

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

June 11, 2026
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Hybrid Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Stash, Vice Chair Magill, Commissioners Keilman, Rebhuhn, Ting, Williams

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: Commissioner Welcher

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Molly Johnson, Michael Ingram, Department of Transportation; Zack Luckin, Department of Community Development

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 Williams, who arrived at 6:33 p.m.

A. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The floor was opened to nominations for Chair.

Principal Planner Kevin McDonald announced that prior to the meeting, the only nomination received for the position of Chair was Vice Chair Magill.

No other nominations were made, and Vice Chair Magill was elected Chair without the need for a vote.

The floor was opened to nominations for Vice Chair.

Kevin McDonald noted that prior to the meeting two nominations had been received for the position of Vice Chair: Commissioner Stash and Commissioner Williams.

Commissioner Stash withdrew herself from nomination.

No other nominations were made, and Commissioner Williams was elected Vice Chair without the need for a vote.

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

Chair Magill made it clear that all public comments must relate to city of Bellevue business and the roles and responsibilities of the Transportation Commission.

Diana Leo spoke representing the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce and expressed support for the staff recommendation to update the bicycle and pedestrian level-of-traffic-stress measures, describing the change as a reasonable refinement of transportation data. However, the speaker strongly opposed the proposed amendments to the volume-to-capacity performance targets, arguing that reducing the targets will normalize congestion rather than solve it. Performance standards provide accountability and should only be revised after the city demonstrates that all reasonable alternatives, including capacity improvements, corridor enhancements, and transit-priority strategies, have been fully evaluated. Additional engineering analysis, multimodal traffic data, and meaningful public engagement is needed before any target changes are considered. With regard to the transportation policies associated with the Factoria and Eastgate neighborhood area plans, appreciation was voiced for the transparency regarding the survey methodology. The Chamber is conducting independent transportation research that could inform future planning discussions and the results will be shared with the Commission.

Maria Frost with Kemper Development Company indicated support for the recommendation to eliminate the 20 percent speed-limit multiplier from the pedestrian and bicycle level-of-traffic-stress calculations and returning to using posted speed limits. An objection was raised in regard to the proposal to weaken the volume-to-capacity performance targets on regional corridors and freeway access points. Citing Comprehensive Plan policy, it was argued that Bellevue remains responsible for accommodating both citywide and regional travel demand and should not lower standards simply because congestion is difficult to address. The Commission was urged to ask for the data, alternative analyses, cost estimates, and cost-benefit evaluations before considering any changes to congestion-related targets. Empirical pedestrian and bicycle count data is needed to support any claims regarding the impacts on active transportation.

David Bonnifant, a resident of the Meydenbauer neighborhood, described persistent speeding, street racing, and excessive vehicle exhaust and noise along Lake Washington Boulevard and nearby streets. The corridor is unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. The situation has deteriorated despite numerous complaints submitted to the city. Speeding vehicles frequently use neighborhood streets for repeated high-speed loops, creating significant noise disturbances and safety concerns for residents on both sides of the bay. The city should take immediate action through increased enforcement, installation of speed and noise detection cameras, reduction of speed limits in the area, implementation of traffic-calming measures, and completion of a proposed four-way stop near the park. The recently approved traffic camera deployments do not include the affected corridor. There is a need for prompt intervention to address the ongoing quality-of-life and public-safety issues.

Scott Lampe spoke representing the Meydenbauer Bay Neighbors Association and noted also having previously served as a member of the Transportation Commission. Support was expressed for the proposed 2026 Mobility Implementation Plan update, and in particular the proposed speed reductions near Meydenbauer Bay. Citing the city's findings that speed is a major factor in serious injury collisions, the recommendation was made to extend the proposed 20-mile-per-hour speed limit westward from Main Street and 100th Avenue NE to the

intersection of 99th Avenue NE and Lake Washington Boulevard. The extension will improve pedestrian safety at a heavily used crosswalk and help address recurring speeding and racing activity along a curved section of Lake Washington Boulevard. The Commissioners were thanked for their service and for considering public input aimed at improving safety for all transportation users.

Vic Bishop, a longtime Bellevue resident, former Transportation Commission chair, and retired transportation engineer, focused on the issue of congestion, arguing that the city should prioritize capacity improvements rather than revising the performance standards. Referencing Comprehensive Plan Policy TR-20, it was asserted that the city's responsibility is to reduce congestion through transportation investments and system improvements. Using historical city data, the speaker contended that congestion standards have already been altered in ways that reduce the number of officially "failing" intersections without actually resolving traffic problems. Changing the volume-to-capacity standards will merely redefine failure rather than addressing congestion itself. The projections show future congestion at several major corridors and intersections. The Commission was urged to develop and prioritize a list of capacity improvement projects rather than lowering performance expectations.

Alex Tsimerman addressed the Commission with remarks concerning Bellevue's growth, traffic congestion, and transportation policies, and criticized the ongoing development. Increased construction is contributing to worsening traffic conditions. Opposition was voiced to various city transportation initiatives, including traffic-camera programs and speed-limit reductions. The speaker's comments included numerous personal attacks, inflammatory statements, and allegations directed toward city officials and transportation decision-makers. City leaders should halt additional growth and development. Transportation conditions will otherwise continue to deteriorate.

