

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES

July 11, 2024  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Hybrid Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Vice Chair Magill, Commissioners Kurz, Rebhuhn  
COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: Commissioners Marciante, Ting  
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Chair Stash  
STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Paula Stevens, Eric Miller, Michael Ingram, Department of Transportation  
OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Nieuwenhuis; Chris Breiland, 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 Vice Chair Magill who presided.

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Chair Stash.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Vice Chair Magill reminded the audience that comments must be related to city of Bellevue government business and to the role and responsibilities of the Transportation Commission.

Vice Chair Magill noted that staff had forwarded to the Commissioners all written communications received since the June 13 meeting.

Barbara Hughes urged the Commission to not put bike lanes on Bel-Red Road, and not remove vehicle travel lanes. BelRed should be removed from the Bike Bellevue project. The Commission should focus instead on Spring Boulevard which has been planned for and is far calmer and safer for cyclists. Spring Boulevard is a better fit with the city's Vision Zero initiative. Traffic, numerous businesses, housing and entrances and exits onto Bel-Red Road and Northup Way make bike lanes unsafe for cyclists on those roads. On 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, the sharrows should be repainted, and nothing else should be done with 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE at the NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street and NE 24<sup>th</sup> Street junctions. Vehicle capacity should not be removed. There is enough space to use the Highland pathway to create a bike path. No vehicle travel lanes or turn lanes should be removed. Bridle Trails residents know that would cause chaos in the Safeway BelRed area. The area is already congested at peak times. There are other creative solutions to

providing safe bike paths using Spring Boulevard to form east-west and north-south bike lanes without removing any vehicle travel lanes. The Commission was urged to think creatively. The development now being seen along with that which is planned in Wilburton, Northup Way and other places will increase the use of the vehicle lanes. Vehicle traffic in Bellevue must be kept flowing. The Vision Zero goals should be kept by focusing on cycle paths on Spring Boulevard where the public right-of-way is already owned by the city.

Valentina Vaneeva noted having on Monday sent to the Commission an email with the subject Bike Bellevue Needs Your Support. The Commissioners were urged to look at the email and the links included to a photo project called Bicycles at a Crossroads. The project should help the Commission think of future Bike Bellevue users not as a vague idea but as real and diverse people whose lives would be significantly improved through the implementation of Bike Bellevue. With regard to Corridors 3 through 5, the staff recommends exploring potential bicycle network connections to Crossroads; that would be a fantastic addition in that it would facilitate people reaching the light rail station from Crossroads in less than ten minutes, which is faster than riding the B Line. For the already existing BelRed segments, an additional corridor study is also recommended. That is confusing given the understanding that Bike Bellevue itself was the result of corridor studies. The project money should not be spent on doing work that has already been done.

Chris Randles with Complete Streets Bellevue said it was encouraging to hear the Mayor at the most recent Council meeting direct staff to investigate rapid implementation of Vision Zero infrastructure. That represents the original spirit of Bike Bellevue, which was to use industry best practices to lower speeds, create calmer conditions, increase compatibility and to improve safety for everyone. In making a recommendation, the Commission should be explicit in thinking about how to materially deliver Vision Zero to achieve the goals on Bel-Red Road, Northup Way and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. If Bike Bellevue infrastructure is not going to be considered, what will be. With regard to the Mobility Implementation Plan gaps and the equity issue, the staff memo did a great job of explaining the points. Anyone can currently go anywhere they want to go in Bellevue in a car. That is fundamentally not the case for those who walk and bike. There are fundamental gaps in the infrastructure; there are swaths of the city in which there is no safe biking infrastructure and no sidewalks. For modes other than traveling by vehicle, there is an access issue and therefore an equity issue.

Maria Frost, transportation director for Kemper Development Company, said Kemper Development Company and Wallace Properties remain strongly opposed to removing general purpose lanes on any of the three corridors on the agenda for study. It is encouraging to see recommendations from staff to study alternative designs that would add bike infrastructure without eliminating the road lanes that are vital to Bellevue's multimodal transportation system. If projects are referred to the TFP for further study, as recommended by staff, it should be clarified and ensured that they will comply with Council direction and include options for expanding the width of the right-of-way to enable completion of the bike network without eliminating road lanes. On Bel-Red Road from NE 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Spring Boulevard to 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Kemper Development Company strongly opposes adding bike lanes, and therefore opposes the staff recommendation that the issue be punted to the TFP. The portion of Bel-Red Road should be assigned to Category 6 and removed from further consideration. Bike lanes on Bel-Red Road will worsen traffic congestion and will create multiple conflict points along driveways. They would also be redundant to Spring Boulevard. Bel-Red Road is a critical arterial that should be preserved to accommodate growth and to keep residents and workers who depend on a car for mobility moving. Beyond 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Kemper Development Company would support further evaluation if the goal is to determine

