



# Bellevue Planning Commission

June 23, 2021

## PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION ITEM

### SUBJECT

Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) to amend the policies in the Transportation Element related to multimodal concurrency and repeal the Comprehensive Transportation Project List in Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan. File No. 21-107724 AC.

### STAFF CONTACT(S)

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*Community Development Department*

### POLICY ISSUES

Two separate areas of transportation policy would be amended through the 2021 annual amendments to the Comprehensive Plan:

- Mobility Implementation Plan (MIP) Multimodal Concurrency: Amend/repeal certain existing Transportation Element policies and add new policies as recommended by the Transportation Commission regarding a multimodal approach to transportation concurrency. Policies to support a multimodal concurrency standard will replace the vehicle-focused concurrency standard embedded in the Transportation Element.
- Comprehensive Transportation Project List (CTPL): Created in 2015 during the major update of the Comprehensive Plan, the CTPL consolidated nearly 800 transportation projects from subarea plans and transportation facility plans that were spread throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Adding, amending or repealing a CTPL project requires a Comprehensive Plan amendment. Staff recommends that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) replace the CTPL as the “inventory” of all transportation projects. The TIP is updated annually with a Transportation Commission recommendation (after study sessions and a public hearing) and City Council adoption. The TIP project list is the first step toward implementation through the financially constrained Transportation Facilities Plan and full project funding in the Capital Investment Program Plan. Typically, to be eligible for the TIP, a transportation project concept would first be identified and vetted through a long-range planning process.

### DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

**ACTION**



**DIRECTION**



**INFORMATION ONLY**



Staff introduced the amendments to the Planning Commission at the April 14<sup>th</sup> Commission study session. At the June 23, 2021 study session, staff will review two items:

- The Transportation Commission policy recommendations for multimodal concurrency. This is a component of the ongoing work to prepare a Mobility Implementation Plan as directed by the City Council.
- The Transportation Department recommendation, in consultation with Community Department and the City Attorney’s Office, to repeal the Comprehensive Transportation

Project List (CTPL) from Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan, and to incorporate projects (now and in the future) into the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Staff requests the Planning Commission to set a public hearing date of July 28 for the CPAs to the Transportation Element and the Comprehensive Transportation Project List.

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Under the Growth Management Act (GMA), the Bellevue City Code allows the Comprehensive Plan to be amended once a year through a two step process – Threshold Review and Final Review. City initiated amendments go directly to Final review. The amendments are reviewed by the Planning Commission and acted upon by the City Council through the Final Review process set forth in the Land Use Code at [LUC 20.30I](#). Final Review evaluates the merits of proposed amendments included in the annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment work program. Final Review evaluation and decision includes staff review, a Planning Commission public hearing and recommendation by resolution, and City Council action by ordinance.

### **The Mobility Implementation Plan - Multimodal Concurrency**

On January 4, 2021, the City Council approved a consultant contract and scope of work for a Mobility Implementation Plan (MIP). The new MIP is envisioned as the planning document that will articulate a multimodal approach to mobility in Bellevue. The MIP will broaden the City’s vehicle-focused transportation concurrency standard to include a multimodal approach. Within the MIP, the Transportation Commission will define transportation system Performance Metrics and Performance Targets for all modes. A multimodal approach to concurrency will match the “demand” for mobility from new development with the “supply” of transportation facilities to ensure that projects for all modes are identified, prioritized and implemented to support planned growth. On April 5, the City Council initiated a Comprehensive Plan amendment with direction to embed multimodal concurrency policy in the Transportation Element as part of the 2021 CPA work program. After three study sessions, culminating on June 10, 2021, the Transportation Commission voted 5-1 to approve policy recommendations to support multimodal concurrency.

### **Transportation Commission Policy Recommendation**

Washington state law, through the Growth Management Act (GMA) (RCW 36.70A), requires local jurisdictions to ensure the planned transportation system will accommodate planned land use. This requirement is called “concurrency”. Rather than prescribe a universal approach, the GMA allows jurisdictions to describe and establish a transportation concurrency standard to reflect the community vision for land use, mobility and other factors. Further, the Washington Administrative Code (WAC 365-196-840 ) provides guidance for implementation to jurisdictions that pursue a multimodal approach to concurrency.

Policies in the Transportation Element provide direction on Bellevue’s approach to transportation concurrency. The existing suite of policies describes the long-standing vehicular level-of-service standard to define the performance of the transportation system. The multimodal approach will also consider the performance of the system for people walking, riding a bicycle, or taking transit. During study sessions, the Transportation Commission reviewed existing policy and made a determination to edit or repeal policies, or to add policies as needed to create the policy support for multimodal concurrency.

Specific policy recommendations from the Transportation Commission are in Table 1. Attachment 1 contains the complete “crosswalk” of all policy recommendations, including a recommendation and rationale to repeal certain policies.

