Senate Bill 5290

City Manager Carlson introduced staff's presentation regarding work to implement changes resulting from the adoption of Senate Bill 5290 affecting Land Use Code regulations, permit timelines and streamlining measures.

Rebecca Horner, Director, Development Services Department (DSD), said staff is seeking Council direction to initiate work to implement provisions in SB 5290. She recalled previous improvements to the permitting process including the implementation of MyBuildingPermit.com in the early 2000s, mobile and paperless permitting, the creation of a customer experience program and, most recently, the establishment of the Bellevue Development Committee.

SB 5290 was introduced in early 2023 and signed by the governor on May 8, 2023. The legislation amends the Local Project Review Act [RCW 36.70B], applies to land use and environmental permits, provides mandatory permit review timelines, and establishes penalties for failing to meet timelines, with the goal of increasing efficiency and reducing permit timelines. Ms. Horner said the State Department of Commerce created a committee to help local communities understand how to implement the new laws.

Jake Hesselgesser, Assistant Director, DSD, said the Department of Commerce convened a digital permitting work group last summer to help with the implementation of SB 5290. The group is charged with reviewing the benefits, costs and barriers to a statewide digital permitting system. The first deliverable is a legislative report, which is provided in the meeting materials as Attachment C [Community Assistance Plan to Address Residential Permitting Delays]. The report is a plan to provide jurisdictions with trained staff to review residential permits. Key findings identified staffing challenges, permitting backlogs in some jurisdictions and fewer planners graduating from higher education. The recommendations reflected in the report address resource strategies and a consultant resource list. Mr. Hesselgesser said future deliverables include grant programs, guidance to establish reasonable fees and the digital permitting report due to the legislature in August 2024.

Key procedural and administrative components of SB 5290 prohibit site plan review on interior alterations, require clear submittal requirements, amend the definition of project permit, amend requirements for permit application completeness, and require the publication of performance reports at the local and state level.

Ms. Hesselgesser described the policy considerations related to SB 5290, noting that the legislation introduces a tiered framework for permit processing timelines. He said previous legislation set a standard permit processing timeline of 120 days. The new framework requires processing within 65 days when a public notice is not required, 100 days when public notice is required, and 170 days when public notice and a public hearing are required. The requirements apply to calendar days and the days are counted for the City's work. If the timelines are not met, jurisdictions may be subject to permit fee refunds ranging from 10-20 percent of the permit fee. The legislation outlines incentive measures to avoid permit fee refunds and to put measures in

place to help streamline the permitting process. Mr. Hesselgesser said the City would avoid the permit fee refunds if it adopts three streamlining measures.

Mr. Hesselgesser presented an analysis of the City's current permit processing timelines from 2021-2023 permit data. He said 79 percent of permits involving no public notice were completed within 65 days, 29 percent of permits requiring public notice were completed within 100 days, and no permits requiring public notice and a public hearing (two permits) were completed within 170 days. For the 358 project permits processed during that time period, 59 percent complied with the new mandatory timelines. Factors affecting the processing of permits include resource availability, special circumstances and complexities, factors outside of the City's control, and unintended consequences. Mr. Hesselgesser said staff saw considerable alignment with the City's current process improvement efforts.

Staff recommends moving four of the 24 permit types to 170-day processing based on special circumstances and complexities, size and scope of large development projects, complex environmental conditions and conditions outside of the City's control. The four permit types are design review, master development plans, critical areas land use and shoreline substantial development. Mr. Hesselgesser highlighted examples of major projects (e.g., phased development, multiple high-rise towers, highly complex designs) and projects in sensitive areas (e.g., wetlands, streams, shorelines, site-specific conditions and procedural complexities).

Mr. Hesselgesser said RCW 36.70B.160 provides 10 streamlining measures for jurisdictions to consider. Local governments can avoid the requirement for fee refunds if they implement three of the measures and the City would be required to evaluate its performance after a five-year period. At the end of the five years, if the City is meeting the timelines 50 percent of the time, the City would continue to receive the benefit of avoiding permit fee refunds.