how to widen the right-of-way to add bike lanes without eliminating road lanes. The staff-recommended referral to the TFP in regard to Northrup Way is acceptable up to 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE because a TFP project that is safe and does not deteriorate intersections can enable a solution to improve bicycle infrastructure without narrowing or removing general purpose lanes. The section from 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE should be changed to Category 5 instead of Category 7 and studied separately. Bike lanes east of 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE are largely redundant, which is why the Commission should remove from consideration bike lanes between 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. The staff-recommended Spring Boulevard spur to 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is superior in safety and in avoiding impacts at the heavily congested intersection of Northrup Way and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. In general, Spring Boulevard is superior to both Northrup Way and Bel-Red Road and should remain the priority. Kemper Development Company supports the staff's short- and long-term recommendations. Staff should consider the acquisition of property rights on the east side of 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to create a safe multipurpose path without eliminating general purpose lanes.

Brad Litoral said Bel-Red Road and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE are significant arterials. Reducing the traffic lanes on those roadways does not seem like something that is in the best interest of the community as a whole. The Commission was urged to consider increasing the right-of-way to make room for bicycle facilities without removing general purpose lanes. Bel-Red Road would not be a great path for bike lanes. Spring Boulevard and along the light rail corridor are better places for further bike improvements.

Vic Bishop, a former Transportation Commission member, spoke representing the Eastside Transportation Association. The Commission was encouraged to reject all consideration of taking travel lanes from either Northrup Way or Bel-Red Road. The idea should just be taken off the table. They need to be identified as Category 6 projects and totally eliminated from further consideration. Both are major arterials that are currently congested and which are projected to continue to be congested out to 2035. A map of congested intersections from the Wilburton DEIS was provided to the Commissioners. The traveling public simply cannot afford to have any travel lanes on either corridor converted to some other use, including bike lanes. In December 2023 the Eastside Transportation Association recommended that the Commission reject Bike Bellevue on its face. That should be done for the two corridors now. The Council gave specific direction to not repurpose travel lanes except as a last resort. A first resort alternative to the two corridors is on the table, namely Spring Boulevard. That should be developed by extending the complete street in some fashion to 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and connected the SR-520 trail and the Overlake area. The map shows 13 failed intersections. The plan is one that will fail with the existing and proposed capacity. Seventy-five percent of all trips will be by car, yet the talk is of taking lanes away to accommodate bike riders who account for only one quarter of one percent. Congestion is the problem and the Commission should not take its eyes off that goal.

Nichole Myers referred to page 3 of the staff memo and pushed back by saying the duration of the peak PM travel period matters a lot to the single parent and low-income households who may not work from home. It is workers who can choose their hours who have the most flexibility and who are the least affected by the peak periods. Any person trying to get to a job that has a rigid schedule will be especially impacted. With regard to equity in terms of giving equal weight for each of the ten equity metrics, it is not clear what the percentile cutoff is for the categories. It would also be reasonable to include multigenerational households as a category since they have very different dynamics. Single vehicle households as a category varies depending on the size of the household. Clarification is needed about whether the points for minors is just for minors overall, or just people between the ages of 16 to 17 as the side

note seems to suggest. School trips are essentially a bonus commute for many families. Clarification is also needed in regard to pages 5 and 6 of the memo where TFP-280 seems to say that 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE should have both a ten-foot-wide path and a five-foot-wide planning area. Page 6 says the same section of 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE should have a six-foot-wide sidewalk and a four-foot-wide planter strip. Northup Way currently has Route 249 along it, but the Bike Bellevue analysis only talks about buses traveling on NE 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Bel-Red Road. Where bike improvements are put in, buses may have to pull over into the bike lanes. Clarification is also needed in regard to what is meant by permanent bicycle infrastructure.

Arman Bilge, a Bridle Trails resident, said the month has been a good one for transportation. Many people, including Vice Chair Magill, have been out to the NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street bridge by the Wilburton station. Funding has been received to complete Eastrail to the south. Eastrail will be a backbone of Bike Bellevue and for pedestrians. The SR-520 trail also serves as a backbone, and Spring Boulevard will be in the future. The question is how to get between all the great facilities. Many still struggle to make the connections. Where the facilities converge is at the missing link of the SR-520 trail. To get between the two SR-520 segments, riders must take Northup Way. Spring Boulevard, which is to come and which will be fantastic, also dumps riders onto Northup Way. Northup Way is a critical connection. The bike lanes that do service the missing SR-520 link are very steep. In order to make the best use of the millions of dollars poured into infrastructure projects, including Eastrail, SR-520, Spring Boulevard and NE 12<sup>th</sup> Street, the last missing link must be completed. No bike lane will be redundant for those seeking to get around.

Alex Tsimerman began with a Nazi salute and called the Commissioners dirty damn Nazi fascist antisemitic bandita Gestapo junta garbage pigs. The situation in Bellevue is very unique in that the Mayor has cut off Alex Tsimerman. The mayor looks absolutely stupid in doing that.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis suggested to the chair that the testimony was not relevant to the work of the Transportation Commission. Vice Chair Magill directed the speaker to keep all remarks relevant to the Commission.

