

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

May 8, 2025
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Hybrid Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Stash, Vice Chair Magill, Commissioners Kurz, Marciante, Rebhuhn, Ting

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: Commissioner Keilman

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Rebhuhn

STAFF PRESENT: Michael Ingram, Kristi Oosterveen, Franz Loewenherz, Molly Johnson, Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: 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 Chair Stash who presided.

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Rebhuhn.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Stash reminded the audience that under Washington state law no person shall use public facilities for electioneering, either to support or oppose a ballot measure, or to support or oppose a candidate, including one's self.

Jody Alberts, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, said a new group, the Bellevue Mobility Coalition (BMC), includes a wide range of stakeholders, including major employers such as Amazon and Symmetra, property managers, nonprofits, and transportation engineers. The coalition's unified concern is in regard to Bellevue's transportation plan to meet the needs of the evolving land use vision. The BMC's primary recommendations include the need for strategic transportation planning, prioritization of the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) to address infrastructure gaps, and focusing on high-impact projects in key growth areas like Downtown, Wilburton, and BelRed. The Commission was urged to elevate the new need assessments identified as TFP candidates to provide critical data in tandem with the Comprehensive Plan implementation. In advancing the work, the Commission should utilize a holistic lens that looks beyond individual projects in

silos to more of a comprehensive transportation vision.

Vic Bishop emphasized the importance of proportionality in transportation funding. Referring to historical data, it was stressed that a vast majority of Bellevue's trips are made by car, with minimal reliance on bikes or transit. City spending should reflect actual transportation behaviors and priorities. Needed are capital investments that will alleviate congestion and improve the intersections that currently fail to meet service standards. The Wilburton Final Environmental Impact Statement which identified numerous problematic intersections. For every new bicycle rider, there will be 400 new vehicle trips. For every new transit rider, there will be 50 new people in vehicles. Given the projected dramatic growth in both population and employment, the city must enhance vehicular infrastructure to meet the practical transportation demands.

Alex Tsimmerman expressed confusion and frustration about ongoing restrictions faced when attempting to speak at public meetings in Bellevue, claiming to have been issued many trespass notices and prosecuted multiple times. The city's governance was criticized with inflammatory language and sweeping accusations, including equating the city to a plantation and making inappropriate historical comparisons. The value of making investments in bike lanes was questioned, and it was argued that the cost is disproportionate to the perceived usage.

Maria Frost, Vice President for Government Affairs at Kemper Development Company, addressed two primary topics: the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) and the Micromobility Code Amendment. Support was expressed for the work of the Commission and the staff in regard to the TFP, and for the Chamber of Commerce's recommendations concerning priority projects that address key roadway and intersection deficiencies. Staff's proposal to remove TFP-222 and TFP-223 should be supported; both propose adding of right-turn lanes along Bellevue Way that would negatively impact both vehicle movement and pedestrian safety by increasing crossing distances and signal times. She supported their removal based on modeling data aligned with 2044 projections, which showed minimal public benefit. With regard to the Micromobility Code Amendment, the speaker urged the Commission to update Bellevue City Code (BCC) 11.60.070 to include scooters, which are not currently referenced. The code governs sidewalk riding and prioritizes pedestrian safety by requiring bicyclists to stop and dismount if their presence poses a danger or unreasonable inconvenience. The same standard should be applied to scooter operators as a matter of consistency and public safety, especially as the new code would allow sidewalk use where no safe alternatives exist.

Kevin Wallace focused on the need for a generational, comprehensive citywide transportation plan. The Commission was urged to prioritize the four specific line items in the TFP that already include design funding, and called for increased resources to support a citywide mobility strategy. The recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, Wilburton Land Use Code, and the upcoming middle housing and BelRed studies, all forecast significant density increases. The developments lack corresponding transportation infrastructure planning. Emphasized was the necessity of aligning growth with infrastructure, and the speaker called for renewal of the transportation levies and consultant-led studies to develop multimodal solutions capable of addressing the impact of future growth.

Nicole Myers concurred with the comments made by the previous speaker and expanded on the concerns related to middle housing, particularly the transportation implications of increased dwelling units per parcel. Pointing to the anticipated changes, such as driveway requirements, curb cuts, and the traffic impacts associated with larger developments on previously single-family lots, feedback from the Bridal Trails neighborhood was cited which highlighted the

issue of pedestrian infrastructure and the challenges in older neighborhoods where sidewalk installation may be ecologically or financially unfeasible. The speaker advocated for pedestrian-shared street strategies, including visual cues like road markings and speed control mechanisms to ensure safe walking environments near transit hubs, despite the sidewalk limitations.

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

Chair Stash reported on having attended the recent city-hosted appreciation dinner for commissioners and described it as an enjoyable and valuable event for networking and discussing common challenges across commissions.

Chair Stash then announced the departure of two longstanding Commissioners: Commissioners Kurtz and Marciante. Commissioner Kurtz, a member of the Commission for four years, was recognized as having an extensive academic background in physics from Princeton and Stanford, and for having made professional contributions in tech and traffic data analysis. Commissioner Kurtz's collegial and enjoyable presence on the Commission was also highlighted.