Joe Kunzler objected to the offensive, discriminatory and un-American language of the prior speaker. The Commission was urged to place greater emphasis on multimodal transportation options, including bicycle and scooter programs. Neighboring communities are to be praised for promoting alternative transportation choices. There should be an expansion of bicycle infrastructure, and additional support should be given to environmentally sustainable transportation and complementary neighborhood amenities near light rail stations.

Heidi Dean, a Newport Hills resident, commented on the Factoria and Eastgate Neighborhood Area Plan processes, arguing that the plans do not adequately reflect the priorities of Factoria residents and instead emphasize objectives favored by individuals outside the neighborhood. Traffic congestion is one of the most significant concerns for residents and visitors, yet the proposed policies focus primarily on walking, bicycling, and transit improvements. The structure of the public engagement surveys steered participants toward multimodal transportation responses while providing limited opportunities to express concerns about traffic congestion. Support was voiced for the earlier comments opposing the proposed changes to the volume-to-capacity standards, and it was argued that modifying the measurement methodologies will not reduce congestion and could worsen conditions on major corridors such as Coal Creek Parkway and Factoria Boulevard. Staff should be directed to return with substantive congestion-mitigation strategies for incorporation into the neighborhood area plan policies.

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

5. STAFF REPORTS

Kevin McDonald informed the Commissioners that the City Council had provided cards and gift boxes in appreciation of their service on the Transportation Commission.

Kevin McDonald reported regarding bicycle improvement projects previously recommended by the Commission, including along Lake Washington Boulevard, 100th Avenue NE, and NE 1st Street between 100th Avenue NE and Bellevue Way, as well as the reduced speed limit on NE 1st Street to 20 miles per hour. Construction is expected to begin in early July following the issuance of the notice to proceed.

The Commissioners were reminded to monitor their email regularly so that staff can confirm attendance and maintain meeting quorums.

6. PUBLIC HEARING – None

7. STUDY SESSION

A. Factoria and Eastgate Neighborhood Plan Transportation Policies

Senior Department of Community Development planner Zach Luckin explained that the work item was launched by the Council in August 2025, and the direction given was to update the neighborhood plans for both Eastgate and Factoria. Over the preceding eight months the city engaged more than 1200 participants through 31 events and gathered feedback that helped shape the draft plans and policies. The current phase of work involves review of the draft policies and community outreach before the plans will return to the Planning Commission and ultimately to the City Council for adoption.

The Great Neighborhoods Program was initiated by the City Council in 2018 to update Bellevue's 16 neighborhood plans, many of which have not been revised for decades. The neighborhood area plans form part of Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan and serve as long-range policy guides for growth, development, and community investment. The plans establish visions, goals, and priorities while allowing for flexibility to respond to changing conditions. Transportation-related policies within the plans can influence future investments, regulations, partnerships, and capital projects. The transportation policies have been coordinated with staff responsible for the Mobility Implementation Plan and the Transportation Element to ensure consistency with citywide transportation priorities, and to identify opportunities for improvements involving sidewalks, bicycle facilities, trails, transit connections, and local streets.

Zach Luckin described Eastgate as a large and diverse area spanning both sides of I-90 and containing residential neighborhoods, apartments, industrial uses, retail businesses, parks, offices, and Bellevue College. Factoria is a major commercial and employment center bounded by I-90 and I-405; it is anchored by Factoria Mall, the T-Mobile headquarters campus, and numerous businesses and restaurants.

There are four phases to the Neighborhood Area planning process. To date the project has progressed through the discovery and definition phases and it is currently in the refinement stage, with final Council adoption anticipated later in the year.

Each neighborhood area plan is organized around five major themes: neighborhood identity, mixed-use and neighborhood centers, community gathering spaces, mobility and access, and environmental stewardship. Considerable attention is given to the public engagement process, which includes workshops, surveys, tabling events, neighborhood walks, classroom outreach, meetings in apartment communities, and other efforts designed to reach a broad and diverse cross-section of residents, businesses, students, and community members. The resulting plans are shaped by extensive community input gathered throughout both neighborhoods.

With regard to Eastgate specifically, Zach Luckin said the community feedback highlighted safety, natural features, diversity, economic vitality, mature trees, parks, streams, convenient access to services, and a strong sense of community. A vision statement was developed based on that feedback. It describes Eastgate as a convenient, safe, and welcoming neighborhood where residents, businesses, and students can thrive, build connections, and enjoy opportunities to walk, bicycle, and use transit while accessing natural, recreational, educational, and commercial destinations. Mixed-use areas on both sides of I-90, together with Bellevue College, are envisioned as community hubs supporting living, working, learning, gathering, and social interaction.