Alex Tsimerman said freedom of speech is not for Jews, and killing Jews is normal. The bosses that control the city have for many years done what they want, and that is classic fascism. The mayor has no shame in doing what she does because it is done only against a Jew.

Vice Chair Magill told the speaker the remarks made were not relevant to the work of the Commission, and the speaker was directed to leave.

Cort Olsen reported being a south Bellevue resident who rides all over by bike. Improvements to Northup Way and Bel-Red Road should be supported. As president of People for Climate Action, full support was given to the Bike Bellevue plan. The Commission was urged to go along with the recommendations of staff. There is a clear need for a variety of mobility options in Bellevue as the population increases. There will continue to be congestion problems and alternatives are needed to save the planet.

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

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis reported that the Council confirmed Susanna Keilman to serve as the newest member of the Transportation Commission. Susanna Keilman is a United States

Air Force veteran who has had the opportunity to travel around the world and witness firsthand the importance of well-functioning multimodal transportation systems, and who has volunteered for humanitarian missions to improve water supply, housing and healthcare. Susanna Keilman also serves on the board of the Asia Pacific Cultural Center and the Greater Seattle Korean Association.

## 5. STAFF REPORTS

Principal Planner Kevin McDonald reminded the Commissioners that all meetings going forward would be via the Teams platform for the hybrid portion.

## 6. PUBLIC HEARING – None

## 7. STUDY SESSION

### A. Bike Bellevue

Kevin McDonald shared with the Commission a map showing the Bike Bellevue corridors in Downtown, Wilburton and BelRed. The corridors are intended to provide a more complete and connected network for bicycle riders in the urban core. Also shared with the Commission was a spreadsheet how the \$4.5 million allocated by the Council in the 2023-2029 CIP was divided among the various corridors. It was noted that the cost of implementing the recommendations already made by the Commission was about \$3.5 million. There is sufficient funding to implement the recommended corridors, minus the NE 12th Street corridor for which the Commission recommended doing a back-of-curb multipurpose path, which will be separately funded. The total cost of all the Bike Bellevue corridors project was \$18.590 million. The Council-allocated \$4.5 million leaves a gap that was intended to be filled in part with a grant which ultimately did not come through.

In March the Council provided direction to the Commission to look at all of the Bike Bellevue corridors to determine if they fit into one or more of seven categories. Over the last three meetings the Commission has focused on doing that work. In April the Commission approved three corridors for implementation, largely on the basis that they could be employed rapidly without repurposing travel lanes. In May the Commission extended the NE 1st Street/NE 2nd Street corridor to include Segment A and chose to identify directional facilities using sharrows, traffic calming measures and a reduced speed limit rather than to repurpose travel lanes. In June the Commission approved the back-of-curb multipurpose path on NE 12<sup>th</sup> street west of 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. As added value, the corridor will be extended all the way to 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, something that will involve collaboration with an adjacent private property that is being redeveloped to include a multipurpose path as part of the frontage improvements.

Kevin McDonald presented the Commission with three additional corridors for deliberation, beginning with Corridor 1, Northup Way. The Bike Bellevue proposal for the corridor was to reallocate a westbound lane to provide for one-way separated bicycle facilities on both sides of the road between 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan references the segment by calling for bike lanes on both sides. A bike lane on Northup Way between 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is already complete. The Mobility Implementation Plan performance target for the corridor is LTS-3 between 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. The section from 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is an extension of the Spring Boulevard priority bicycle corridor and the MIP LTS target for the segment is LTS-1.

Kevin McDonald noted that there are some planned implementation projects along the corridor. As private properties redevelopment, the city requires frontage improvements based on the adopted plans and policies. Some of the frontage improvements on Northrup Way have already occurred. Additionally, the Washington State Department of Transportation is planning for an interchange with SR-520 to provide access to and from the east. The interchange is being planned to happen at 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and will incorporate separated bike lanes in each direction on Northrup Way.

The options open to the Commission are to implement the Bike Bellevue plan; implement the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Project B-111 with buffered bike lanes instead of regular bike lanes; or to refer the corridor for further analysis in the Transportation Facilities Plan.

The Commissioners were shown examples of frontage improvements that have occurred along Northrup Way.

Staff have looked at the corridor in separate parts. The segment between 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE already has bike lanes, but there is thought to be enough space within the curb-to-curb dimension to narrow the travel lanes a little to achieve a buffered bike lane in each direction without repurposing travel lanes. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan is currently being implemented in the segment between 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE with buffered or back-of-curb bike lanes. The incremental progress should be maintained and encouraged, and if there are any lingering gaps resulting from some properties not redeveloping in a reasonable timeframe, CIP resources should be used to fill them. The segment between 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, where the MIP calls for LTS-1 as part of the priority bike corridor, does not yet have a design. It should be referred to the TFP for consideration for design and implementation.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked if the direction from the Council to avoid where possible repurposing travel lanes will carry over into the TFP. Kevin McDonald said the Council's direction would accompany the recommendation to the TFP. One reason for going to the TFP to look for design alternatives is to determine if repurposing a travel lane would be the last resort, something that cannot be known until other options are considered.