Chair Stash said Commissioner Marciante served on the Commission for eight years, including two as Chair during the COVID-19 period. It was noted that just three months ago Commissioner Marciante received a promotion to Associate Vice President at HNTB. Commissioner Marciante brought to the Commission a strong background in engineering and environmental studies from Brown University, and served the Commission with commitment and leadership.

Vice Chair Magill thanked both Commissioners for their participation and contributions as members of the Commission.

Commissioner Ting said it has been great having discussions with both Commissioners, even when spirited. Good things come from productive debate.

Commissioner Keilman voiced appreciation for the constructive conversations and respectful disagreements both Commissioners brought to the table.

Senior Planner Michael Ingram noted having very much enjoyed working with both Commissioners, adding that they will both be missed for their great insights.

5. STAFF REPORTS

A. Curb Pricing Study Update

Michael Ingram referred to the printed report that had been included in the packet. It was stated that the topic will return to the Commission in July for further discussion.

Chair Stash pointed out that because curb pricing is a revenue generating activity, it differs from the work of the Commission that is focused on the spending of city funds. Michael Ingram allowed that the curb program is not likely to raise a lot of money.

Commissioner Ting asked staff to clarify for the Commission when the topic is again on the agenda exactly what direction the Council has given to the Commission, specifically in regard to what areas the Commission should and should not discuss. Michael Ingram agreed to communicate the request to the relevant staff for incorporation into future memos to better guide the deliberation.

6. PUBLIC HEARING – None

7. STUDY SESSION

A. Transportation Facilities Plan Update

Michael Ingram explained that a comprehensive list of candidate projects had been compiled, evaluated, and scored using a formal methodology. However, it was noted that the scoring alone is insufficient for final prioritization due to the diversity of project types. Consequently, staff have entered a more nuanced prioritization phase while still waiting for the revenue forecast. All preliminary indications are that funding will be tight.

The current Capital Investment Program (CIP) contained a lot of projects, probably more than can realistically be funded within the defined timeline. The overextension will necessitate deferring or rebalancing future investments. The revenue assumptions previously taken for granted can no longer be relied on with any certainty, and future funding likely will be continue to be constrained.

Michael Ingram explained that the three-phase approach used to determine project priorities begins with a quantitative analysis. That is the phase where the MIP scoring comes into play, the results of which were shared with the Commission in February. The projects were scored according to relevant transportation modes. The scoring provides a baseline but does not result in a final ranked list. The second phase adds in qualitative factors that include contributions from over two dozen staff members across multiple departments, including Transportation, Community Development, Parks, and Utilities. The representatives participated in three key meetings: an initial kickoff to introduce the process, followed by two detailed work sessions in March and April. During the kickoff meeting, the staff representative evaluated the project lists, identified high and low priorities, and provided justifications for their assessments. At the first work session they engaged in a dot exercise where the participants marked projects with green dots for high priority or red dots for low priority. The dots included initials indicating who provided each designation, allowing for transparent discussions around the reasons behind each ranking.

Leading up to the second work session, the TFP team prepared a “straw man” list, color-coded into three categories: green indicating a recommendation for funding, peach for projects to include with placeholder funding, and red for projects not recommended for inclusion at current time. During the session, each project was reviewed individually, and some color assignments were changed based on the collective feedback.

The revised prioritized list was shared with the Commission.

Michael Ingram reiterated that the prioritization remains provisional until the revenue forecasts are finalized. The current fiscal climate indicates constrained resources, with the existing Capital Investment Program already exceeding realistic funding capacity. Future funding

allocations will need to be limited and carefully targeted.

Michael Ingram said some of the projects highlighted during public comments, specifically 112th Avenue NE at NE 10th Street, and NE 12th Street at 116th Avenue NE, NE 4th Street at 116th Avenue NE, and SE 2nd Street at 116th Avenue SE, are all locations where the analysis done for the Comprehensive Plan showed there may be problems down the line. Those projects are included as placeholders totaling \$300,000, but the staff acknowledge the need for additional analysis.

Turning to the shortlist of “green” projects recommended by staff for funding, it was noted that the first two projects, both located in downtown Bellevue, are closely tied to adjacent development and are primarily funded through developer contributions. Including them in the TFP allows the projects to be recognized under the impact fee program.

The Mountains to Sound Greenway project is partially in development. The next phase will focus on extending it from 150th Avenue to Lakemont Boulevard through further feasibility work.

The Eastrail project, while led by King County, requires Bellevue’s contribution to connect it with neighborhood networks, including Woodridge and Greenwich Crest.

The Bellevue College connection project is a multi-benefit, multimodal investment involving the reconfiguring of roads and bus routes through the college campus to improve transit efficiency and reduce congestion at the Eastgate intersection. While grants have funded the design work, partial city funding is necessary to move forward with construction.

The section of 120th Avenue NE from NE 16th Street to Northup Way is the last segment to be addressed. The current TFP shows the project as fully funded, but cost increases necessitate additional city resources to complete the construction in phases.

The Spring Boulevard Zone 3 project, a critical connectivity segment that supports multiple modes except for transit that is already serving the area. The project focuses on bicycle, pedestrian and roadway elements and is a win for all.

The Bellevue Grand Connection is a major City Council priority that supports significant multimodal and placemaking objectives. Staff noted its significance and recommended it as a key inclusion in the short-term TFP.