The draft transportation-related policies for Eastgate focus on the mixed-use centers and they are intended to improve access to housing, shopping, services, and transit through coordination with government agencies, transit providers, and major institutions. The mobility and access policies seek to provide safe and convenient travel options while addressing congestion relief, traffic calming, pedestrian safety, trail access, active transportation connections, wayfinding improvements, and enhanced transit service and amenities. The conceptual mobility and access maps are intended to illustrate possible future improvements rather than identify specific projects. The concepts include enhanced streetscapes along key arterials, improved pedestrian crossings and midblock connections, through-block pedestrian routes, and expanded walking and bicycling connections linking destinations throughout the neighborhood.

Commissioner Rebhuhn sought clarification regarding the draft policy that calls for coordination with the Washington State Department of Transportation on projects along and near I-90 “to relieve congestion and minimize traffic impacts during construction.” Zach Luckin explained that the policy is intended to address both long-term congestion relief and the mitigation of traffic impacts associated with construction activities.

Commissioner Ting referred to the relationship between the neighborhood area plans and the Transportation Facilities Plan and Mobility Implementation Plan and suggested that the neighborhood plans would be more useful if they identified which transportation priorities are emphasized or deemphasized within a specific neighborhood. The existing policy language largely mirrors the broader Comprehensive Plan objectives, making it difficult to understand how neighborhood-specific priorities should influence future project selection and investment decisions. The concept maps provide some geographic specificity, but the policy language itself could better reflect local priorities. Zach Luckin said the concept maps are intended to translate broad policy goals into specific locations and improvement opportunities identified through community engagement, including mapping exercises where residents highlighted problem areas and desired improvements. The maps illustrate where community priorities are concentrated; they can help inform future transportation planning and implementation efforts.

Commissioner Keilman asked to quantify the level of community participation and explain how the city determined that the feedback received accurately represents the Eastgate community. Zach Luckin explained that participation metrics are difficult to quantify because

individuals can engage through multiple channels, such as surveys, workshops, and community meetings, without a reliable method for determining if responses come from unique individuals. The extensive outreach efforts included engagement with neighborhood associations, supportive housing residents, multifamily housing communities, seniors, students at Bellevue College, local schools, community events, retail locations, and residents reached through citywide mailings. The objective had been to engage as many different community groups as possible, particularly those who are often underrepresented in public processes.

Commissioner Keilman expressed concern that a relatively small number of participants could potentially influence policies affecting a much larger population and suggested that future planning efforts should include more quantifiable participation metrics. Zach Luckin acknowledged the concern and noted that, while participation rates remain well above typical survey response levels, it will be difficult to provide an exact count of unique participants. Every address in the area received information about opportunities to participate and the outreach efforts had been designed to reduce barriers and reach people where they lived, worked, or gathered. Commissioner Keilman reiterated the importance of establishing measurable participation benchmarks and suggested that demographic factors, including the prevalence of vehicle travel in Eastgate, should be considered when evaluating the representativeness of public feedback.

Vice Chair Williams referred to the concerns that had been expressed by the public regarding the survey questions that may have favored certain transportation modes over others. Zach Luckin explained that the survey had been developed based on feedback gathered during earlier, open-ended visioning activities and was designed to focus on the most frequently identified concerns and opportunities. The design of the survey required limiting the number of predefined response options, though it still provided opportunities for participants to submit additional comments through open-ended responses. Some topics, such as public safety and congestion management, are addressed through other city programs and planning efforts, which influenced how the questions were structured. The survey was intended to capture neighborhood priorities while still allowing respondents to identify issues that were not included among the primary response choices.

Vice Chair Williams suggested that some transportation concerns, particularly those related to vehicle travel, may have appeared less prominent because they were already being addressed through separate city initiatives such as the Mobility Implementation Plan. Zach Luckin agreed that was one factor and noted that congestion concerns had nevertheless emerged during the planning process, particularly in Factoria. Traffic congestion remains a significant challenge in certain areas. Physical constraints, including limited right-of-way and the need to acquire private property for roadway expansion, can complicate efforts to address congestion through traditional roadway widening projects. Congestion remains an important issue and will continue to be a challenge in the future.

Commissioner Ting suggested that future reports should include an affinity-mapping approach or similar methodology to better organize and communicate themes emerging from the public feedback. The existing summaries do not sufficiently convey the relative importance of different concerns or how themes relate to one another. Also reiterated were the concerns about the design of the survey. Surveys should include all transportation modes and be updated when new themes emerge through public comments. Issues not explicitly listed as survey options may receive less attention from respondents. Future neighborhood planning efforts should incorporate additional flexibility to capture evolving community concerns. Zack Luckin welcomed the feedback and indicated that lessons learned from the Eastgate and Factoria

processes will be applied to the upcoming neighborhood planning efforts for Lake Hills and West Lake Sammamish.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Rebhuhn about the Eastgate open-ended questionnaire responses, Zach Luckin explained that the responses were gathered through mailed and online surveys distributed broadly throughout the neighborhood. Commissioner Rebhuhn stated that the feedback appears consistent with personal experiences as a resident of the area, and it reflects many of the qualities that community members value about Eastgate. The open-ended responses provide a meaningful representation of neighborhood perspectives and should be given significant consideration.