Staff recommends implementing the following three streamlining measures: 1) adopting reasonable fees per RCW 82.02.020, 2) establishing consultant contracts and a supporting budget, and 3) budgeting for contingent positions to support a quick response in permit processing.

Mr. Hesselgesser said outreach and engagement to date includes regional benchmarking with cities and counties, participating in the statewide digital permitting work group, working with the Bellevue Development Committee, establishing a project web page, engaging an internal work group to address process improvements and coordinating with the 17 cities and counties that use MyBuildingPermit.com.

Kristina Gallant, Planning Manager, DSD, said staff is seeking direction to move forward with the Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) necessary to comply with SB 5290. The revisions will involve administrative and procedural amendments rather than amendments to development regulations. Staff will move forward with modifying the timeline/shot clock requirements, continuing process improvement commitments and, through the budget process later this year, implementing the streamlining measures.

A study session regarding the LUCA will be scheduled for the third quarter and a public hearing and formal Council action are anticipated during the fourth quarter to prepare for implementation beginning January 1, 2025.

Ms. Gallant said staff is requesting direction to initiate work to implement the changes necessary resulting from the adoption of SB 5290, including initiating the LUCA, modifications to permit timelines and three of the streamlining measure options required by the legislation.

Responding to Councilmember Stokes, Director Horner said that SB 5290 is a natural extension of the continuous improvement efforts by the City. Mr. Stokes expressed support for moving forward as proposed.

Councilmember Hamilton thanked staff for their work. He said the permit timeline analysis is very helpful and he was impressed with the customer survey. He expressed support for expanding the pool of consultant resources and for implementing additional streamlining measures. He said he would like for the Council to receive an update approximately one year after the amendments are implemented. He expressed support for moving forward.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for the significant engagement with the development community. He commended Director Horner and opined that the City is better aligned than it was a few years ago in understanding the issues in Bellevue that prevent development and projects.

Ms. Horner said Mr. Hesselgesser leads the Business Services Division, which has focused on process improvements for many years.

Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Mr. Hesselgesser said the City could create a new project permit timeline category (e.g., 80 days, 120 days) for specific permits. However, he said most cities are committed to using the 65-day, 100-day and 170-day categories to maintain better consistency statewide.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis said it is important to him for the City continue its cost recovery model. Mr. Hesselgesser said there are no cost recovery provisions in the legislation except for existing state law. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis expressed support for moving forward as proposed.

Mayor Robinson said it was fortunate that the City implemented full online permitting before the pandemic. Referring to the timeline categories, she asked whether it would be possible to expedite the permit following a public hearing instead of continuing the decision to an additional Council meeting. Mr. Hesselgesser said that is possible and noted that the resource streamlining measures will be part of the future budget process.

→ Councilmember Stokes moved to direct staff to initiate work to implement changes resulting from the adoption of SB 5290, including initiating Land Use Code Amendments, modifications to permit timelines and the implementation of three streamlining measures. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 4-0.

(c) Transportation Capital Investment Program and Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity and Congestion Levy Update

City Manager Carlson introduced staff's update regarding the Transportation Capital Investment Program (CIP) and projects funded by the neighborhood safety, connectivity and congestion levy.

Maher Welaye, Assistant Director, Transportation Department, said the Transportation CIP for 2023-2024 totals \$99.1 million, with approximately 44 percent spent on discrete projects, 37 percent spent on programs (e.g., pavement preservation, major maintenance, traffic safety, etc.) and 18 percent funded by the levy.

Mr. Welaye said recently completed projects include the NE 6th Street crosswalk, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail (Phase 2), West Lake Sammamish Parkway (Phase 2), 124th Avenue NE (NE 12th Street to Spring Boulevard), Spring Boulevard Zone 4 (130th Avenue NE to 132nd Avenue NE) and the 130th Avenue NE Park and Ride facility.

Projects under construction include 130th Avenue NE (BelRed Road to Northup Way), 124th Avenue NE (Ichigo Way to Northup Way), 98th Avenue SE and SE 11th Street slope stabilization, the 2024 overlay program in 10 neighborhoods and the 2024 downtown overlay program. Mr. Welaye noted that the downtown overlay project received \$7 million in federal funding.