Michael Ingram shifted focus to the integration of projects supporting an east-west bicycle corridor. The corridor would link existing and proposed bicycle infrastructure across the city from NE 12th Street through the Spring District, over to 140th Avenue NE, and potentially eastward toward 156th Avenue NE. It was noted that the corridor would incorporate a mix of existing facilities and new segments requiring construction, additional study, and coordination with neighboring jurisdictions like Redmond. To establish the corridor would require four essential projects. One, TFP-270, the Spring Boulevard gap, was noted to already be included in the green category. The other three, BB-12, BB-4B, and BB-5, are in the peach category, indicating placeholder status pending further funding analysis and potential adjustments based on revenue forecasts.

Commissioner Marciante asked what the total cost of the green-tier projects totals. Michael Ingram said there is currently no confirmed budget, adding that even the recommended green-

tier projects, which were identified as priorities, are not affordable under the existing or anticipated financial constraints. Surprised by that submission, Commissioner Marciante noted having assumed the green projects were at least financially feasible. Michael Ingram clarified that the purpose of assigning projects to the green category was not to indicate affordability but rather to denote those which should be kept active with limited funding to maintain progress or momentum, even in the absence of full capital funding.

Chair Stash asked what the chances are for any of the peach projects. Michael Ingram said it will depend on the project and if the decision is made to focus on congestion projects. Chair Stash asked whether the green projects must be completed before the peach-tier projects can proceed, and Michael Ingram clarified that the tier designations reflect relative priority rather than a strict implementation sequence. Some peach-tier projects may progress ahead of certain green-tier projects depending on emerging needs, opportunities, or alignment with other initiatives. The \$300,000 noted as a placeholder is a figure that has historically been used for placeholders. The amount, while previously useful, is now insufficient for many purposes due to escalating costs. Despite being symbolic in some cases, the placeholder continues to serve as a nominal allocation for preliminary work.

Commissioner Ting then asked how staff will recommend prioritizing projects at the fringes of the green-tier category, especially since there is insufficient funding for all of them. Knowing which projects sit near the bottom of the green list will be essential when decisions are made about where to reduce the scope of or to remove projects. Michael Ingram committed to returning with a more detailed breakdown of project importance within the green category, along with insights from internal discussions that shaped those determinations.

Vice Chair Magill asked to have future presentations include summaries of internal discussions that explain why certain projects were promoted or demoted, and emphasized that such context would help avoid misalignment between staff insights and Commissioner feedback.

Michael Ingram confirmed that project cost was indeed a factor during the prioritization discussions, even though not all projects had exact figures. The staff were generally aware of which projects involved significant expenditures and that influenced their rankings. An illustrative example was offered regarding a previously funded project to add a high-occupancy vehicle lane on Bellevue Way. Despite its historic inclusion in the TFP and completion of outreach and analysis, the project was no longer recommended by staff due to its high cost and limited benefit during peak hours only. In the current financial environment, the staff deprioritized the project in favor of more impactful and broadly beneficial initiatives.

Vice Chair Magill encouraged staff to share more detailed commentary on both the green-tier and red-tier projects. Michael Ingram agreed to provide additional narrative detail for both supported and excluded projects in future meetings.

Commissioner Keilman raised a broader structural question regarding coordination with the Planning Commission, observing that decisions made by the Planning Commission regarding land use and growth patterns inevitably influence transportation demands. It may be useful to consult with other commissions to ensure holistic and forward-looking planning, reducing the risk of reactive or inefficient spending. Michael Ingram acknowledged the interconnectedness of land use and transportation planning, but pointed out that the two commissions operate independently. The Transportation Commission's work is informed by adopted land use plans and projected growth scenarios. Direct collaboration or input from the Planning Commission on specific transportation project prioritization is not part of the current governance model.

Similarly, the Planning Commission does not typically seek input from the Transportation Commission regarding land use issues.

Commissioner Ting acknowledged the difficulty of cross-commission coordination at the level of individual projects but suggested that there could be mutual value in exchanging high-level insights. While agreeing that sharing the detailed TFP list with the Planning Commission might be impractical, a broader communication between the commissions could support better-informed decision-making.

Chair Stash voiced agreement and suggested discussing the issue further at the retreat. While formal collaboration on specific TFP items may be too granular, there remains potential value in establishing channels for inter-commission understanding and alignment on overarching planning priorities.

Commissioner Ting asked for clarification about the previously mentioned \$300,000 placeholder for analyzing failing intersections. Michael Ingram said the figure is not definitive. The TFP is not a funded budget but rather a prioritized planning tool. Final costs are determined through ongoing congestion reduction programs managed by other departments, where the detailed scoping and budgeting takes place.

Commissioner Ting asked if the City is committed to conducting a deeper analysis of the failing elements identified in the 2044 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Michael Ingram confirmed that identifying and evaluating such issues is part of the process. However, the actual approach varies depending on the nature of the issues and the available resources. While some locations warrant closer investigation, others may be monitored over time, as predictions often evolve and do not always materialize precisely as forecasted.

Commissioner Ting clarified that the core concern is not a question of implementation, but rather whether the city plans to properly study and understand the magnitude and character of the projected failures. It was stressed that the importance of conducting foundational assessments to determine whether intervention is necessary, even if execution remains uncertain or delayed.