Chair Magill asked about the development of the Eastgate vision statement and if residents had had opportunity to review and comment on it. Zach Luckin explained that the vision statement was introduced during an early workshop and then refined through multiple rounds of public feedback, including comments gathered through surveys and other engagement activities. The recurring themes included appreciation for Eastgate's natural features, tree-lined streets, sense of community, convenience, and safety. The themes ultimately shaped the vision statement presented to the Commission.

Chair Magill observed that the vision statement highlights walking, bicycling, and transit use but does not mention driving, despite the neighborhood's current reliance on automobiles. It was asked if the residents might find that omission noteworthy. Zach Luckin responded that the vision statement was intended to be aspirational rather than descriptive of current conditions. While community members recognize Eastgate's present dependence on automobiles, many participants expressed a desire for safer and more convenient opportunities to walk, bicycle, and use transit in the future. The vision reflects where participants hope the neighborhood will evolve rather than simply describing existing travel behavior.

Commissioner Ting sought clarification regarding if staff believe Eastgate residents generally favor investments in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure over vehicular improvements. Zach Luckin replied that feedback gathered through surveys, workshops, and other engagement activities indicated that the participants commonly expressed a preference for prioritizing alternative transportation options and reducing dependence on automobiles. Asked if the feedback implied support for directing future transportation investments toward those modes, Zach Luckin indicated that such an interpretation would be consistent with the aspirations expressed during the planning process.

Commissioner Keilman cautioned against characterizing the views of the participants as representing the views of a majority of all Eastgate residents given the difficulty of verifying how representative the engagement results were. Zach Luckin clarified that the references to a "majority" were intended to describe the majority of respondents and the participants who had engaged with the planning process.

Commissioner Ting asked if, based on all the data seen and staff's inherent understanding of Eastgate, the people of Eastgate want more ped/bike investments, or more vehicular investments. Zach Luckin said the majority of those who participated in the outreach efforts articulated a desire to see more investment in alternative modes of transportation. Staff believes that the positions of the respondents are reflective of the broader Eastgate population.

Commissioner Rebhuhn noted that many raised safety concerns in the Eastgate area, particularly following the opening of a local shelter and asked how such concerns could be

addressed within the planning process. Zach Luckin said the city is already addressing the issues through coordinated efforts involving homelessness outreach personnel, affordable housing staff, and the Bellevue Police Department. Increased communication and collaboration with the shelter operators and the service providers have improved monitoring and responsiveness. While acknowledging that neighborhood planning itself has limited authority over such issues, planning-related measures such as improved lighting, enhanced pedestrian design, and other environmental improvements can contribute to perceptions of safety. The city as a whole continues to work collaboratively across departments to address public safety concerns as they arise.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Keilman, Zach Luckin explained that two to three percent reflects a typical response rate for city surveys generally. The exact Eastgate participation figures were not immediately available. Commissioner Keilman emphasized that terms such as “majority” should be used carefully and suggested that such language will normally imply feedback from a very large percentage of residents. Zach Luckin clarified that it was not being claimed that the responses came from a majority of all neighborhood residents.

Chair Magill asked if the city maintains a threshold or targets for determining when sufficient community input has been received. Zach Luckin responded that the engagement plan establishes an aspirational goal of reaching approximately five percent of the neighborhood population and said that more detailed participation data could be obtained from the city’s engagement team.

Turning to the Factoria Neighborhood Area Plan, Zach Luckin described the area as a neighborhood valued for its safety, diversity, accessibility, affordability, international character, and convenience. Community members highlighted the area’s diverse retail and dining options, employment opportunities, access to services, and transportation connectivity. Factoria’s location provides convenient access for drivers, transit users, and cyclists, including connections to regional trail systems. Based on community feedback, the draft vision statement describes Factoria as a globally connected employment and commercial center supported by diverse businesses, housing opportunities, gathering spaces, strong transit access, and a walkable, pedestrian-oriented environment.

Zach Luckin reviewed with the Commissioners the transportation-related policies for Factoria. It was stated that the mixed-use center policies focus on improving pedestrian safety, enhancing the public realm, and coordinating with transit providers to support future investments. The mobility and access policies emphasize pedestrian and bicycle improvements, congestion relief, traffic calming, wayfinding, and partnerships with transit agencies to improve service and access to regional transit facilities. The conceptual mobility and access map illustrates possible future improvements, including enhanced intersections, streetscape projects, pedestrian connections, and active transportation routes.

Commissioner Stash raised questions about the public safety concerns that had emerged during community engagement and asked if any specific measures had been discussed beyond the transportation policies themselves. Commissioner Stash also inquired about possible improvements to Factoria Mall, which community members identified as an important gathering place. Zach Luckin explained that public safety issues are primarily addressed through ongoing collaboration among housing, homelessness outreach, and police personnel rather than through specific neighborhood plan policies. Regarding the mall, it was reported that conversations have occurred with property ownership representatives. Although no immediate redevelopment or improvement plans are underway, ownership recognizes the

mall's importance as a community destination. Future investment decisions may depend in part on the eventual form and location of high-capacity transit infrastructure. In the meantime, opportunities exist for partnerships involving cultural programming, community events, and collaboration with local artists to strengthen the mall's role as a gathering space.