Commissioner Ting stated that the data indicates that 57 percent of the fatal and serious collisions between bicyclists and cars are due to right and left turns. In light of that, the question asked was what type of facility can be put in that would address the right and left turn safety issue. Kevin McDonald allowed that in the absence of a completely separated multipurpose path, the potential for collisions between vehicles and bicycles will exist wherever driveways or roadway intersections exist. The more separation there is between a bike and a car along a corridor, the safer the bike rider is generally. At intersections where turning movements can be phased, safety can be improved for cyclists.

Commissioner Ting voiced the concern that by putting additional facilities on a busy, high-speed road, the chance of conflicts is increased. Back-of-curb separated facilities are great so long as there are no driveways or intersections.

Commissioner Marciante expressed the understanding that new developments are discouraged from having an entry or exit across arterials to minimize dumping more traffic onto the arterials. As such, garage entrances will not be from an arterial. Kevin McDonald confirmed

the statement and pointed out that there is a Comprehensive Plan policy that calls for that approach. Commissioner Marciante suggested that accordingly the safest place to put a separated bike lane more often will be on the arterial itself.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked how non-intersection curb cuts or driveways exist in the corridor that must be dealt with. Kevin McDonald said there are dozens of them by the nature of the way the properties have developed over time. Some properties have one or more individual driveways. While the intent is to consolidate driveways to the extent possible, in the meantime vehicle access to and from parcels must still be provided for. The redevelopment of parcels will eliminate some driveways.

Commissioner Ting asked why bicycle facilities should be placed on an arterial if there is a parallel route that avoids the high-speed interactions. Kevin McDonald allowed that in the context of Northup Way the SR-520 trail is a parallel route. The trail, however, operates as a regional connection and has no local access opportunities. There is value in having parallel corridors for bicycles that serve multiple purposes. Going south of Northup Way is Spring Boulevard where properties are being redeveloped and bike lanes are being installed. There is a gap that needs to be filled between 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, but for anyone whose destination is anywhere along Northup Way, bicycle facilities are needed along Northup Way. That intent has existed for decades in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, which facilitates incremental implementation as properties redevelop.

Commissioner Kurz asked about the timeline involved with the three options proposed by staff. Kevin McDonald said there may be sufficient funding to achieve the first category in 2025 or 2026. Category 2 involves incremental implementation as development occurs, which might leave gaps to be filled with program funds. For Category 5, will be necessary to determine how to provide LTS-1 facilities between 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, and that process has not yet begun.

Vice Chair Magill commented that theoretically an LTS-1 bike path could be developed that crosses multiple driveways. The question asked was if there is a way to measure safety based on the density or volume of driveways and intersections. Kevin McDonald said determining the number of existing driveways between 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE would be a part of the study, along with identifying opportunities to consolidate driveways. There may be statistics regarding the danger factor at each driveway, but it likely would depend on the speed and volume of the traffic and ingress and egress from the driveway. Directional bicycle facilities are typically a safer way to provide for connectivity over a multipurpose path where there are driveway crossings. Vehicle drivers typically look in the direction other cars are coming from, and if there is a bicycle coming from the opposite direction on a two-way cycle track, the driver may not see the bicycle. It may be possible to provide directional bicycle facilities between 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE with a crossing at 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to get to the Spring Boulevard connection which riders could take all the way to 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE along the new multipurpose path previously recommended by the Commission.

Commissioner Ting suggested the Commission would benefit from hearing more about ways to achieve Vision Zero more rapidly through strategically creating bike lanes where they will be the safest. While there is a lot of history behind putting bike lanes on arterials, there should be some discussion about running bike lanes parallel to arterials with connecting cross paths. Trying to get more people to use really busy arterials does not appear to be a good idea.

Commissioner Ting asked if the staff recommendation for Category 7 would involve the

repurposing of a travel lane. Kevin McDonald said the recommendation for the segment between 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is for back-of-curb permanent infrastructure. Commissioner Ting asked if implementation of Category 5 could result in the removal of a travel lane. Kevin McDonald said the focus will be on achieving LTS-1 between those streets, but doing so likely cannot be done with paint and posts by taking a travel lane. It would have to involve back-of-curb protected bicycle facilities. The referral to the TFP would be to study the alternatives to determine which approach would be the best for getting to LTS-1.

Commissioner Marciante urged the Commission to avoid narrowing the scope of the study. The study should go forward to determine the options and the costs as well as the tradeoffs and benefits.