Commissioner Kurz pointed out that existing tools, such as the MIP and the FEIS, already track intersection performance across cycles. The tools help anticipate where issues may arise and guide the decision-making. Certain constraints, such as limitations on construction near state highways like SR-520, influence what can or cannot be done in specific areas.

Consultant Chris Breiland with Fehr & Peers commented that the MIP and TFP already account for what could be done to meet the performance targets. For each intersection with projected performance issues, staff developed early-stage conceptual solutions ranging from relatively simple fixes like adding a turn lane to more complex and expensive solutions such as widening bridges or major structural redesigns. While not detailed designs, the concepts help gauge project scale and cost. The exercise was conducted in coordination with the city's Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) modeling department and was previously reviewed by the Commission in an earlier meeting. The information is fed into the TFP prioritization process. The purpose of the exercise is to ensure that projects requiring extensive investment are properly recognized and compared against more affordable or immediate needs. The considerations help determine whether a project should be designated green, peach, or red within the TFP.

Commissioner Marciante responded that this level of assessment is helpful and adequate for the moment. However, it is important to have a clear understanding of the city's strategic response to forecasted failures. If a specific intersection is expected to fail in the future, the city must evaluate potential solutions in a timely manner rather than allowing years to pass without having any clarity on the scope or feasibility of a response. The TFP is a financially constrained planning document that outlines anticipated needs over a six- to twelve-year horizon, but it is not a binding budget. The City Council has the authority to draw from the TFP when formulating the CIP, which is the actual budget. While the CIP generally aligns with the TFP due to the rigorous planning process behind it, the Council may occasionally prioritize other projects based on emergent needs or opportunities. The TFP serves as a strategic guide rather than a fixed financial plan.

Commissioner Marciante asked how the TFP priorities influence ongoing departmental work, particularly for projects that remain outside the formal CIP. Michael Ingram responded by noting that while the TFP informs long-term planning and supports the impact fee program, it does not in itself trigger project work. Projects in the TFP may be advanced due to other motivating factors, such as community interest, development-related pressures, or policy alignment. Although some limited work such as preliminary analysis or cost estimation may occur, most project development is guided by dedicated programs, including congestion reduction efforts managed by other staff within the department. The programs may draw upon the TFP but also rely on their own data, assessments, and priorities.

Commissioner Marciante emphasized the importance of understanding what work typically occurs on TFP projects before they enter the CIP. Michael Ingram clarified that being included in the TFP does not automatically initiate detailed study or progression unless there is independent momentum or external drivers. Some analytical and planning activities are supported by general departmental funds rather than specific project budgets.

Chair Stash expressed a desire for clearer information regarding the likelihood of TFP projects advancing, especially once budget numbers become available. Although the Commission has reviewed the color-coded project categories, there remains some uncertainty about which projects are realistically viable. Michael Ingram allowed that the financial limitations are significant, and even the short list of eight green projects likely exceeds what the city can afford. Only a few projects will receive meaningful funding, but there will be greater clarity in June when the updated budget projections are expected.

The Commissioners agreed to review the spreadsheet again before the next meeting to identify any projects believed to have been miscategorized.

Commissioner Kurz commented that even after engaging deeply with the project list, more detail is needed regarding the rationale for how specific projects were classified. Staff was asked to specifically document why each green project was promoted and why each red project was demoted in terms of the overarching criteria and how they were applied to individual projects. Michael Ingram agreed to provide additional context and supporting detail for each project before the next meeting.

Commissioner Kurz noted having been struck by how many of the green-tier projects appear to have been elevated due to external factors such as concurrent development, funding from other agencies, or existing momentum. Such drivers, though not strictly part of the prioritization framework, seem to have heavily influenced the outcome. Partial funding or external alignment appears to propel projects into the green category; it is not the scoring system alone that does

that.

Commissioner Ting emphasized that clarifying which green projects were near the threshold, and which red projects were just below it, would be helpful for future funding decisions.

Kristi Oosterveen explained that some peach-tier projects appear in the CIP already. They are projects that have partial capital funding but which are not being recommended for additional investment at this time. In such cases, the existing funds for each project, often related to state-led or early-phase efforts, justify their inclusion in the plan but not in the green category.

Commissioner Marciante said it would be helpful to outline the criteria used to designate projects as green. Kristi Oosterveen said the criteria include project readiness, alignment with external funding, strategic importance, and development synergies. It was agreed that creating a clear and consistent summary of the criteria would help the Commission better understand the rationale behind the color-coded categories and reduce the impression that arbitrary or undefined lines had been drawn.

Commissioner Marciante urged giving consideration to investigating how a comprehensive and multimodal plan could be created on integrated frame. The approach was previously discussed by the Commission, but the reason it did not come to be was because of the need to do rather than to just plan, which led to the creation of an implementation plan. The TFP list is now only a third of what it was a few years ago. Commissioner Marciante said the point regarding an integrated plan is a good one. The city's ongoing programs do take a coordinated approach by aligning elements such as sidewalks and bike lanes. However, the smaller projects do not appear prominently in the TFP because of their scale. Commissioner Marciante said documenting the integrated planning philosophy would more explicitly aid in a broader understanding and future coordination.

