

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

March 12, 2026
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Hybrid Meeting

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

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: None

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Rebhuhn

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Mike Ingram, Department of Transportation; Heather Jones, City Attorney's Office

OTHERS PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Hamilton

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.

Chair Stash welcomed Deputy Mayor Dave Hamilton, new Council liaison to the Commission. Everyone present introduced themselves.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Steve Fantle, a 30-year Bellevue resident and avid bicyclist, noted having volunteered in 2019 with the city's transportation planning group and tasked with putting together a list of low-cost, high-impact bicycle safety improvements intended for rapid implementation. Now several years later, only a few of the ideas have been addressed; most remain unimplemented despite alignment with safety initiatives such as Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School. When raising specific project ideas with staff, the responses often reference large capital projects scheduled far in the future or the absence of a small discretionary funding pool for quick improvements. Small but meaningful safety measures, such as pavement markings or signage, should not require a serious injury, fatality, or legal action before implementation. The materials distributed to the Commission describe three specific locations where bicycle safety concerns could be addressed through modest interventions. Although acknowledging that the Commission does not directly control departmental budgets, the Commissioners can communicate to the Council and the staff the importance of establishing a mechanism to

implement such projects quickly in the interest of safety.

Alex Tsimerman, a longtime Bellevue resident and leader of an organization called Stand Up America, voiced a series of criticisms directed at the city's meeting procedures and public comment policies, including objections related to video display practices and the limitations placed on the duration and number of speakers during public comment periods. Also expressed were broader grievances concerning past enforcement actions and alleged violations of free speech and civil rights. The comments included repeated accusations directed at city officials and statements of a political nature.

John Tiscornia referred to the Sound Transit train and said the primary concern is the noise generated by the train when it crosses the East Channel Bridge. Local residents have been experiencing a low rumbling sound. The Commission was asked for assistance and suggestions regarding how the issue might be mitigated. It was also reported that the train has been operating during nighttime hours, including a run at approximately three o'clock in the morning, which is disruptive for nearby residents.

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

Deputy Mayor Hamilton noted that the Commission would be reviewing its bylaws and suggested that the members should pay particular attention to the section concerning communications with the City Council.

The Council held its annual retreat at the end of February during which the Councilmembers reviewed priorities for the coming year; revisited the Council's overall vision; and discussed the Grand Connection initiative. Transportation leadership staff participated in the retreat discussions, which is a signal that transportation issues will be a major focus for the city during the upcoming year.

The opening of Fire Station 10 located near 112 Avenue NE and NE 12th Street was described as a successful event and a good example of significant work completed by city staff. The attention of the Commissioners was directed to the city's *It's Your City* publication which was recently distributed both online and by mail. Sound Transit updates will be presented to the City Council at its next Council meeting and the Commissioners were encouraged to attend the meeting or watch online and to provide feedback if they have comments. The opening of the Cross Lake Connection is scheduled for March 28 and several activities are planned around the city to mark the occasion.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton said there was a particular focus on the city's boards and commissions during the Council's annual retreat. Considerable attention was given to improving and potentially standardizing the processes governing how boards and Commissions interact with the Council, and how new members are recruited and appointed. It was explained that the preferred approach will emphasize collaboration and transparency, with current Commission members participating in various stages of the selection process. As the appointment process advances, leadership positions such as the chair and vice chair may also be involved in interviewing potential candidates. The goal is to ensure that all interested applicants have an opportunity to express their interests, and to have the process become more consistent across all boards and commissions.

There are several guiding principles related to the role of boards and commissions described in the Council rules. The purpose of the bodies is to advise the Council; prepare issues for Council consideration and final decision; and represent a cross-section of public perspectives so that Councilmembers can evaluate a full range of viewpoints when making policy decisions. The role of the Council liaison is primarily focused on serving as a conduit of communication between the commissions and the Council, offering guidance consistent with Council direction, and providing commissioners with awareness of broader city issues, including matters that may generate public controversy. The liaison does not vote as a member of a board or commission and may attend meetings regularly, though Council rules require attendance at least quarterly.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton emphasized the importance of helping to refine policy issues for Council decision-making and communicating community perspectives gathered through public engagement and community interaction. The Commission's bylaws call for quarterly communication with the Council and the Commissioners were assured that reports and recommendations from boards and commissions are reviewed carefully and considered seriously by the Councilmembers.

