

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

December 12, 2024
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Hybrid Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Stash, Commissioners Keilman, Kurz, Marciante, Rebhuhn, Ting

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: None

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Vice Chair Magill

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Andrew Singelakis, Chris Long, Michael Ingram, Kristi Oosterveen, Eric Miller, Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: Chris Iverson, Iverson Mobility; Chrissy Mancini Nichols, Kenzie Coulson, Walker Consultants

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Stash who presided.

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Marciante, who arrived at 6:37 p.m. and Vice Chair Magill.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Mariya Frost, Transportation Director at Kemper Development Company asked the Commission to consider removing from the TFP projects TFP-222 and TFP-223. TFP 222 at Bellevue Way and NE 4th Street involves adding a southbound-to-westbound right-turn lane and converting a northbound through lane to create a second northbound-to-westbound left turn lane. The project description states that implementation will be subject to further analysis and city staff have indicated in the past that the benefits of the project are uncertain. After conducting an extensive study, Kemper Development Company agrees. TFP-223 at Bellevue Way and NE 8th Street involves adding a southbound-to-westbound right-turn lane and it is determined by when redevelopment occurs on the adjacent parcel. For both of the intersections, transportation modelers found that adding right-turn lanes would not produce a significant improvement in the V/C ratio or Level of Service, even with the projected 2035 volumes. That analysis and modeling was included with the letter forwarded to the Commission earlier in the week. The main concern that applies to both projects is that adding right turn lanes would

increase crossing distances and times for pedestrians, which would also require extending pedestrian signal phases, which would negatively impact vehicle throughput. Because the projects do not provide a benefit to pedestrians and are unlikely to provide a meaningful benefit to drivers, their removal would be appropriate and necessary. The speaker took a moment to thank the Commission and staff for a productive year, for all the work that is done, and for the hours dedicated to tackling complex transportation issues and policies. The Commission and staff have done a fantastic job navigating through some very difficult and polarizing topics to get to reasonable solutions that frankly seemed totally out of reach just earlier this year. More thoughtful discussions and debate will occur in 2025.

Alex Tsimerman began with a Nazi salute and called the Commissioners dirty damn Nazi fascist cockroaches. Trump come to power and everybody who vote for Democrats right now look cockroaches. Mayor Robinson two days ago had a hysterical reaction when the talk turned to the Bellevue Police Department and the Bellevue Police Commission. The Mayor used the Gestapo to take him out. Trump has talked for years about governments being dirty, and that is reflective of everything, including the Commission. For 30 or 40 years it has not been possible to find one honest man who works for government. There have been dozens, even hundreds of complaints, hundreds of communications, but not one positive answer. So Trump will come to power again, a new American Revolution. A hundred million people want the revolution, because change is needed. About transportation, Bellevue is crazy right now. It is absolutely idiotic. This idiot who come for last ten years. They come from the jungle. They cannot drive a car. For ten years it is not enough for driving a car in city like Bellevue because Bellevue right is now crazy with driving. It is a nightmare. It will get worse. It will not get better. Bringing in another 30,000 probably slaves from the jungle. The Commission should not act like degeneratives. Stop please the idiotic government.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, AND MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION – None

5. STAFF REPORTS

Kevin McDonald noted that the Commission at its annual retreat expressed a desire to know what other departments were doing. The Community Development department is leading an effort called Neighborhood Area planning. There are 16 neighborhood areas within the city. Currently the focus is on Newport and Crossroads. There are a number of topics that they are asking the neighborhoods about in order to move forward with projects or policies that will address neighborhood identity, including community gathering places, urban design, connectivity and the public realm. Those processes are underway right now and will be ongoing for the next several months. The work will include online open houses and community meetings in person over the next few months to involve the people in developing their neighborhood plans.

On a technical note, Kevin McDonald reiterated that the city's IT department has been working to move away from Zoom to the Teams format for hybrid meetings. It currently looks as though it will be September of 2025 before the change happens.

Kevin McDonald asked the Commissioners to keep open the fourth Thursdays of March and April given a second meeting may be needed those months.