Kristi Oosterveen said once the financial data is received, staff will overlay the project costs against the available funds, draw a clear funding line within the spreadsheet, and display which projects lie above or below it. The Commission will then be asked to suggest adjustments based on their assessments, potentially moving specific projects up or down. Staff will update the status column in the spreadsheet with more detailed explanations for each project's assigned color code.

In response to a question asked by Commissioner Ting, Commissioner Marciante said the earlier proposal for a comprehensive multimodal network was not intended to serve as a replacement for existing mode-specific plans, but rather a reorganization of projects into a unified framework. The idea is not to redefine policies but to visually and strategically assemble existing projects into more coherent and digestible forms for public understanding and long-term integration in something resembling a Transportation Master Plan, a long-term, cohesive framework visualizing future connectivity across all modes.

Referring to the east-west bike corridor option map, Commissioner Ting asked what the takeaway was supposed to be. Chair Stash noted having specifically asked for it after struggling to understand the fate of the east-west corridor within the TFP spreadsheet. Although the corridor's projects appear under different names and codes in the spreadsheet, they are indeed connected, and the visualization is intended to make those links apparent.

Commissioner Ting asked how the principles and project ideas from initiatives such as Bike Bellevue were incorporated into the TFP and how the priorities are translated into final project

selections. Michael Ingram clarified that all Bike Bellevue projects are labeled with the “BB” designation in the project list. Because the entries came from a variety of sources, including different planning efforts, they have contributed to the complexity and clutter of the TFP spreadsheet.

B. Micromobility Code Amendment

Mobility Planning and Solutions Manager Franz Loewenherz said the goal of the presentation was to gather Commission feedback and assess the general support, or at least a shared understanding, of the proposed amendments in order to prepare finalized language for presentation to the City Council, tentatively scheduled for June 24. The Commissioners were reminded of the Council’s direction to focus solely on updating the existing micromobility ordinance, BCC 11.48.2010. Broader discussions involving other types of mobility devices, such as e-bikes, are outside the scope of the update.

Since the ordinance was adopted in 2007, the micromobility landscape has changed significantly. Devices that were once gas-powered and disruptive have evolved into quieter and more widely adopted electric scooters which are now frequently observed in Bellevue, particularly in the downtown core. There is a growing need to modernize the city’s regulations to align with regional and state standards, ensuring consistency and clarity for users, enforcement efforts, and infrastructure planning.

Franz Loewenherz reviewed with the Commissioners a series of comparison tables that listed the regulatory categories, current state law, Bellevue’s existing 2007 code, and the proposed amendments. In regard to definitions, it was noted that the recommended update to the terminology is intended to reflect modern devices and remove references to gas-powered equipment, and to allow for flexibility in wheel size and design to accommodate a variety of scooter types.

With regard to user age requirements, it was noted that the current city code permits operation starting at age 14. The proposal was to increase the minimum age to 16 to align with state law, reflecting a more cautious approach and consistency with regional standards.

The existing city code does not allow scooters to be operated at night. The proposal is to allow nighttime use, and approach that is consistent with state law, provided that proper reflectors are used.

The current city code does not define speed limits. The proposal is to adopt a 15 mile per hour limit, which aligns with both state law and regional practice.

Bellevue’s existing helmet requirement is proposed to be retained, even though both the state and county no longer mandate helmets. Franz Loewenherz emphasized that feedback from the Commission had shown strong support for continuing the safety measure.

With regard to where scooters can be ridden, it was noted that the current code restricts scooters to streets with speed limits of 25 miles per hour or less, effectively rendering them illegal in most cases. The proposal is to update the code to allow scooter use on all roadways, which is consistent with state law. The proposal is to allow scooters to operate in bicycle lanes. The recommendation is, however, that scooters be prohibited from sidewalks unless no safe alternative exists, which is also in alignment with state law. The staff are also proposing incorporating a provision that would allow a city traffic engineer to create specific dismount

zones where determined to be the prudent course of action in pedestrian-heavy.

The current code does not specify whether or not scooters are allowed on paved trails and shared-use paths. The recommendation is to permit scooters on those facilities unless signed as prohibited, which offers some flexibility.

On unpaved, non-motorized trails, the proposal is to maintain the current restriction that prohibits scooter use.

With regard to use in city parks, Franz Loewenherz said after consultation with the Parks and Community Services Department, the recommendation is to allow scooter in parks unless otherwise signed as prohibited, maintaining consistency with the shared-use path approach.

Commissioner Ting voiced the assumption that the regulations being considered apply exclusively to motorized scooters. Franz Loewenherz confirmed that the amendments were indeed focused solely on motorized devices, not manual or non-motorized scooters.

Commissioner McGill asked whether seated scooters were included within the scope of the ordinance. Franz Loewenherz allowed that both seated and standing electric scooters are encompassed under the broader definition of motorized scooters in alignment with state law.