Emphasized was the important role of city staff in preparing meeting agendas, producing minutes, providing technical information, and ensuring that the boards and commissions have the necessary tools to perform their advisory role effectively. Staff members work under the direction of the City Manager or designee and do not take direction from the boards or commissions, although staff understand that Commissions may ultimately make recommendations that differ from staff perspectives.

Commissioner Keilman asked how the feedback from the earlier public speaker regarding Sound Transit train noise should best be directed to ensure it reaches the appropriate individuals. Deputy Mayor Hamilton explained that such requests typically flow through city staff. The staff are best positioned to address the question.

Principal Planner Kevin McDonald explained that the Transportation Commission does not have any responsibilities regarding transit agencies or other external governmental entities. The Commission's role is to advise the City Council. The comment regarding Sound Transit will be shared with the appropriate staff within the Transportation Department. The upcoming Sound Transit briefing before the City Council might present an appropriate opportunity for the issue to be raised again.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton added that Council meetings include an opportunity for public comment. Individuals with concerns about Sound Transit can attend and present their comments directly to the Council during that session.

Commissioner Ting remarked on the benefits of having new Council liaisons assigned to the different boards and commissions. Such transitions allow for ideas and best practices to be widely shared among the boards and commissions. An interest was expressed in hearing about the effective practices observed by the Deputy Mayor while serving a Council liaison to the Parks Board, particularly in regard to how the body responds to public feedback and determines appropriate avenues for addressing community concerns while remaining within their advisory role. Deputy Mayor Hamilton emphasized the value of maintaining awareness of public sentiment on key issues, communicating those perspectives to the Council, and relying on staff to assist in directing questions or concerns to the appropriate departments. Commissioners often receive emails from community members and they can channel that information through staff to ensure that inquiries are handled effectively. It was acknowledged

that determining the correct point of contact can sometimes be complex, but it was reiterated that staff serve as a key resource for facilitating the communications.

Vice Chair Magill commented on communication between the Commission and the Council and expressed support for establishing a more regular quarterly communication process. While the Commission has occasionally presented matters directly to the Council, such interactions typically occur only when the Commission is formally presenting a recommendation. A consistent communication structure would improve coordination. Deputy Mayor Hamilton explained that quarterly communication is already contemplated within the bylaws that govern all boards and commissions. The city has sought to maintain consistency across those governing documents. As an example, the Parks Board's practice is to submit quarterly updates to the Council; they are included in the Council meeting packets. The communications are generally prepared by the staff liaison in collaboration with the board's chair and vice chair and they provide a brief summary of activities from the previous quarter. Such updates are helpful because Councilmembers cannot attend every board or commission meeting and therefore rely on the summaries to remain informed about ongoing work. The Councilmembers review the materials carefully and often discuss them, which reinforces the fact that the effort involved in preparing the reports is worthwhile.

Kevin McDonald added that the City Clerk's Office is currently working on a standardized template for communications from boards and commissions to the Council. The intent of the effort is to ensure that the information provided is consistent and delivered in a timely and uniform format.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton stressed the importance of maintaining the quarterly communication practice, which is always useful but which has not always been consistently maintained. The practice serves to recognize and highlight the work being done by the members of the city's boards and commissions.

Chair Stash called attention to an upcoming citywide event involving members of the various boards and commissions. The recognition event was paused during the pandemic but is back on track. The Commissioners were encouraged to attend if possible. The event provides an opportunity for members of the different boards and commissions to meet informally, exchange information about their work, and learn more about activities across city government.

5. STAFF REPORTS

Kevin McDonald informed the Commissioners that the meeting agenda packet is now available as a single consolidated PDF document in response to a prior request. The Commissioners were asked to provide feedback on the helpfulness of the format so staff can determine whether to continue providing materials in that manner.

Commissioner Williams noted having been the one who made the request and expressed appreciation for it. Kevin McDonald clarified that the file had been sent as an attachment to the Commissioners' email and was also made available in the printed meeting packet.