6. PUBLIC HEARING – None

7. STUDY SESSION

A. Curb Pricing Implementation Study

Assistant Director of Mobility Operations Chris Long noted having been put in charge of overseeing the advancement of the CMP and a curb pricing study. Also present were Chris Iverson, consultant with Iverson Mobility, Chrissy Mancini Nichols, project manager from Walker Consultants, and Kenzie Coulson, also with Walker Consultants.

Chris Iverson said the Commission worked for about a year and a half on developing the CMP (CMP), culminating its work 2023. The recommendation of the Commission was brought forward to City Council which adopted the plan in July 2023. The plan includes, among other things, items called curb practices, which essentially are the implementing strategies and projects to make changes to the curb environment in the long run. To catalyze the work and to get the ball rolling on the program side of curb management, the city created a curb management on-call contract to help advance some of the curb practices, beginning with curb pricing.

There are over two dozen curb practices in the CMP. One of the near term and top priority practices identified was performing an implementation study for a paid parking program and updating associated street parking procedures, such as enforcement and the way that potential pricing could be captured. In addition, there are Comprehensive Plan policies that were developed in 2022. The Transportation and the Planning Commissions together created policies that were eventually adopted by City Council, one of which is TR-34, which is to consider implementation of a pay-for-curbs program.

Continuing, Chris Iverson reminded the Commissioners about the concept of curb economics relative to the curb management arrangement of supply and demand. The curb is a limited resource for which there are numerous demands, including parking, loading and placemaking, and the demands for the space are constantly changing. The Commission workshopped and brainstormed the curb economics framework which assigns inherent value to what the curb provides for the community. People park, people load and unload passengers and goods. There is economic generation revolving around the way the curb can facilitate those types of activities. Pricing the curb is seen as a best practice in many communities. That was covered in detail when developing the CMP. Placing some type of monetary value, or at least reflecting the curb as a valuable space, was part of the discussion. When adding pricing to the curb, whether through on-street paid parking or charging for permits, the full economic value the curb space provides is reflected. It can help streamline enforcement practices, making it easier to have better compliance at the curb. It can encourage turnover to support businesses, creating more predictable availability, and ultimately, funds from a pricing program can be reinvested into the community in ways such as enforcement and placemaking.

Currently there is no paid on-street parking. Most of the free on-street parking in the study area, which is the urban core, is two-hour time limited. However, the city's enforcement resources are very light and it is not possible to adequately enforce the parking regulations in the urban core. The curb is seen as a negative customer experience in terms of the way it is utilized. The existing on-street parking is very well utilized to a point where it is very hard to find a space, especially in districts like Old Bellevue and the Spring District. On a principle level, when one cannot find a place to park, it generally wastes peoples time because it increases traffic congestion, encourages circling the block, looking for a spot, and it does potentially increase the risk of spillover into adjacent areas of neighborhoods, which is bad practice and which actually works against the city policy to restrict spillover into neighborhoods.

Interestingly, paid parking is actually fairly common in the city but particularly in the Downtown and the Spring District where most of the publicly available but privately owned lots and garages charge fees of between four to eight dollars for the first hour or two. As such, there is an imbalance between the free parking supply, which is overburdened and very well utilized, and the practice off-street.

Chrissy Mancini Nichols with Walker Consultants said the CMP includes a set of principles to manage the curb space to create more access and areas for deliveries. One of the recommendations is to explore paid parking. Throughout the coming year the consultant team and the staff will be working with the Commission and the community in evaluating paid parking. Data collection began in September. The data analysis will inform what is being called the method of operation, which is figuring out if and how paid parking would work. Once the recommendations are in hand, the team will work with the Commission and the community to vet them.