Commissioner Rebhuhn agreed with Commissioner Marciante. With regard to the segment between 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, it would not make sense to repurpose a travel lane only to have the corridor open back up to the same amount of lanes on the other side of 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Kevin McDonald said the connection is not to the east of 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, rather it is to 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. The priority north-south bike corridor would be 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. There are no bicycle facilities existing or planned to the east of 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. It may not be logical or reasonable to repurpose a travel lane for the segment, but it should be studied in order to eliminate that option.

Vice Chair Magill pointed out that there are three points of access to the SR-520 trail.

Commissioner Rebhuhn voiced support for the ideas proposed by the staff. The work done to add bicycle lanes without repurposing a travel lane is good and has provided the Commission with some good options.

Commissioner Kurz agreed and suggested the options represent a reasonable compromise.

Commissioner Ting agreed as well but voiced the desire to see a well-designed and protected bicycle lane between 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE since that could serve as an important connection up to Eastrail from the Spring Boulevard path

Commissioner Marciante also agreed with the staff recommendation, adding that one important consideration when analyzing studies is how long the process takes. The Bicycle Rapid Implementation Program was formed specifically to get projects on the ground. The completion of gaps and the creation of safe connections may need to be done with temporary facilities while development occurs.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked what the difference is in travel lane width where narrowing is done. Kevin McDonald said typically travel lanes are not less than ten feet, but it will take some study to determine exactly how much room there is to work with.

A motion to accept the staff recommendation for Corridor 1 was made by Commissioner Rebhuhn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kurz and the motion carried unanimously.

With regard to the Bel-Red Road segments, Kevin McDonald said the Bike Bellevue proposal for Corridor 3 is to convert one of two westbound lanes to provide for buffered bike lanes in each direction. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan does not provide a bicycle network facility type for the corridor. The Commission added Bel-Red Road for consideration



as a LTS-3 corridor during its deliberations on the Mobility Implementation Plan in consideration of the Bicycle Rapid Implementation Program that included the corridor. The LTS-3 categorization for the Corridor 3 section scored 15-16 technical points out of 20. The options are to implement Bike Bellevue, or to refer to the TFP to conduct a corridor study. There is no option to allow for redevelopment to build projects incrementally because the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan does not prescribe a type of bicycle facility for the segment, precluding the city to require building a facility as part of redevelopment.

Bike Bellevue also calls for the repurposing of travel lanes for Corridor 4 in order to achieve buffered bike lanes in each direction. There is no Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan project for the segment, and the MIP envisions an LTS-3 facility. The MIP score is 18 out of 20 points. The same options apply to the corridor, to implement Bike Bellevue or refer to the TFP for a corridor study to identify options for achieving LTS-3 along the corridor.

Bike Bellevue calls for repurposing travel lanes along Corridor 5 as well to achieve one-way buffered bike lanes between 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street. There is a Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan project for the segment between 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street that calls for adding a five-foot bike lane on each side of the street between NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street and 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. To the west of NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street there is no Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan project. The MIP identifies the corridor for LTS-3, and the corridor scores 15-18 out of 20 points. As before, the options are to implement Bike Bellevue or refer to the TFP for a corridor study.

Kevin McDonald said the consolidated staff recommendation for Corridors 2, 3 and 5 is to refer each corridor to the TFP to conduct a corridor study between Spring Boulevard and 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to identify ways to achieve LTS-3. Because the Crossroads neighborhood has called for connections to and from the corridor from Crossroads, the recommendation is to expand the geographic scope of the study to look at ways to improve the bike network connections to the Crossroads neighborhood to connect with the Overlake Village light rail station and the bike network Redmond is building.

Commissioner Ting asked if the recommendation for Corridor 5 could result in the removal of a travel lane. Kevin McDonald said the recommendation will result in the consideration of that option, but it may not be the preferred option once the study is completed. Commissioner Ting asked which option should be taken if the Commission were to want to see the study but without considering the removal of a travel lane. Kevin McDonald said the Commission could refer to the TFP with that comment.

Commissioner Marciante said it would be a bad idea for the Commission to restrict a study to where repurposing a travel lane could not even be considered as an option.

Commissioner Kurz concurred. Referring to the TFP would not exclude moving forward with temporary projects, something that could yield valuable data. Temporary projects could also improve safety.

Commissioner Ting voiced concern about encouraging a lot more bikers to use an arterial where the majority of accidents are the result of right and left turns. Careful consideration needs to be given to where facilities should go and what they should be. Rapid implementation with a temporary and unprotected facility might be a good way to gather data, but may not protect against right and left turns.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked if consideration was given to extending beyond where NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street ends at Bel-Red Road. Kevin McDonald said the stretch is uphill and is largely redeveloped. There is nothing in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan so nothing was ever done, and the opportunity may have passed.

Commissioner Rebhuhn commented that like Bellevue Way, Bel-Red Road is not well suited to bicyclists. It can be studied, but it is not clear how bicycle facilities could be installed without repurposing a travel lane. Spring Boulevard, Northup Way and the SR-520 trail all offer options.