Kevin McDonald announced that the Commission's annual leadership election process will begin soon. Nominations for chair and vice chair are typically accepted during the April and May meetings, with the election scheduled for June. The selected individuals will serve from mid-2026 through June of 2027. The Commissioners were encouraged to begin considering potential nominees.

Chair Stash noted plans to be absent from the May meeting and asked if submitting a nomination by email in advance is acceptable. Kevin McDonald any such nominations will be accepted and recorded.

A. 2026 Transportation Element Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Kevin McDonald stated that on November 25, 2025, the City Council had unanimously approved two recommendations originating from the Transportation Commission: the Transportation Facilities Plan and the Mobility Implementation Plan. As a result of those approvals, several minor inconsistencies arose between the newly adopted plans and the language currently contained in the Comprehensive Plan. Consequently, the Council has voted unanimously to direct staff and the relevant Commissions to reconcile the inconsistencies. One inconsistency relates to the planning horizon of the Transportation Facilities Plan. The plan has been updated from a 12-year planning framework to a 20-year framework, while the Comprehensive Plan still references the 12-year timeline. The Comprehensive Plan language therefore needs to be revised to reflect the 20-year planning horizon.

A second inconsistency involves references to the former Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan. Because the Mobility Implementation Plan now incorporates the components of the earlier plan, references in the Comprehensive Plan will need to be updated to refer instead to the Mobility Implementation Plan. The proposed textual changes were included in the Commissioners' meeting packet. The Commission will review and approve the revisions in May before transmitting them to the Planning Commission for review. The Planning Commission will ultimately forward the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to the City Council.

Vice Chair Magill asked for clarification about how references within the Comprehensive Plan to the Mobility Implementation Plan function procedurally. The Comprehensive Plan refers to the Mobility Implementation Plan and that allows for the flexibility to change the latter as needed, while the Comprehensive Plan is changed only once per year. While acknowledging that changing the Mobility Implementation Plan requires Council approval, the question asked was if changing the Mobility Implementation Plan can bypass the Planning Commission. Kevin McDonald said the work to make amendments to the Mobility Implementation Plan are directed to the Transportation Commission from the Council, and the Transportation Commission's deliverable is directly back to the Council. To the extent that any policy issues emerge from working with the Mobility Implementation Plan, they would go to the Planning Commission which serves as the conduit to the Council on all things related to the Comprehensive Plan. Changes to the Mobility Implementation Plan do not necessarily require amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Ting asked if the supporting documents, such as the modal transportation plans, contain policies, or if they follow a different framework. Kevin McDonald explained that earlier plans, such as the former Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, had policy language included in them. The current best practice is to avoid embedding policy within modal plans. Policy direction is instead contained in the Comprehensive Plan, while documents such as the Mobility Implementation Plan function primarily as implementation tools. The Mobility Implementation Plan is a mechanism that translates policy direction into practical actions, identifying areas where performance targets are not being met and proposing project concepts such as infrastructure improvements that translate policy into tangible results on the ground. The separation between policy and implementation is generally considered a best

practice.

6. PUBLIC HEARING – None

7. STUDY SESSION

A. Transportation Commission By Laws

Assistant City Attorney Heather Jones reminded the Commissioners that three substantive changes are contemplated in regard to the Commission’s bylaws. The first change addresses term limits for board and commission members and establishes a limit of two terms of service. After completing two terms, an individual will be required to observe a two-year waiting period before serving on any other board or commission. The second change extends the period of exclusion associated with certain conduct from 60 days to 180 days. The third change clarifies elements of the appeal process that will apply in cases where a period of exclusion has been imposed. The proposed amendments were reviewed during the Commission’s prior meeting and were presented for a final vote in accordance with the Commission’s bylaws.

A motion to approve the bylaw amendments as presented was made by Commissioner Keilman. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ting and the motion carried unanimously.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 12, 2026

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

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. REVIEW OF COMMISSION CALENDAR

Kevin McDonald took a moment to review the calendar of upcoming meeting dates and agenda items. It was stressed that there would not be a Commission meeting in April.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Stash adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date