Commissioner Marciante asked if four-wheel motorized mobility devices, such as motorized wheelchairs, are included. Franz Loewenherz explained that devices intended for mobility assistance, such as electric wheelchairs, are categorically separate and not affected by the proposed amendments. Those devices are treated under different provisions, including those related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protections. Commissioner Marciante asked how a user of mobility assistance devices would know that the proposed code provisions do not apply to them. Franz Loewenherz responded that public education will be an important component of the ordinance rollout. Flyers and communications materials will be prepared to help clarify which devices are governed under the new rules. Additionally, there is an intent to replicate the explanatory language found in state law, which delineates between types of mobility devices, in order to avoid confusion.

Commissioner Kurz questioned the rationale behind raising the minimum age for scooter operation from 14 to 16, particularly in light of the fact that many students currently ride scooters to high school. The Commissioner asked if there is any safety data supporting the change, or whether the change simply mirrors a conservative regulatory approach. Franz Loewenherz said the proposed age of 16 was chosen to harmonize with both state law and neighboring jurisdictions. Although e-bikes have different classifications, with some allowing younger riders, inconsistency in age requirements across modes could create potential enforcement challenges. Aligning with the state's 16-year threshold will help to avoid regulatory confusion and ensure a more uniform approach across city and regional systems.

Commissioner Ting asked if manufacturers of e-scooters have a recommended minimum age. Franz Loewenherz noted not being aware of any such age recommendations on the part of the manufacturers.

Commissioner Ting asked if down the road there might be e-scooters designed for more than one rider, such as tandem-style scooters. Franz Loewenherz explained that current scooter designs, due to their narrow platforms and balance limitations, are generally not conducive to safe use by more than one person. It was allowed, however, that the market is evolving rapidly.

Commissioner Marciante pointed out that multiple riders on a single scooter is already a common practice, even though it is not necessarily safe or permitted.

There was consensus that the one-rider rule should remain the standard in the ordinance.

Returning to the age requirement, Commissioner Kurz allowed that the argument in favor of consistency is valid even though there is no clear rationale for requiring riders to be 16. Franz Loewenherz said the City Attorney strongly advised alignment with the state RCW unless a compelling alternative justification can be presented. The need to avoid enforcement complications and inconsistencies with neighboring cities was cited as a primary reason for the alignment.

There was consensus regarding the proposed maximum speed of 15 miles per hour, which aligns with state law and regional norms.

The helmet mandate drew more divided opinions. Commissioner Marciante revisited the earlier decision by the Commission to require helmets and pointed out that things have changed since then. The Commissioner noted riding scooters without a helmet in other cities when traveling for work. There may be visitors who will come to Bellevue who are used to riding without a helmet who could find themselves stopped or fined because of a rule with which they are unfamiliar. There could also be potential liabilities and operational barriers for scooter rental companies, which may not be able to supply helmets, and about the broader goal of promoting ease of use and mobility access.

Commissioner McGill supported the concern, noting that mandating helmets could effectively discourage scooter availability or use, especially if rental companies are burdened by additional operational requirements. Although personally favoring the wearing of helmets, it was stated that there are practical trade-offs, including increased cost for scooter rentals.

Commissioner Ting clarified that most scooter rental services do not provide helmets, and users are expected to bring their own. While acknowledging the barrier, helmets are the right way to go from a safety perspective. Support was voiced for retaining the helmet requirement for reasons of safety, and to align the ordinance with the same rationale used for bicycle helmet use.

Chair Stash concurred and emphasized the safety imperative before voicing support for maintaining a helmet mandate despite the challenges it might present. The question asked was if having to provide helmets would be a financial challenge for scooter rental operations. Franz Loewenherz said the terms of a right-of-way use permit, which is the direction taken by the pilot program, could build in flexibility, allowing for the responsibility to be put on the rider to have a helmet.

Commissioner Keilman questioned the logic of mandating helmets for scooter riders while not requiring similar protections for pedestrians, especially given the shared use of space. Drawing from personal experience using rental scooters such as Lime in downtown Seattle, the impracticality of carrying a helmet at all times was pointed out. Doubt was expressed about how enforceable such a requirement would be. Helmet use should be left to individual choice.

Commissioner Marciante asked if the language used could strongly encourage the use of helmets without requiring them, and calling for education. Franz Loewenherz responded by

saying that educational materials will indeed be produced but will not be included in the code itself.

Molly Johnson proposed asking the city attorney about the possibility of inserting language into the code that strongly advises helmet use, even if it falls short of a legal requirement. The scooter rental company Lime does not provide helmets but does encourage riders to use them.

The options open to the Commission in regard to helmets was to require them, strongly advise them, or not specify. By a show of hands, there was majority support for strongly advising helmets or encouraging them.

Franz Loewenherz reiterated that as proposed the amendment would allow scooters on roadways and in bicycle lanes.

Chair Stash proposed including language specifying that scooters are not allowed on state highways.

Commissioner Marciante asked if there might be some roadways in Bellevue on which the city would not want to allow scooters. Molly Johnson explained that the city traffic engineer has the authority to designate such restrictions, though additional legal review would be necessary to confirm the exact mechanics. Commissioner Marciante favored the language “allowed except where signed as prohibited.” Molly Johnson said there could be issues around signing to disallow scooters on a vehicle street given all the rules regarding what can be done with a vehicle street. Before taking that approach, the issue should be addressed by the traffic engineer.