Answering a question asked by Vice Chair Magill about the Spring District missing link, Kevin McDonald suggested that Spring Boulevard should be thought of separate from any other corridor. It is in the CIP, not the Bike Bellevue plan, and it is funded at least for design. The Council will be considering adding funds to provide for the permanent roadway connection between 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, and there has been some discussion and analysis of an interim facility along that stretch, though the feasibility is questionable given the private property involved to which the city does not have access. There are also wetlands and streams and a new bridge would be needed.

Commissioner Ting agreed with the comments made by Commissioner Rebhuhn about Bel-Red Road. Having a lot of cyclists on arterials does not make sense from a safety standpoint. Having a connected bike network that is not on arterials makes sense. Support was voiced for the Category 5 recommendation with the proviso that removing travel lanes should be avoided.

Commissioner Marciante commented that a no build scenario is generally part of roadway studies. In this case that could bolster the understanding of why the corridor is actually needed. There also must be a safety assessment conducted if there is going to be a pilot project. There remain a lot of questions in regard to the corridor, whether it is the right one, what kind of facilities should be employed and so on.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked what the studies cost. Kevin McDonald said cost is to some degree related to the number of alternatives looked at, as well as the length and complexity of the corridor. Bel-Red Road is long and very complex with a lot of driveways and intersections, and there is topography to deal with. A study of the corridor would not be inexpensive, especially if consideration for providing connections to the Crossroads neighborhood is included in the mix. The study likely would fall into the several hundred thousand dollar range. The Commission could refer a corridor study to the TFP, but once there it would have to compete for the scarce funding with all other items in the TFP. A corridor study may or may not rise to above the funding line.

Senior Transportation Planner Michael Ingram explained that the TFP is fiscally constrained and the Commission is very much involved in ranking the projects. Several hundred thousand dollars for a corridor study is usually something that can be fit it if the study involves a priority corridor. Once a study is completed, it is money allocated in the budget that actually moves projects forward. The Council always has the final say.

Commissioner Ting said it is somewhat frustrating in looking at the data, especially related to Vision Zero and the high-injury network, is the lack of data in regard to the cause of the accidents. Detail is lacking when it comes to indicating how to prevent the accidents. There is also detail missing in terms of the number of riders. A corridor may have had only one accident but it may also have only a few riders. Another corridor may have had two accidents but more

than ten times the number of riders. Accordingly, the killed/serious injury data is not necessarily telling in regard to how safe a corridor is in respect to others. More data is needed in regard to how to prevent accidents. Kevin McDonald said one of the Vision Zero principles is to design roads to reduce the propensity for collisions too occur. The Commission will be given an update on the Vision Zero plan in the fall of the year.

Commissioner Marciante shared with the Commission that her husband is a bike rider who has been in accidents and has almost been run over by cars, but who uses Bel-Red Road all the time. It is hard, particularly for those who do no bike, to understand all the issues. The designers and engineers making important decisions about corridors must be trusted to have good judgement, but somehow the data they rely on does not always get shared, making it difficult to know why one corridor is recommended over another. Bel-Red Road is important to bikers for reasons that non-bikers do not fully understand. There are good reasons for and against the BelRed corridor, and the public needs to understand the tradeoffs.

Vice Chair Magill allowed as a bike rider that driveways are very stressful for cyclists who cannot know if a car is going to stop or turn. There is a need to think about Vision Zero and getting data beyond LTS to clarify why one corridor alternative is safer than another.

Commissioner Marciante said the study would be good to undertake. However, anything referred to the TFP will likely not get built for at least seven years. The Council will have to decide if the elements are important enough to move the project into the CIP during the next budget round, but it should be conveyed to the Council how important the corridor is.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis stated that the Council is fully committed to creating world-class bicycle facilities throughout the city. The Bel-Red Road corridor is, however, concerning from a safety perspective. It is a major arterial that has a lot of traffic, much of which is traveling very fast. It is difficult to image a safe alternative on Bel-Red Road, but that is not to say it should not be studied. One question is whether or not facilities would draw out general purpose cyclists. Spring Boulevard does seem to offer a great alternative.

Commissioner Kurz said the Commission would benefit from hearing from Mobility Planning and Solutions Manager Franz Loewenherz regarding options for temporary facilities that would increase safety. There are cyclists who choose not to ride on Bel-Red Road, but there are cyclists who do and interim projects that will improve safety should be considered.

Commissioner Rebhuhn allowed not having cycled on Bel-Red Road, but noted having driven the roadway a number of times with an eye specifically on where a bike lane could be located without repurposing a travel lane. It is not at all clear there is room to do that. Bellevue Way is a very direct route, but Commissioner Rebhuhn said if it came to choosing, the parallel routes would be preferred. If the majority of the Commission wants to see the corridor studied in the TFP, that should happen. Speaking personally, Commissioner Rebhuhn voiced a preference for moving the roadway to Category 6.

Commissioner Ting noted having serious concerns about encouraging cyclists to take the route without having a clear alternative route. Support was voiced for putting the route in Category 6 unless it could be shown that a travel lane would not have to be taken away.