The primary goal is to ensure that visitors, delivery drivers, and individuals with mobility challenges can easily find parking in Bellevue. To achieve this, the city aims to maintain about 80 percent curb occupancy, enough to keep a few spaces consistently open. The balance would improve equity, safety, and compliance, while preventing spillover into residential areas. Data collected in 2022 showed that most on-street spaces were already near capacity, and recent counts in September confirm that after 10:00 a.m., especially in places like Old Bellevue and the Spring District, occupancy often exceeds the target, sometimes even surpassing 100 percent when drivers use no-parking areas. The analysis provides a foundation for considering new policies, such as hourly limits or other measures, to meet the goals.

The data reveals that a significant portion of drivers exceed the existing two-hour parking limits and often park illegally in no-parking zones. Having curb spaces fill up by lunchtime and remain full throughout the day indicates demand, but such conditions can discourage visitors who find it too difficult to secure a spot. The goal is to make the curb both well-utilized and easily accessible, recognizing that curb space is valuable real estate that should efficiently serve residents, businesses, and visitors.

Kenzie Coulson said the team is drawing on practical experience from similar projects, including in Park City, Utah, where a carefully designed strategy restored order and relieved

congestion. The community understood that a one-size-fits-all solution does not exist; multiple coordinated measures, shaped by community input, were necessary. The goal is to develop an organized system that reduces congestion, increasing accessibility, safety and compliance. To achieve that a robust outreach is planned that will involve speaking with residents, employees, visitors, business owners, and neighborhood groups. The team will gather firsthand experiences, identify concerns like residential spillover, and incorporate feedback into the evolving plan. They will share updates with the commission regularly, delve deeper into data at upcoming meetings, and refine operational methods as they consider new strategies, technologies, and potential pricing models. The ultimate objective is to present a well-informed recommendation to the City Council by late 2025.

The approach will ensure that Bellevue's streets will remain vibrant, safe, and manageable, with a parking system that meets the needs of the community. The strong demand for parking can mean frustrations for both visitors and businesses. People may avoid spending more time browsing shops or enjoying a long lunch if they fear a hassle with parking or risk of a ticket. Yet, limiting parking time too strictly might conflict with the wishes of businesses, many of which want customers to linger and enjoy multiple stops rather than rush off due to rigid restrictions.

The project team is preparing to learn more through direct engagement with the community. The intent is to speak with residents, visitors, employees, apartment managers, and business owners to understand how people really park, why they might choose street spaces over private garages, and what trade-offs they are willing to accept. The community input will be essential, since adjusting curb management, potentially through pricing, modified time limits, or other measures, will require a careful balance.

Chris Iverson said the project team will engage with the Commission about every other month during 2025, first to review the initial public engagement, the data findings, and the method of operations.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked if garages in the Spring District are run by the city or if they are private. Chris Iverson said they are all run privately and the city has no direct control over pricing or utilization.

Commissioner Ting asked if the utilization of those private parking lots is known and Chris Iverson allowed not having much detail about it, adding that it would be difficult to determine the utilization without seeking information from each of the property owners individually.

Commissioner Keilman asked if that will be part of the engagement process and Chris Iverson said the team could definitely try to engage with the operators of the private lots.

Commissioner Keilman noted the community feedback around the fact that much of the occupancy, especially in the Downtown area, is from people who live in apartments or condominiums not wanting to pay for parking in their own parking garages. Chris Iverson said there will be engagement with the various property managers in the study area to at least try to understand behaviors. Chrissy Mancini Nichols added that the work will include some one-on-

one intercept surveys and the like to clarify how and why residents, tenants, and visitors choose certain parking options that sometimes lead to congestion on the streets.

Commissioner Keilman asked if the Commission would be participating in shaping the survey or engagement questions to be put to the community. The community should be asked if they hate looking for free parking more than paying for parking. Understanding local perspectives, especially in a rapidly growing and costly environment like Bellevue, should remain central to the project's outreach strategy.

Commissioner Ting asked if the team has data in hand showing local residents prefer parking on the street to paying for parking in their buildings, or if that is only a theory someone has. Chris Iverson said it is only a theory. To prove the theory would require tying VIN number or address plates to addresses, which has not been done.