*Table 1. Transportation Commission Policy Recommendation*

Policy	Transportation Commission Final Recommendation, June 10, 2021
New Goal	GOAL: To improve all mobility options so that everyone in Bellevue has a safe, comfortable, reliable, and efficient experience on their preferred mode, while encouraging and transitioning to more environmentally and fiscally sustainable modes.
TR-2	Improve the multimodal transportation system and the quality of the travel experience for all users.
TR-20	Scope, plan, design, implement, operate, and maintain a complete and multimodal transportation system in accordance with the Performance Metrics, Performance Targets and Performance Management Areas as established in the Mobility Implementation Plan.
TR-30	1. Monitor and document transportation system performance in accordance with the Performance Targets and Performance Management Areas established in the Mobility Implementation Plan. 2. Engage the community to evaluate and modify the Mobility Implementation Plan as needed, in concert with each update of the Comprehensive Plan, or as warranted by changed circumstances.
TR-34	Evaluate the performance of all modes and engage the community to identify projects, priorities, programs and resources to meet Complete Streets goals and the Performance Targets through updates to the Transportation Facilities Plan.
TR-73	Implement infrastructure and technology to support reliable transit arrival time and travel speed along the Frequent Transit Network between Activity Centers.
TR-132	Provide and prioritize transportation funding to meet Performance Targets for people walking, biking, riding transit, and travelling in a car.
New Policy A	Employ a citywide multimodal level-of-service concurrency standard that provides transportation facilities that meet the demand from new development.
New Policy B	Plan for transportation system projects to accommodate the forecast demand and to meet Performance Targets in each update of the Transportation Facilities Plan.

### The Comprehensive Transportation Project List

The [Comprehensive Transportation Project List](#) (CTPL) was developed by the Transportation Commission as part of the 2015 update to the Comprehensive Plan. The six transportation facility plans and several subarea plans that were scattered throughout the Comprehensive Plan contained 781 transportation projects – since these lists were so old, many of the projects were completed, outdated, redundant, conflicting with one another, or inconsistent with current land use planning objectives. Subsequent transportation planning – for example, the Downtown Transportation Plan and the Eastgate Transportation Study – added new projects to the CTPL through amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

The consolidation of these project lists in 2015 was the mechanism to repeal completed or outdated projects, and eliminate redundancies and conflicts that existed between the project descriptions in different plans. Now that all the projects have been consolidated and the CTPL is up to date, this project list may be moved outside of the Comprehensive Plan to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for which an required annual update keeps the TIP project list current. On April 5, 2021, the City Council initiated a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to repeal the Compreiensive Transportation Project List. This proposal is requested by staff and does not require a recommendation from the Transportation Commission.

### Transportation Improvement Program

The [Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#) is the project inventory and a draft work plan for the local transportation system. The primary importance of the Bellevue TIP is that, in most instances, projects must be included on this list to be eligible for state and federal grants.

Unlike the city’s funded Capital Investment Program Plan and the revenue-constrained 12-year [Transportation Facilities Plan](#), the Bellevue TIP is not "revenue constrained," nor is the list of projects prioritized. The city may include all projects that it would choose to implement within the six-year time frame if funding was available. Projects are typically created and vetted through long-range planning with the community that is focused on a specific geographic area such as a subarea or a transportation corridor.

The TIP is required by state law (RCW 35.77.010), a mandate for local jurisdictions to annually adopt and submit to the state a six-year program of transportation improvements. The state Department of Transportation and the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) use local TIPs to coordinate the transportation programs of local jurisdictions with those of regional agencies. The PSRC monitors local TIPs for projects of regional significance, which are modeled for regional air quality conformity with federal standards, and to track projects supported by federal funds.

#### TIP Annual Update

Each year, the Transportation Commission recommends a TIP to the City Council. To prepare its recommendation, the Commission considers that some projects have been completed (these are recommended to be deleted) some projects have been identified through long-range planning (these are recommended to be added - an example is the Eastgate Transportation Study), and some project descriptions are changed through further planning and engineering. The Transportation Commission holds a public hearing and makes a final recommendation to the City Council. This process occurs in Q1 through Q3 of each year, so the project list in the TIP stays current. The Transportation Commission held a public hearing on the update to the TIP on April 8, 2021. The Council adopted the 2021 TIP on May 10, under Resolution 9932.

The TIP project list essentially duplicates the CTPL, however the TIP is more responsive to changed circumstances because it is updated annually. In contrast, to update the CTPL requires an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan – a process that may be done annually, but that requires several additional steps, including initiation by the City Council, and study sessions, public hearing and recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Because of this extra process to amend the Comprehensive Plan, that in the end creates a duplicate project list, staff recommends to repeal the CTPL and to use the TIP as the one aggregated transportation project list for Bellevue.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

Staff will incorporate Planning Commission direction into the staff report that will be prepared for the July 28 Final Review public hearing.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Transportation Element Policy Crosswalk Table