Commissioner Welcher focused on congestion and observed that traffic congestion appears repeatedly throughout the community feedback and asked if the draft policies adequately addressed what many participants consider a defining characteristic of Factoria. Congestion concerns have emerged despite not being prominently featured among the survey response options. Commissioner Welcher asked if the plan should include more explicit policies supporting vehicle movement and traffic flow. Zach Luckin acknowledged the significance of the congestion concerns and explained that options available through the neighborhood planning process are limited. Improvements to alternative transportation options, circulation patterns, and coordination with state transportation agencies represent some of the principal tools available through the plan. Physical constraints, particularly the need to acquire private property to expand roadways such as Factoria Boulevard, limit opportunities for traditional capacity expansion.

Kevin McDonald explained that the Mobility Implementation Plan contains citywide performance measures relating to intersection operations and travel speeds, and the Transportation Element includes policies related to congestion. The purpose of the neighborhood area plans is not to duplicate those citywide policies but rather to identify neighborhood-level connectivity needs and fill gaps in the transportation network. The neighborhood plans are intended to complement the Mobility Implementation Plan by focusing on local pedestrians, bicycle, and multimodal connections that improve access to destinations within and between neighborhoods.

Commissioner Rebhuhn pointed out that Eastgate is currently experiencing significant transportation construction projects and expressed optimism that those investments will ultimately improve traffic and congestion conditions.

Chair Magill referred to the conceptual transportation maps and asked if they represent existing conditions or future aspirations. Zach Luckin clarified that the maps are aspirational and are intended to identify desired future improvements based on community feedback rather than existing infrastructure alone. Chair Magill asked how the maps should be interpreted and Zach Luckin said the maps identify opportunities for completing and enhancing active transportation connections, including corridors where facilities currently exist but could be improved or extended. The conceptual improvements are intended to illustrate a desired future transportation network that will better connect destinations throughout the neighborhood.

With regard to an interesting question submitted by the community involving policy S-F-N24, which relates to improving safety and access in a specific area of Factoria, Commissioner Ting asked what the specific safety and access concern is. Zach Luckin explained that the policy stemmed from repeated community concerns regarding traffic congestion and safety issues near major office campuses along SE 36th Street. During peak travel periods, vehicles attempting to exit those developments often experience significant delays, particularly where access points are unsignalized. There are situations in which the queues back up onto surrounding roadways, and some drivers use turn lanes improperly to bypass the congestion, triggering conflicts among motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists accessing nearby destinations and the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail. The policy is intended to address both operational and safety concerns in that area.

Commissioner Ting stressed that an affinity mapping or similar technique would be helpful toward better organizing and communicating the community input. Commissioner Ting repeated the concern that multimodal surveys should explicitly include all transportation modes among their response options. Zach Luckin acknowledged the suggestions and noted that the planning team is already considering improved methods of visualizing public feedback for future neighborhood planning efforts.

Zach Luckin said the feedback from the Commission will be reviewed and incorporated as appropriate into the final draft policies. The completed draft plans for both Eastgate and Factoria will then be presented to the Planning Commission later in the month for further review.

B. 2026 Mobility Implementation Plan Update

Kevin McDonald explained that transportation plans inevitably require periodic amendments as conditions change and new policy directions emerge. A need has emerged to review several components of the Mobility Implementation Plan. Commission direction is needed before staff conduct additional analysis.

The topics identified for consideration were incorporation of the forthcoming citywide speed-limit reductions directed by the City Council; potential changes to the methodology used to evaluate pedestrian and bicycle level-of-traffic-stress; and the treatment of intersections along regional arterials and at freeway-access locations within the plan's performance framework.

The City Council recently directed preparation of an ordinance to reduce speed limits on numerous arterials throughout the city. Because speed limits are a key factor in calculating both pedestrian and bicycle levels of traffic stress, the action will be to update the Mobility Implementation Plan's maps, tables, and performance metrics once the ordinance is adopted. Speed and traffic volume are fundamental elements of the pedestrian and bicycle level-of-traffic-stress calculations; lower speed limits could significantly increase the number of corridors that meet the established performance targets. The existing maps show several corridors that do not meet the pedestrian level-of-traffic-stress targets, primarily because speed is a determining factor in the calculation. Recalculating those metrics using the revised speed limits is needed once they are adopted.

Commissioner Ting referred to the community feedback about speeding vehicles, racing activity, and excessive vehicle noise and asked if transportation officials should consider traffic-calming measures or other structural interventions to encourage compliance with the posted speed limits. Kevin McDonald said the concerns regarding the issue in specific locations, including Lake Washington Boulevard, will be shared with the staff responsible for neighborhood traffic-calming programs. Traffic enforcement falls primarily under the authority of the police department, although transportation staff can evaluate potential engineering or traffic-calming solutions and work with communities to implement appropriate measures where feasible.