Chair Stash said one key concern is how curb management changes, particularly paid parking or strict time limits, will affect local businesses and their customers. Many businesses benefit from shoppers lingering longer than two hours, perhaps enjoying a meal and then browsing another store. Imposing rigid time limits or high parking fees could deter what is ideal consumer behavior, potentially hurting sales. Rather than fixating on the current two-hour limit, the policies should be rethought to align with what businesses and shoppers truly need. One major issue is preventing non-shoppers from occupying valuable spaces all day, such as commuters who park for hours and then leave the area. The project team should gather data to ensure that any policy changes will discourage long-term storage of cars while still supporting the customers who want to stay longer.

Chair Stash said the best practices from other communities, like Park City, demonstrate that strategic parking management can actually help businesses by reducing circling and making it easier for customers to arrive on time. Adjusting factors like pricing, time limits, and enforcement, and tailoring them to specific blocks, can balance demand across the neighborhoods. The idea is to create an environment where everyone knows how and where to find parking, improving overall access and convenience. Ultimately, it is about refining multiple elements, including time limits, rates, and enforcement, through direct engagement with businesses and residents. Their feedback will guide adjustments so that policies encourage the right parking behaviors, enhance safety, and benefit both commercial vitality and quality of life in the area.

Chair Stash asked how a paid program will assure having more spaces available. Chris Iverson said it is identified as a best practice in many communities. Paid programs with reasonable rates yield occupancies that average in the 80 percent to 85 percent range. Currently in places like Old Bellevue, ten out of ten spaces are full from 4:00 p.m. and throughout the night. Chrissy Mancini Nichols said there are blocks that are over 100 percent utilized, while a few blocks away there is plenty of parking. The idea is to think about pricing to balance out the demand. The principle of park once and walk around is a best practice that needs to be explored, but along with that is the need to strive for the right mix.

Chair Stash said that is where the discussion with the businesses is key. They need to realize that people are not going to spend an excessive amount of time if they are paying for parking.

They are going to leave their spot and they are going to give that 10 percent or 20 percent of the street available for someone else. It will be good to hear the feedback from the businesses.

Commissioner Rebhuhn suggested much will depend on the business. A restaurant owner will be more likely to want to see customers have to go move their cars so that the table can be refilled. Kenzie Coulson said restaurants are great example. A restaurant owner in Park City, Utah, remarked that once paid parking was initiated people started showing up for their reservations on time. Previously they would be 15 or 20 minutes late, or they would cancel, simply because they could not find a place to park and they were circling. Time limits need to be one of many solutions to explore and intertwine effectively to make sure everyone is being accommodated. It is a good thing to have people park and spend time. The goal is not to cut anybody out of leaving, rather the goal is to make sure that the demand is shifting. It will take many elements of the program coming together. Time limits and enforcement opportunities will be explored later, as will the rates and the rates per area. Talking to the businesses will be key to understand what their customers and employees need, and the same will be true of residents.

Chair Stash asked if it is known where employees are currently parking. Chris Long said the answer varies according to the businesses in question. In Old Bellevue, for instance, some storefronts do not have parking facilities behind or underneath, while others have garages. In those cases, employers sometimes arrange garage access for employees, but in other instances employees are on their own. Anecdotally, it is known that employees move their cars every two hours to avoid paying for parking and occasionally end up with multiple citations. Meanwhile, some business owners report offering parking stipends to employees so they will work at their establishment rather than at a mall that offers free parking. There is a need to more fully understand the dynamics, particularly for restaurant staff, both front-of-house and back-of-house.

Commissioner Rebhuhn stressed the need to examine different options, such as variable rates, depending on location, time of day, and day of the week. Hopefully the team will also look into newer methods for charging, such as pick-up and drop-off fees, or even fees for rideshare vehicles. There are many ways to monetize the curb beyond traditional parking meters.

Commissioner Ting also called for more data regarding impacts on businesses. For instance, more efficient parking might lead to increased turnover, which might benefit certain retail or destination shopping, but it might affect the people who want to casually browse different stores. There could be pros and cons to be presented to businesses. It would be helpful to see case studies from cities that have met with successes and to share that with businesses that will be affected.