Vice Chair Magill said the clear issues with Bel-Red Road are safety, disruption caused from losing a lane, and how local businesses might be affected by having a bike lane crossing their driveways. The Commission's options are to go with the staff recommendation, to recommend

the staff proposal but with additional comments, or to recommend a different categorization.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked if the Commission could recommend a no build should a study show the only option is to repurpose a travel lane. Vice Chair Magill said it is the job of the Commission to make a recommendation. Kevin McDonald added that should a study go forward, it will include repurposing a travel lane as one of the options. Ultimately, however, that outcome may not be selected as the preferred alternative. There may be a back-of-curb option, or an option that results in not doing anything in the corridor. All alternatives must first be studied before making a final decision.

Commissioner Kurz pointed out that an assessment was made as part of Bike Bellevue that concluded the possibility that congestion will not be impacted. It would be premature to throw out those findings based solely on anecdote.

Commissioner Ting voiced having serious concerns about putting a series of non-separated bike lanes going down the corridor, and about removing a travel lane given the degree to which Bel-Red Road is used and the feedback received from the community.

A motion to convert Bel-Red Road to Category 6 was made by Commissioner Ting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rebhuhn.

Kevin McDonald clarified that Category 6 is reserved for corridors that are no longer to be considered for bike network facilities. To put a corridor into that category requires including a rationale.

Commissioner Ting clarified that the motion to put Bel-Red Road into Category 6 was due to safety concerns and feedback received regarding the removal of travel lanes.

Commissioner Marciante commented that approving the motion would be to disregard everyone who has ever come before the Commission and shared how important Bel-Red Road is to them as a bike route. The motion makes it clear the Commission is not willing to even study options for providing a more safe route.

Commissioner Ting noted not being opposed to looking at alternatives, such as Spring Boulevard. The motion is specific to what the Commission thinks about Bel-Red Road in the context of Bike Bellevue.

Kevin McDonald said the motion would recommend to the Director that Bel-Red Road should be considered Category 6, removing it from being a Bike Bellevue corridor, due to safety and maintaining road capacity for vehicles.

The motion carried 3-2, with Commissioners Ting, Rebhuhn and Magill voting for, and Commissioners Kurz and Marciante voting no.

Turning to Corridor 11, 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Kevin McDonald said Bike Bellevue envisions repurposing one of two southbound lanes to buffered bike lanes in each direction. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan calls for five-foot bike lanes in each direction between NE 24<sup>th</sup> and NE 8th Street as a priority bike corridor. The MIP LTS target is LTS-1, has a technical score of 18 out of 20 points.

The first three of the four options put the table for consideration were: implement Bike

Bellevue; implement the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan projects with redevelopment; and refer the corridor to the TFP to conduct a study to define the options for achieving LTS-1. Kevin McDonald said the fourth option envisions a connection between 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and Spring Boulevard along the Spring Boulevard spur, which is an asphalt path. Mentioned for consideration was adding a multipurpose path along a small section of Bel-Red Road at the corner and on the west side of 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, transitioning to a bike facility on the Spring Boulevard spur and connecting at the signalized intersection to bicycle facilities on Spring Boulevard. There is sufficient right-of-way for the multipurpose path, and it might be possible to close off a driveway to reduce the potential for collisions with vehicles.

Kevin McDonald explained that there are already sharrows on 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE that could be enhanced with fresh paint and wayfinding. For the longer term, the options include referring the corridor to the TFP for a study to determine options for achieving LTS-1, and to connect to the Northrup Way priority bike corridor and the SR-520 trail; and referring the corridor to the TFP to study how to design and build a multipurpose path on the north side of Bel-Red Road as described, providing a connection between 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and Spring Boulevard.

Commissioner Rebhuhn voiced support for the Spring Boulevard spur on what is currently a road that does not see much use.

Vice Chair Magill commented on the importance of connecting to the SR-520 trail.

Commissioner Ting asked what an LTS-1 corridor would look like. Kevin McDonald explained that to achieve LTS-1 on the corridor would require a physically separated bike facility, such as a multipurpose path or separated directional bike lanes. The corridor study would look at all options, including the repurposing of a travel lane, which would be the option of last resort.

Mike Ingram pointed out that the current TFP includes project TFP-245 that focuses on the segment of 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE from NE 8th Street to NE 24<sup>th</sup> Street. The project description calls for evaluating either on-street bike lanes or a separated path on the east side of the roadway. There is a vestigial path along much of the east side that previously served as a horse trail connecting Bridle Trails to Robinswood. The part not currently in the TFP is the spur connection from Spring Boulevard to 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

Commissioner Rebhuhn observed that there is a lot of settled development on the west side of 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and asked if any redevelopment is planned for scheduled for the east side of the roadway. Kevin McDonald said the area between Bel-Red Road and NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street is primarily park facilities or streams and wetlands without much development potential.