Vice Chair Magill said it makes sense to include dismount zones, but asked what the difference is between that and a sign. Franz Loewenherz said it can be done in a number of different ways. Some cities place medallions in the sidewalk; others utilize signs or geofencing technologies associated with shared mobility providers. It was noted, however, that private scooter users would not be subject to geofencing controls. Molly Johnson said if there start to be a lot of scooter-pedestrian safety issues, the city will want to have some flexibility to requiring scooter uses to step down in certain areas.

Commissioner Ting asked if the same bicycle rules apply to scooters on sidewalks in regard to overtaking pedestrians. Franz Loewenherz said it is the intent to take existing language around being preferential to pedestrians and moving it into the proposed code section.

Commissioner Ting asked, aside from the helmet issue which is yet to be resolved, if there were any other significant differences between how electric scooters and electric bicycles are regulated. Molly Johnson clarified that while the operational characteristics might seem similar, the legal treatment of the two device types is distinct. Scooter regulations fall under Bellevue City Code 11.48.2010, while bicycle rules are in a separate section. Because the City Council only authorized changes to the scooter-related chapter for the proposed ordinance, modifications to the bicycle code are not under consideration. The feedback, however, may inform future updates to bicycle regulations.

Commissioner Keilman suggested that teenage scooter riders should be provided with some educational material that clearly explains what constitutes a “safe alternative” when riding on sidewalks is generally prohibited. Franz Loewenherz confirmed the intent to produce public education materials that will help riders understand such nuances.

Commissioner Ting asked about Lime's interest in participating in a demonstration project. Molly Johnson remarked on having had contact with Lime earlier in the week and learning that the company will be setting up a demonstration soon. Before a demonstration project can be launched, the proposed code revisions will need to be completed. The soonest the code can be approved by the Council is June 24. If that target date is met, a demonstration project could be effected before the end of the summer, though there are numerous steps to be taken first.

Commissioner Ting asked if there are any rules regarding helmet usage from the state. Franz Loewenherz said there is no requirement by the state, or by King County.

A motion to extend the meeting to 9:30 p.m. was made by Chair Stash. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ting and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Mobility Implementation Plan Update

Consultant Chris Breiland with Fehr & Peers noted that the MIP was being refreshed with significantly improved data compared to the original 2019 version. The update includes more accurate, comprehensive inputs for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The primary changes include updates to maps, tables, and figures that reflect pedestrian and bicycle levels of traffic stress. Data in 2019 was rudimentary and often limited to the presence or absence of sidewalks. In contrast, the update includes more granular details, such as sidewalk width, the presence of buffers, and the suitability of pedestrian facilities based on street volume and speed. The Commission previously agreed to repeal Table 4 and replace it with a note regarding the intersection design tools to implement and achieve bicycle level of traffic stress. A new table is being developed, one that will look similar to the prior table but will include examples rather than prescriptive dictates. The updated bicycle level of traffic stress map includes the corridor intersections showing the lower LTS of any two intersecting streets.

Part of the goal for updating the MIP was to take the data, which was largely from 2019, and update it to reflect the latest conditions. Some refinements have also been adopted relative to bicycle level of traffic stress, and a new performance metric, pedestrian level of traffic stress, has been added. The result is maps that are greatly improved. There is also new data from the Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement that affects transit and the vehicle mode.

There are a number of figures related to the pedestrian network. Where previously there was a lack of data with regard to where sidewalks were and were not, the update now differentiates between each side of a street. Areas where facilities are completely absent are marked clearly, as are those where existing infrastructure does not meet the performance targets. As a result of the higher quality data and more rigorous performance metrics, there is now less area shown as meeting pedestrian level of traffic stress goals, even though the data better reflects actual conditions.

The tables in the MIP have been updated to quantify where the city does or does not meet its performance goals. The tables are aligned with the bicycle level of traffic stress metrics to ensure consistency. The tables further reinforce that while there may not be many total sidewalk gaps, especially outside residential neighborhoods, a significant number of existing facilities still fall short of the target quality.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Marciante about the seemingly larger number of gaps, Chris Breiland explained that the change comes about from measuring both sides of the

street. Previously, gaps were identified as having absolutely no facility on either side of the street. There are many streets that have sidewalks missing on only one side which now shows up as gaps.

Commissioner Kurz asked why gaps in the Downtown are so low and Chris Breiland explained that in the Downtown, where traffic speeds are approximated by multiplying the posted limit by 1.5, the speeds exceed the PLTS of 1, even despite the wider sidewalks. Actual traffic speeds data is being gathered which shows the speeds that are not as high, and as a result the targets are in fact being met. Under the supplemental metrics, where the standard is not met in the Downtown, more nuanced data will be collected. If traffic speeds are found to be high, some speed management may be necessary.

Commissioner Marciante asked if traffic speeds can be improved without affecting throughput. Chris Breiland said the trick is in measuring the 85th percentile speeds, the speed at which cars move away from traffic signals, which is in fact what affects throughput. Things like traffic signal timing are essential in reducing speed without necessarily affecting throughput.

With regard to the bicycle level of traffic stress (BLTS), Chris Breiland said the updated maps reflect more accurate and comprehensive data. Notably, the collector and arterial streets now appear more completely and accurately with indications of where bicycle infrastructure is lacking or insufficient. Some positive changes were noted, such as the addition of new multi-use paths like the one on 112th Avenue NE built by Sound Transit. The changes in data accuracy have resulted in a clearer understanding of where the city meets its BLTS goals and where improvements are necessary.