There was consensus in favor of recalibrating the network performance using the revised speed limits once they are adopted.

With regard to the proposed amendment to the Mobility Implementation Plan concerning the use of the "speed limit factor" in calculating pedestrian and bicycle levels of traffic stress,

Kevin McDonald explained that when the MIP was originally developed, citywide data on actual travel speeds was not available. As a result, the plan adopted a proxy measure that multiplied the posted speed limit by 1.2 to approximate the higher-end speeds. The adjusted speed value became a key input in calculating both pedestrian and bicycle level-of-traffic-stress. Subsequent data collection has revealed that the speed-limit factor often does not accurately reflect actual vehicle speeds on many corridors. Examples from selected roadways show significant differences between the calculated speed-limit factor and measured 85th-percentile vehicle speeds. The discrepancy may be causing the bicycle and pedestrian performance measures to portray conditions that do not accurately represent the experience of travelers. Consequently, the proposal is to conduct additional analysis to evaluate how replacing the speed-limit factor with the adopted speed limit will affect the maps, tables, and performance measures contained in the Mobility Implementation Plan. The concurrence of the Commission was sought to continue that work and return with the findings at a future meeting.

Commissioner Stash noted that previous discussions had established that many motorists do travel somewhat above the posted speed limits, particularly on longer and more open roadways, and that driving behavior differs significantly between dense urban environments and higher-speed arterial corridors. Using Downtown Bellevue and corridors such as Coal Creek Parkway as examples, the suggestion was made that the current factor may overestimate speeds in some locations while potentially remaining appropriate in others. A concern was expressed about replacing the factor entirely with the adopted speed limits; it should not be assumed that motorists universally travel at the legal speed limit. Roadway context should be considered. Additional study certainly will be beneficial before any methodological change is made. Consultant Chris Breiland explained that the original research underlying the pedestrian and bicycle stress metrics was based primarily on adopted speed limits rather than actual measured speeds, even though the researchers acknowledged that some motorists exceed those limits. During the development of the Mobility Implementation Plan, staff had elected to incorporate the speed-limit factor in recognition of concerns that actual travel speeds on some roadways could be substantially higher than the speed limits. However, more recent speed data collected throughout Bellevue indicates that the speed-limit factor does not consistently match real-world conditions. In particular, Downtown corridors often operate at speeds significantly below the factor's assumptions, while other corridors may more closely align with it. It was stated that collecting comprehensive speed data citywide is costly and difficult to maintain over time, making it impractical as a permanent planning tool. For that reason, the staff believe the adopted speed limits provide a more reliable and consistently available baseline for citywide planning purposes. Actual speed data can still be collected and considered when evaluating and designing specific capital projects.

Commissioner Stash acknowledged the practical challenges associated with collecting comprehensive speed data but reiterated a concern about abandoning the speed-limit factor entirely. Speeding violations occur regularly and assuming that all motorists travel at the adopted speed limit could understate actual conditions on some roadways. While agreeing that Downtown streets and constrained urban corridors may operate close to or below the speed limits, higher-speed corridors present a different reality and should perhaps be evaluated differently. Support was voiced for additional study before making a final decision regarding the methodology.

Commissioner Ting expressed support for continuing the analysis and emphasized that the newly collected speed data provides evidence that the existing methodology may be overestimating travel speeds in many locations. Caution was expressed, however, regarding the setting of artificial speed limits. Posted speed limits should correspond to roadway design.

Traffic-calming measures are often more effective than simply lowering speed limits through signage alone. Support was voiced for advocating for transportation designs that naturally encourage drivers to travel at appropriate speeds rather than relying solely on regulatory changes.

Commissioner Ting said there are limitations within the current bicycle and pedestrian level-of-traffic-stress scoring framework. The categorical rating system can obscure meaningful differences between projects because improvements that fall short of moving a corridor into a higher performance category may still provide significant benefits. The suggestion was made that a revised methodology based on more realistic speed assumptions could improve the city's understanding of existing conditions and help identify projects that will meaningfully improve the transportation network. General support was expressed for the proposed analysis and for further examination of alternative approaches to calculating speed within the Mobility Implementation Plan.

Commissioner Stash suggested that future analysis should not be limited to a simple comparison between the existing 1.2 multiplier and the adopted speed limit. Instead, staff should examine intermediate alternatives, such as a smaller multiplier or a methodology that varies by area of the city. Kevin McDonald agreed that future analyses could include side-by-side comparisons of actual speed data, adopted speed limits, and alternative factors. Traffic-calming measures can serve as a project-level strategy for addressing performance gaps by reducing operating speeds without necessarily requiring major infrastructure investments.

Vice Chair Williams expressed support for the approach and suggested that roadway context, such as density, traffic signals, and urban form, could justify different assumptions regarding vehicle speeds in different parts of the city. Kevin McDonald agreed that additional analysis of the possibilities could be undertaken.