Commissioner Ting asked about the scope of the Curb Management Plan, noting the understanding that it includes all of Bellevue. Chris Long said it impacts only the urban core of the Downtown, BelRed, and Wilburton. Those are also the areas that are specifically being targeted for purposes of gaining feedback. There will, however, be outreach to the residential neighborhoods adjacent to the study area where residents may worry about spillover parking. Neighborhood associations will receive mailers, and the work will be advertised citywide through social media. Ultimately, though, the desire is to hear most from those who actually

use the urban core.

Commissioner Ting asked how the feedback from people who live next to the curb versus those who live elsewhere but visit or work in an area will be prioritized. Chris Long said staff will gather input from both groups. For instance, the team wants to hear from residents in the condos above Old Bellevue restaurants. Chrissy Mancini Nichols added that the outreach effort will include intercept surveys with visitors, people who might live elsewhere in the city, to learn about their experiences.

Commissioner Ting asked who the target groups are in terms of underrepresented communities and equity. Kenzie Coulson answered that equity can mean many things, and the intention is to capture as many voices and perspectives as possible. The team wants to include people who have mobility issues, since a properly managed curb can ensure regular availability of spaces close to their destinations. The team also wants to consider employees who might have schedules that make it difficult to attend standard meetings.

Commissioner Keilman asked what quality measures will be used to ensure the integrity of the feedback and how it translates into the final product. Chris Long said the Commission will guide the process throughout. At the next meeting, staff will present the community feedback gathered to date. The Commission packet included a draft engagement plan and some draft questions. If there are suggestions or comments, the Commissioners are encouraged to send them to staff.

Commissioner Keilman asked about the comment made about a portion of the revenue going back into the community and called for the outside data used to be from comparable cities with similar curb space in order to better understand the potential revenue and costs. Chris Long said those are the types of issues the team will be sorting out. The term “method of operations” involves the specific details on technology, costs, and potential revenue.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked if there will be an initial investment required given that enforcement is needed to gain the revenues needed to pay for enforcement. Chris Long said the city began contracting out for enforcement when two-hour parking was first introduced in the early 2000s. Every few years, the contract is rebid. The existing contractor cannot cover all areas, so it is necessary to choose where they patrol. If the city implements paid on-street parking more broadly, it will expand enforcement alongside it. Currently the market rate for enforcement cannot be matched, but with a pricing mechanism, the fees can be adjusted to cover the costs. It must be kept in mind that enforcement addresses more than just timed parking violations. It also addresses lane blockages and other safety issues. Many of the citations issued are safety-related, so the focus is broader than simply enforcing time limits.

B. Update to the Transportation Facilities Plan

Senior Planner Mike Ingram, along with Program Manager Kristi Oosterveen, noted having met with the Commission several times in recent months as part of the TFP update process.

Mike Ingram stated that of the 53 projects in the current TFP, 19 are classified as impact fee projects in that they add vehicle capacity to the network and are expected to be constructed

within 12 years to accommodate new development. Sufficient funding is allocated in the TFP to ensure the projects can be built. The city assesses a fee for each new peak-period trip added by development projects. The fee funds part of the cost of the impact fee projects.

The Commissioners were shown a table demonstrating different project types and the estimated additional trips each would generate. It was noted that one single-family residence is assumed to add one trip to the network at peak time. That amounts to a fee of \$7946 based on the current impact fee rate. Multifamily midrise units typically add fewer trips per unit, about 0.39, leading to a smaller fee of \$3099 per unit.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked about the lag time between a developer paying the impact fee and the construction of the project that the fee would fund. Mike Ingram explained that the 19 impact fee projects collectively cost several hundred million dollars, but the city collects only about \$5.8 million annually in impact fees. Developers do not pay for a single designated project; rather, their fees go into the overall pool that funds all impact fee projects. The \$5.8 million covers well under half the total cost because the projects also serve other trips, not only new development.