Chris Breiland said the Frequent Transit Network remained mostly unchanged except for showing two lines in service, which has resulted in one corridor between Downtown and Overlake now meeting the service threshold.

The big shift relative to intersection performance was tied to having the system intersections more clearly defined and informed by new traffic data gathered during the Comprehensive Plan's Environmental Impact Statement. The refinements provide a clearer assessment of whether intersections meet the performance targets. Similarly in regard to the vehicle corridor performance map, new data was incorporated from the FEIS so that the new map reflects the most recent measurements of traffic performance across the city's primary corridors.

Molly Johnson introduced a proposal to consolidate the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan into the updated Mobility Implementation Plan. The 2009 plan, while adopted by the Council, is outdated and uses obsolete standards. Rather than maintain two parallel planning documents, the proposal is to fully integrate pedestrian and bicycle planning into the MIP, streamlining the city's transportation planning and allowing for continuous updates through the MIP's living framework.

The Commissioners were offered an example illustrating the need for the change. The 2009 plan includes outdated recommendations such as a five foot wide bike lane along Main Street, which would be a BLTS-3 facility, and which would not meet the updated BLTS-1 standard. It is undesirable to have an official adopted plan that does not meet the same standard as the other official adopted plan. Consolidating the documents will ensure consistency across the city's transportation strategy.

Trails were part of the 2009 plan but they are not yet integrated into the MIP. Initially, they

will be included in the MIP as an appendix. The city plans to distinguish between transportation trails and recreational trails. Transportation trails will be subject to different design and ADA standards than park trails. The transportation department owns and maintains some trails, while the parks department oversees others. A future goal is to disaggregate the responsibilities and apply appropriate design standards based on each trail's intended use.

Molly Johnson said the June Commission meeting will focus exclusively on the Transportation Facilities Plan, so the final version of the updated MIP will be reviewed in July instead. At that time, the Commissioners will see all elements of the updated plan consolidated into a single comprehensive document.

Commissioner Marciante suggested that the current update to the MIP could provide an opportunity to establish a broader, more visionary framework, particularly by integrating multimodal concepts across entire corridors rather than maintaining a modal or intersection-level approach. The proposal made was to organize the TFP projects within broader corridor-based visions, thereby enhancing the city's ability to convey cohesive transportation goals to the public. Molly Johnson responded affirmatively, agreeing that the MIP's evolutionary structure allows for the integration of additional visioning and conceptual planning over time.

Chris Breiland affirmed that the MIP update will emphasize the priority bicycle corridors inherited from the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan. The corridors remain important connections, as confirmed through staff review. The intention is to retain the coherence of key network elements, especially where multiple projects interconnect, forming a comprehensive transportation structure.

Commissioner Ting raised the idea that planning could also reflect certain geographic areas rather than strictly corridors, an example of which could be the Downtown's pedestrian environment. Molly Johnson said the MIP includes specific design concepts for each corridor that may or may not meet the PLTS or the BLTS standards. Going forward, the design concepts will need to meet the performance standard.

Commissioner Ting raised a concern about preserving the high-level concepts and valuable information that is in the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan. Molly Johnson said moving the trail map into the MIP appendix is being done for that very reason.

Chris Breiland added that while many of the original plan's policies have been updated and transferred into the current Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, the goal is to ensure the MIP does not lose sight of those principles. The MIP provides more clarity in terms of implementation and outcome targets, such as specifying what constitutes a high-quality pedestrian environment. Still, the intent is to ensure that the updated plan reflects the overarching vision and concepts.

Commissioner Marciante asked whether elements like the east-west and north-south bicycle corridors from the 2009 plan will continue to exist in the updated document. Chris Breiland confirmed that the corridors are being retained. The idea of creating a connected network will be retained as well. The challenge lies in saying in the MIP that the city should focus on completing the north-south and east-west corridors when doing so is directly tied to funding. The MIP aims to support opportunistic implementation where feasible, rather than rigidly prescribing sequence or scale.

Commissioner Marciante emphasized that even where implementation must remain flexible,

the vision should be consistently upheld and visible. The MIP, having evolved from a tool focused strictly on implementation, is now also becoming the city's de facto modal plan. Therefore, it is important to clarify how older concepts are being preserved, revised, or replaced, and to allow the Commissioners the opportunity to review any substantive changes to ensure transparency.

Chris Breiland committed to highlighting for the July Commission meeting any substantive changes. That is the meeting where the final MIP draft will be shared in full. It was reiterated that no major vision shifts are anticipated. If anything notable arises during the final drafting, the Commission will be made aware.

Molly Johnson stressed that the Comprehensive Plan remains the primary location for the city's long-term transportation vision. The MIP serves as a tool for carrying that vision forward through performance-based implementation.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None
9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None
10. NEW BUSINESS – None
11. REVIEW OF COMMISSION CALENDAR

Michael Ingram took a moment to review the Commission the calendar of upcoming meeting dates and agenda items.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Stash adjourned the meeting at 9:26 p.m.



July 10th, 2025

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date