On the issue of arterials that perform a regional function, Kevin McDonald explained that when the Mobility Implementation Plan was originally adopted, lower volume-to-capacity targets were established for intersections in Performance Management Area 3 because those areas are predominantly residential and offer fewer transportation alternatives than denser parts of Bellevue. As staff reviewed the future-year transportation forecasts, however, several corridors, particularly major arterials such as 148th Avenue NE, appeared unlikely to meet the adopted intersection performance targets by 2045. The corridors function differently from typical neighborhood streets because they serve significant regional travel demand, including trips with origins and destinations outside Bellevue. That creates a potential mismatch between the corridor's regional transportation function and the performance expectations established for the surrounding neighborhood context.

Kevin McDonald explained that addressing a volume-to-capacity performance target gap generally involves either reducing traffic volumes or increasing roadway capacity. For many regional corridors, reducing traffic demand is difficult because much of the traffic originates outside the city and is not easily influenced by local transportation policies. Consequently, the remaining option often involves expanding roadway capacity through additional lanes or larger intersections. Such improvements can have significant consequences, including property acquisition, impacts to environmentally sensitive areas, and in some cases the need to acquire or remove existing buildings. Because of the challenges, staff believes a more comprehensive analysis is needed to determine if the current volume-to-capacity targets are appropriate for regional corridors, and to evaluate the feasibility and consequences of potential capacity improvements.

Commissioner Rebhuhn asked if the analysis would consider nearby parallel corridors that could potentially absorb some traffic from heavily congested roadways such as 148th Avenue NE. Kevin McDonald acknowledged that parallel routes, including nearby arterial corridors, provide alternative travel paths, and noted that their current performance generally remains within the adopted targets. However, some corridors, such as Bellevue Way and Coal Creek Parkway, lack parallel alternatives and therefore present different challenges.

Chris Breiland added that the regional travel model already accounts for congestion by distributing traffic toward routes that provide the fastest travel times. Consequently, much of the diversion to parallel routes is already reflected in the forecast results. While additional operational improvements on adjacent corridors could be examined, such measures will likely have only a limited effect on relieving congestion along major regional corridors because many travelers are already choosing the most efficient route available.

Commissioner Rebhuhn followed up by suggesting that localized operational improvements, such as converting a four-way stop on a parallel arterial into a roundabout, might improve traffic flow and encourage additional route diversion. Chris Breiland agreed that such site-specific improvements could be evaluated as part of future analyses.

Commissioner Ting asked for clarification regarding the definition of a “regional corridor.” Kevin McDonald explained that they are arterial roadways that span large portions of the city and serve significant travel demand extending beyond Bellevue’s boundaries. Examples cited included 148th Avenue NE, Bellevue Way, and Coal Creek Parkway. Regional corridors are facilities that accommodate trips whose origins and destinations are frequently outside Bellevue, such as travel between I-90 and employment centers in neighboring communities.

Commissioner Ting asked how congestion on the regional corridors affects nearby streets. Chris Breiland explained that Bellevue’s street network differs from a traditional grid because many residential streets are discontinuous and designed as loops, cul-de-sacs, and other configurations that limit through travel. As a result, regional traffic generally does not divert extensively onto local neighborhood streets. Instead, overflow traffic tends to shift to other nearby arterial roadways. Examples were provided showing how traffic may redistribute between major corridors such as Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue NE, while local residential streets typically experience only limited diversion because they do not provide practical routes for longer regional trips.

Commissioner Ting expressed concern that changes to the volume-to-capacity targets for regional corridors could unintentionally encourage additional traffic to shift onto parallel arterial routes such as 140th Avenue NE and 156th Avenue NE. Motorists often choose alternative routes when congestion increases on 148th Avenue NE. Creating a special designation for regional corridors could result in greater congestion spreading to neighboring roadways. Chris Breiland responded that the existing 2045 traffic modeling already accounts for route choice behavior and congestion-related diversion. The projected traffic volumes on 140th Avenue NE and 156th Avenue NE reflect the tendency of motorists to select the fastest available route. However, while congestion may influence how local travelers choose among parallel arterials, it does not necessarily alter broader regional travel patterns. Commissioner Ting remained concerned that changes to corridor classifications or performance expectations could have unintended consequences for surrounding neighborhoods and urged careful consideration of those impacts.

Commissioner Stash voiced support for conducting further study but cautioned against modifying the performance targets simply to improve the appearance of transportation system performance. There is a natural tendency to want all indicators to show favorable results, yet a corridor's designation on a map should accurately reflect real-world conditions. Some corridors may remain congested for years because practical solutions are limited. Maintaining an unfavorable performance rating may be more honest than altering targets to achieve a better result.

Senior Transportation Planner Michael Ingram expanded on the point by discussing the broader system implications of capacity expansion projects. Using a previous evaluation of Bellevue Way as an example, it was explained that increasing roadway capacity can sometimes attract additional regional traffic rather than simply improving conditions for local users. In the example cited, adding capacity could have drawn vehicles away from I-405 and onto city streets, effectively encouraging more regional traffic to use Bellevue's transportation network. The city's transportation policies generally do not seek to expand local roadways solely to accommodate regional travel demand. The implications of any capacity improvements must be considered from a systemwide perspective.