Chair Stash asked what percentage of the needed improvements is covered by the \$5.8 million. Mike Ingram expressed confidence that the collected fees fall well below 50 percent.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Ting, Kristi Oosterveen explained that while the maximum legally justifiable impact fee might be higher, potentially as much as \$14,000 per trip, the City Council chose to charge only \$7946 dollars, which increases annually by three percent until decided otherwise.

Mike Ingram stated that some of the 19 impact fee projects have already been completed. Those not yet completed will be candidate projects for the new TFP. Some completed projects will remain as part of the impact fee base given that funds were borrowed to build them, and given that the projects continue to provide capacity for new development. The city has completed one intersection outside of the Downtown, 148th Avenue SE and Lake Hills Boulevard, and removed one project, 140th Avenue NE and NE 8th Street. Of the five major impact fee projects, three are finished or nearly finished: two on 124th Avenue NE between NE 12th Street and Northup Way, and a segment of Spring Boulevard from 130th Avenue NE to 132nd Avenue NE where a new road segment was created near the BelRed Sound Transit station.

There are three Impact Fee projects remaining in the Downtown, including Bellevue Way at NE 8th Street. The project at Bellevue Way and NE 4th Street, highlighted during public comment, is still in the TFP, though not an Impact Fee project and staff are not certain about its future. Staff plans to revisit the analysis to determine whether it should remain in the TFP. The other remaining Downtown projects are TFP-110, 110th Avenue NE near City Hall, and TFP-219, realigning the intersection at 106th Avenue NE and NE 8th Street, allowing for a westbound through lane to continue to Bellevue Way rather than forcing a right turn.

Commissioner Ting asked how the prioritized list for the impact fee projects was originally developed. Mike Ingram explained that some of the projects date back to the Downtown

planning efforts done in the early 2000s, when traffic modeling predicted heavy Downtown congestion. Older traffic models tended to project more aggressive demand. Over time, improved data and modeling may reveal that certain projects are less necessary than once believed.

Commissioner Ting asked if the project list is driven by the Mobility Implementation Plan (MIP) performance metrics. Mike Ingram noted that many of them predate the MIP and were created during a broad assessment of how to handle growth in downtown Bellevue. In the case of TFP-110, 110th Avenue NE from NE 6th Street to NE 8th Street, the Bravern defines a fixed curb line on the east side, and the Bellevue 600 project now under construction will set the the curb for part of the west side. Future development immediately to the north will set the remainder of the west curb line for the block and complete the project.

Overall, staff are considering how to integrate completed projects, ongoing projects, and revised proposals into the updated TFP, including those funded in part by impact fees. As further analysis clarifies the value of each project, recommendations will take shape. The Commission will continue to receive updates as the team refines project descriptions and recommended project priorities, to ensure the TFP aligns with Bellevue's evolving transportation needs.

Mike Ingram said there are seven impact fee projects outside of the Downtown. The project at the intersection of 114th Avenue SE and SE 8th Street faces afternoon pressure from drivers heading southbound onto I-405. The plan is to add a second southbound-to-eastbound left-turn lane. The intersection of Lake Hills Connector and SE 8th Street is similar in that it adds a second left-turn lane from northbound to westbound to improve freeway access. The location also experiences considerable congestion. The proposal for the intersection of 148th Avenue NE and NE 8th Street calls for adding a second left-turn lane on all four legs. At 148th Avenue NE and Main Street, the project includes adding a signal at the shopping center driveway, which is more efficient than placing improvements right at Main Street to address the underlying issue of congestion at the Main Street intersection.

The project at the intersection of Lake Hills Boulevard and SE 60th Street calls for converting the four-way stop to a signalized intersection. A signal will also be installed at the intersection of Lakemont Boulevard and Forest Drive along with a northbound-to-westbound left-turn lane. At the intersection of Lakemont Boulevard and Newport Way, the north and south legs currently run on a split phase, which is less efficient. The lanes will be reconfigured so both directions can operate simultaneously. The intersection improvements remain on the current impact fee project list and address congestion outside the downtown core.