A motion to accept the staff recommendation was made by Commissioner Rebhuhn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kurz and the motion carried unanimously.

Kevin McDonald stated that the final two Bike Bellevue corridors will be before the Commission on September 12.

## B. Mobility Implementation Plan

Kevin McDonald explained that in the bigger picture, the MIP is a key part of developing the TFP and eventually the CIP to provide resources to implement transportation projects in the city. The MIP includes a four-step process for identifying performance target gaps, screening

them with respect to the goals of the MIP, developing project concepts to address the performance target gaps, and prioritizing them to inform the TFP. The current process is between steps three and four; the technical scoring has been done, project concepts and performance target gaps have been shared with the community for consideration and comment, and all of the technical work and public comments will be consolidated into a final deliverable to the TFP on September 12. By way of reminder, the Commissioners were told that the goals of the MIP are to provide transportation facilities that support growth, that improve safety, that consider equity, and that improve access and mobility.

Kevin McDonald noted that the MIP scores system intersections and maps the results as high-scoring vehicle intersection gaps; existing vehicle intersection performance targets; and already existing TFP projects. A total of seven system intersections already have an assigned TFP number. Staff are not recommending developing a project concept for two of the system intersections that do not meet the performance target gap, namely 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE at SE 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE (115<sup>th</sup> Place NE) at Northup Way.

With regard to 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and SE 16<sup>th</sup> Street, it was noted that there was a performance target gap identified in 2019 and documented in the Environmental Impact Statement for the Comprehensive Plan. Since 2019 a projected funded by the transportation levy has improved the performance of the intersection, obviating the need for a referral to the TFP.

With regard to the 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE/Northup Way intersection, it was explained that the signalized intersection was reconstructed in 2017 to its current configuration, with components of the SR-520 trail included. In its current configuration, the intersection likely is built out to its maximum capacity given the topographic constraints and the bridge of Eastrail which make expanding vehicle capacity infeasible. Signal operations can always be refined to improve traffic flow.

Turning to the MIP scoring of the bike network, Kevin McDonald said the performance target gaps are mapped as to high-scoring bicycle network gaps; existing bicycle network facilities; existing TFP projects; and Bike Bellevue corridors. Staff are recommending transmitting a number of the bicycle corridors to the TFP for consideration. A number of the bicycle facility gaps are already in the TFP and the recommendation is to retain them in the TFP update process. Staff are recommending referring a number of other corridors for consideration in the TFP update.

The MIP scoring for the arterial pedestrian network was also mapped according to high-scoring pedestrian network gaps; existing arterial pedestrian network; and TFP projects. Based on the technical scoring, the MIP recommends retaining all of the existing Transportation Facilities Plan projects, and the addition of a number of project concepts to the TFP for other arterial pedestrian network corridors.

In addition to the Commission meetings focused on the topic, an Engaging Bellevue platform was open between June 17 and July 8. The information gathered through that process will be taken into consideration in developing project concepts. The Engaging Bellevue platform included an interactive map and sought feedback on high-scoring performance target gaps as well as any other place in the city. A full report and recommendation on project concepts will be delivered to the Commission on September 12.

Commissioner Ting asked staff to respond to the notion of building out a pedestrian and bicycle path on West Lake Sammamish Parkway. The pedestrian path scored higher than the

bicycle facility. Kevin McDonald said the project is already in the TFP as project TFP-257 for a multipurpose path on the west side of the roadway. Additionally, the intent is to extend the implementation currently in place along the entire corridor. Not a lot of additional thought was given to West Lake Sammamish Parkway in the MIP since it is already in the TFP. The TFP may retain the project as a high priority, or it may fall off in deference to other higher-scoring priorities.

Consultant Chris Breiland with Fehr & Peers clarified that the MIP information is primarily for the benefit of the Commission in thinking about advancing project concepts to the TFP. The West Lake Sammamish Parkway project has been planned by the city for a long time, and the MIP bolsters the previous planning work in terms of the pedestrian and bicycle network gaps. While the exact segments are a little different, it shows up as a high-scoring project in both modes. Similarly, Lakemont Boulevard under I-90 shows up in both instances and it could likely be handled as a single project as well.

Commissioner Ting said it had been difficult to gauge one project versus another. The MIP scoring gives a hint as to how prioritization within a mode should be done. The Commission will need a lot of guidance in understanding the top pros and cons for a particular TFP project that may not jump out just by looking at the MIP scoring.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 13, 2024

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Rebhuhn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kurz.

Commissioner Marciante called attention to the first sentence of the last paragraph on page 11 and asked that it be revised to read "...low-income persons who must rely on their vehicles and live in PMA-3 are more likely to need vehicle improvements because there are fewer options."

The minutes as amended were approved unanimously.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. REVIEW OF COMMISSION CALENDAR

Kevin McDonald took a moment to review with the Commission the calendar of upcoming meeting dates and agenda items.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Magill adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.



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Secretary to the Transportation Commission

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Date