Vice Chair Williams observed that revising performance targets could be perceived as an attempt to make conditions appear better on paper rather than improve actual traffic operations. Lowering the targets if the underlying congestion problem remains unchanged is questionable. There may be value in distinguishing between an aspirational target and a realistic operational condition. The question asked was what would justify changing the performance metric rather than simply acknowledging that some corridors are likely to remain congested. In response, Kevin McDonald clarified that the intent of the proposed analysis is not to recommend a particular outcome but rather to understand the consequences of various options. The analysis will examine what level of improvement could be achieved through capacity enhancements and what tradeoffs will accompany those improvements. Potential impacts could include substantial financial costs, environmental consequences, property acquisition requirements, or negative effects on pedestrian and bicycle facilities resulting from wider intersections and roadways. The goal is to provide the Commission with information regarding the benefits and costs of addressing volume-to-capacity performance target gaps so that informed policy decisions can be made. The Mobility Implementation Plan is designed to identify areas requiring attention rather than prescribe specific solutions.

Commissioner Ting said the targets should reflect the goals as well as the realities on the ground. Strong opposition was expressed to lowering the performance targets merely to make congested corridors appear compliant. Drawing on personal experience living near one of the affected corridors, Commissioner Ting argued that residents expect transparency regarding traffic conditions and will view a change to the targets as an attempt to obscure persistent problems. Although some congestion issues may not be immediately solvable, the city should continue to acknowledge them honestly and pursue creative or innovative solutions where possible. Bellevue has previously modified congestion-related targets. Repeatedly lowering expectations rather than addressing underlying challenges is not the right approach. A preference was voiced for retaining the current targets and maintaining accountability even if certain corridors continue to fail to meet adopted performance targets.

Chair Magill summarized the broader concerns expressed by the Commissioners and members of the public, including the comments received from business representatives, neighborhood residents, and other stakeholders. Many participants view the proposed review of regional corridor targets as potentially lowering the bar rather than solving transportation problems. The

staff were encouraged to address those concerns directly when returning with future analysis, and to clearly explain the rationale behind any proposed changes. Kevin McDonald agreed and confirmed that the requested direction was to proceed with the analysis and return with options rather than to modify any targets at the current time.

Chair Magill requested that future presentations clearly explain why a change to a target might be warranted and what alternatives exist. Kevin McDonald agreed to develop the analysis, explore possible approaches for addressing identified performance gaps, and return with options for Commission consideration.

Commissioner Ting asked the other Commissioners if they favored investigating changes to the targets or maintaining the existing framework.

Vice Chair Williams stated a preference for staff returning with additional analysis and options, adding that the Commission appears generally reluctant to modify the targets without a compelling justification.

Commissioner Stash agreed and emphasized that if a corridor remains yellow or otherwise fails to meet the adopted target, the condition should be acknowledged honestly unless a substantial and well-supported reason exists to alter the target.

Chair Magill concurred, noting a personal preference for maintaining the existing targets unless a particularly persuasive case could be made for modification.

Commissioner Keilman expressed a stronger position, arguing that there is little value in further studying changes to the targets because doing so will not alter actual conditions at the affected intersections. The current targets should simply be upheld and used as the benchmark against which conditions are measured.

Commissioner Rebhuhn indicated agreement with the sentiments already expressed.

Kevin McDonald introduced a related topic involving intersections that serve freeway access functions and similarly fail to meet the volume-to-capacity targets. The locations face challenges comparable to those discussed for regional corridors. Direction was sought from the Commission in regard to conducting additional analysis to examine the constraints associated with improving conditions at freeway-access intersections and identifying potential options for addressing performance gaps.

Commissioner Stash suggested the same principles discussed previously should apply in the context. Staff should focus on identifying creative solutions and evaluating potential projects while maintaining the existing performance targets rather than lowering expectations.

Commissioner Ting agreed but raised a broader concern regarding the implications of creating a new category of corridor with different volume-to-capacity targets. Introducing a new classification system will effectively alter how transportation performance is represented on city maps and could have implications for adjacent neighborhoods. A concern was expressed that residents living along affected corridors might find it difficult to accept being reclassified into a category associated with regional traffic movement rather than neighborhood-oriented transportation planning. Such a change could fail to acknowledge the lived reality of residents who view the areas primarily as neighborhoods rather than transportation corridors.

Kevin McDonald summarized the next steps and explained that the July meeting will include updated maps, tables, and figures reflecting the newly adopted speed-limit changes as well as the results of the analysis concerning the speed-limit factor used in bicycle and pedestrian level-of-traffic-stress calculations. Additional work on regional corridors and freeway-access intersections will continue into the third quarter of the year, with future discussions focusing on the findings and potential options identified through that analysis.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 14, 2026

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

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. REVIEW OF COMMISSION CALENDAR

Kevin McDonald took a few minutes to review the calendar of upcoming meeting dates and agenda items.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Magill adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.



Secretary to the Transportation Commission

7/9/2026

Date