Projects in the design phase include the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail (Phase 3), Grand Connection I-405 crossing, Bellevue College multimodal connection, 120th Avenue NE (Stage 4), Spring Boulevard (Zone 3), the seismic retrofit of two NE 12th Street bridges and the 2025 overlay program. The Mountains to Sound Greenway project has received \$3 million in City funding, \$6.6 million in state funding and \$2.3 million in federal funding.

John Murphy, Senior Planner, recalled that the 20-year neighborhood safety, connectivity and congestion levy was approved by the voters in 2016. Approximately \$2 million is provided annually for neighborhood congestion reduction and \$8 million per year is directed toward safety and connectivity projects (e.g., sidewalk and trail maintenance, safety and traffic management technology, new sidewalks and trails, neighborhood safety and bike facilities).

The City has invested more than \$34 million in projects to date and completed 70 projects with projects in every Bellevue neighborhood. The projects vary in scale from \$15,000 to \$4 million and often partner with other City funds and/or grants.

Mr. Murphy said approximately 45 projects are in different stages of planning and design. Examples of recently completed levy projects include the 105th Avenue SE sidewalk (near Bellevue High School), NE 24th Street slope stabilization, Kamber Road flashing crosswalks and 112th Avenue NE/NE 24th Street traffic signal. A number of projects are planned for construction in 2024 and 2025 including the Northwest Bellevue walkways project, NE 8th Street I-405

crossing pedestrian and landscaping improvements, 156th Avenue SE/Lake Hills Boulevard traffic signal, South Bellevue Station neighborhood improvements, 150th Avenue SE congestion reduction, Coal Creek Parkway rockery replacement and 123rd Avenue SE sidewalk.

Mr. Murphy said this is the eighth year of the levy and staff will provide a progress report to the community this fall in the *It's Your City* newspaper. He said staff will update the online interactive project map and continue to seek grant funding to supplement projects.

Mr. Welaye highlighted project delivery factors and challenges including staffing, cost increases, property acquisitions, site complexity and a competitive labor market. The public engagement strategy involves a Title VI report, survey, open house public meetings, social media updates, construction mailer and traffic advisories.

Mr. Welaye commented on diversity in procurement practices. The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program is required for all projects receiving federal funding for both design and construction activities. Under the City's Women and Minority Owned Business Enterprise (WMBE) program, transportation staff is working with the Finance and Asset Management (FAM) Department to implement the new Procurement Diversity Inclusion Plan.

The Transportation Department began implementing the City's new Apprenticeship Utilization Program in February 2024. The program established a minimum apprentice utilization requirement of 15 percent of total labor hours for public works projects exceeding \$2 million. Mr. Welaye said approximately 10 apprentices are currently working in the 2024 overlay program.

Responding to Councilmember Hamilton, Mr. Welaye said that future funding opportunities include another TIFIA (Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act) loan as well as new programs to be evaluated by finance staff.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for maintaining and building the City's transportation infrastructure and for focusing on safety. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Mr. Murphy said the 156th Avenue SE/Lake Hills Boulevard project was part of a broader study of intersections along 156th Avenue SE. Mr. Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for their work with apprentices.

Councilmember Stokes thanked staff for the update and the significant progress on transportation projects.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Mr. Murphy said the levy package has delivered approximately 15 Safe Routes to Schools projects. He said he did not think there were any projects currently planned near Stevenson Elementary School or Odle Middle School.

Ms. Robinson suggested that every road project should include a bike lane and sidewalk. Mr. Welaye said those elements are evaluated with every project. However, sometimes there are constraints on including those features. Mr. Welaye said the Coal Creek Parkway project was redesigned to allow a future bike lane.

11. Land Use: None.
12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions: None.
13. Written Reports
 - (a) Intergovernmental Affairs Monthly Update
 - (b) Report of Emergency Procurement for Public Works Contract – Lakehurst Creek Culvert Repair
14. Unfinished Business: None.
15. New Business: None.
16. Executive Session: None.
17. Adjournment

At 8:50 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared the meeting adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC
City Clerk

/kaw