There are two major projects on the impact fee list to which substantial funds in the existing TFP are allocated. The Bellevue Way SE project, which extends south from the Winters House to the park and ride entrance, will add a southbound HOV lane to alleviate PM peak congestion and tie into the Sound Transit HOV lane that runs from the park and ride onto I-90. The final segment of the 120th Avenue NE project is between NE16th Street and Northup Way. The project, along with the Bellevue Way SE HOV lane project, each had allocations of around \$30 million in the previous TFP, but current cost projections will likely be higher. Another big

project that is out there is the segment of Spring Boulevard from 120th Avenue NE to 130th Avenue NE. It will be considered in the TFP update.

There is a major project under way on 150th Avenue SE on the north and south sides of I-90. In the TFP it appears as two different projects but they are being designed and implemented as a single combined project. The design work is complete and construction is expected to begin and possibly be completed in 2025, which means it may be fully completed by the time the updated TFP takes effect.

With regard to regional projects, which involve connections between Bellevue's local street network and the state's freeway system, Mike Ingram said there are five of them. Currently, 124th Avenue NE only provides access to SR-520 to and from the west. TFP-217 would add access to and from the east. The Washington State Department of Transportation has some funding for right-of-way acquisition but has not funded construction or set a timeline.

There are four projects related to I-405. TFP-193 involves adding a southbound off-ramp at NE 10th Street as a partner with the existing northbound on-ramp at NE 10th Street. There is no timeline or funding identified for the project. TFP-211, the NE 6th Street extension to 116th Avenue NE is designed for HOV and HOT lane access to the center lanes of I-405, supporting the mixed-use and high-density land use vision for Wilburton. The state is considering building the project in the early 2030s, pending budget decisions. TFP-296, at the intersection of 116th Avenue NE at Lake Hills Connector would add a southbound on-ramp, but it has no identified funding or timeline. It likely will be a long-term project. The Coal Creek Parkway project, TFP-271, would include a series of four roundabouts beginning at the intersection with 119th Avenue SE. Roundabouts are also earmarked for the southbound ramps, the northbound ramps, and at the intersection of 120th Avenue SE and Coal Creek Parkway. Residents have seen the preliminary plans and appear generally supportive, given the existing access challenges. The earliest possible timeline is in the 2030s. WSDOT would presumably fund the regional projects.

Mike Ingram shared that the city is on track with its candidate project list and will soon enter the public outreach phase. Staff will also work to refine the bicycle project candidates, some of which are included in the current TFP. Others will be coming from the MIP gap analysis, and still others are referrals from Bike Bellevue. The staff intends to consolidate and organize the bicycle projects and share the outcomes at the Commission's January 23 meeting.

C. Mobility Implementation Plan Update

Kevin McDonald shared information about the planned update of the Mobility Implementation Plan, saying that most of the update will involve a technical analysis and technical outcomes. There will be some public engagement on particular elements that the Commission will present to the Council. The Commission worked on the current MIP for a few years, mainly during the pandemic and in a remote setting. Despite that, the Commission produced impressive results, and the Council unanimously approved the plan in April 2022. The plan contains many elements that were never previously part of the city's transportation planning. It defined three categories of performance management areas: the urban core, which is the Downtown, Wilburton and BelRed; the activity centers, which are Factoria, Crossroads and Eastgate; and

the rest of the city, primarily the residential areas that have small-scale commercial development. The plan also established performance metrics for four travel modes, vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit, and created performance targets for the arterial network in each of those modes. Most notably, the plan developed the framework for multimodal concurrency, setting the stage for marking a significant shift in how the city manages transportation since the introduction of concurrency standards across multiple modes.

The MIP implementation guide identified the project concepts for the pedestrian and bicycle modes that are referred as candidate projects for consideration in the update of the Transportation Facilities Plan. The MIP received recognition at both the state level, resulting in the Governor's 2022 Smart Communities Award, and at the regional level by the Puget Sound Regional Council.

Continuing, Kevin McDonald explained that the update is needed because some things have happened subsequent to adoption. The Comprehensive Plan policy TR-28 states that the MIP should be updated with each periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan, which recently occurred. There are also new circumstances that call for a fresh look at certain aspects of the plan. Specifically, there is a growing interest within City Hall, particularly among those involved in development review, and within the private sector, to establish a pedestrian level of traffic stress metric and performance targets, similar to the bicycle level of traffic stress that the Commission recommended and that are currently in use. There has also been a need to identify local networks for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. The existing MIP focuses on arterials, but people need to travel between their neighborhoods and the arterial corridors. Yet another motivator for the update is the availability of refreshed data. Some of the information in the MIP is three to five years old; newer data from the Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement and from additional sources is now available.

The central goal is to create a new metric and target for pedestrian level of traffic stress (LTS). The approach will mirror the bicycle LTS with categorization by speed limit, traffic volume, and the characteristics of the pedestrian space, such as sidewalk width, buffers, parked cars, and other design features. Similar to the bicycle LTS, the pedestrian LTS could guide both private frontage improvements and the City's capital investments in sidewalks.

The update work will take a closer look at local networks. While the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan maps local networks for bicycles and pedestrians, the MIP would benefit from an updated assessment to confirm whether those connections remain relevant. Since many current residents of the city might not have been part of the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, staff plans to conduct public outreach via the Engaging Bellevue platform and invite community members to attend Commission meetings, either in person or online, to share their thoughts on key local connections. The impetus is to create a comprehensive, connected local street network that complements the arterial network, whether for reaching bus stops, shopping centers, schools, or other destinations. The plan would also describe the typical infrastructure features needed to make the connections safe and comfortable.

Kevin McDonald said the staff will refresh the MIP tables, maps, and graphics with the latest

information. Although the MIP primarily looks toward the near future, the 2044 Comprehensive Plan EIS can be used to get a more forward-looking perspective on where performance gaps may emerge. That could help identify potential long-term project concepts, such as additional lanes or intersection improvements which might not be in the Transportation Facilities Plan but which could be relevant for consideration down the line.

Engagement for the update will mainly take place during Commission study sessions, supplemented by the Engaging Bellevue website to invite broader community input on local street pedestrian and bicycle networks. The goal is to conduct the technical analysis, gather feedback, and develop preliminary recommendations by May or June, with Council consideration in late June or early July. At the Commission’s meeting in January, staff will present a focused discussion of the fundamental components of pedestrian LTS, including the roadway and pedestrian environment factors to incorporate. Similar to bike LTS, the metric will apply only to arterial corridors, so the scope will be focused accordingly.

Commissioner Ting welcomed use of the FEIS as future-looking guidance. Regarding the pedestrian LTS, the staff were encouraged to consider distinguishing safety from comfort. The bicycle LTS sometimes conflates comfort and safety. The issues raised and the lessons learned in regard to making a distinction between the two should be integrated into the update.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked how priorities are determined for filling sidewalk gaps. Kevin McDonald said a contextual approach is used to inform prioritization. If a missing sidewalk is located in a higher-priority performance management area, such as a core urban zone, it might receive higher priority because of the greater number of pedestrian origins and destinations.

Consultant Chris Breiland with Fehr & Peers added that part of the framework for expanding the definition of the networks and looking at sidewalk gaps will involve consideration of the city’s various sources of program funding for different types of infrastructure improvements, such as neighborhood connectivity and safe routes to schools. Collecting and mapping data about all gaps and linking that data to the MIP framework can help unify how the City decides where to allocate resources.

Commissioner Ting asked if the data regarding the MIP performance gaps is current. Kevin McDonald said the data source for the MIP is from 2019 , but the 2044 Comprehensive Plan FEIS updated data and maps to reflect existing conditions .

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 10, 2024

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

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. REVIEW OF COMMISSION CALENDAR

Kevin McDonald reviewed the upcoming agenda items and meeting dates, including a fourth Thursday meeting in January, and potentially second meetings in March and April.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Stash adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.