



DATE: January 11, 2024

TO: Chair Stash and members of the Transportation Commission

FROM: Kevin McDonald, AICP, Principal Transportation Planner
kmcdonald@bellevuewa.gov, 425-452-4558
Kate Nesse, PhD, Senior Planner, 425-452-2042
knesse@bellevuewa.gov, 425-452-2042

SUBJECT: Transportation Element Draft Policy Amendments

DIRECTION REQUESTED

_____ Action (anticipated Q1, 2024)

_____ X Discussion/Direction

_____ X Information

Staff will provide and seek input on updated draft recommendations to the Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element policies. Policy recommendations were last shared with the Transportation Commission on December 8, 2022.

No Action by the Transportation Commission is requested at this study session.

BACKGROUND/INFORMATION

On December 8, 2022, staff reviewed draft Transportation Element policy recommendations with the Commission for discussion and input. In the intervening year, staff has incorporated Commission input and recommended additional minor edits based on subject matter expert review and new information. Those changes are outlined below.

DRAFT POLICY RECOMMENDATION

In Attachment A, staff has compiled the draft Transportation Element policy amendments. The format for the policy amendments highlights the recommended change to the existing policy, with underline/strike-through text.

Transportation Commission made the following suggestions (all policy numbers refer to the New Number in Attachment A, unless preceded by "(old number)"):

- Retain policies that include high-level ideals for how the street network and transit functions in the city.
 - Staff changed the recommendation for TR-54, from repeal to modify. As modified, the policy focuses on arterial speed and safety.

- Staff changed the recommendation for TR-66 from repeal to retain, unchanged. It focuses on advocating for Eastside transit facilities as a priority in the regional transit system.
- Staff changed the recommendation for TR-68 from modify to retain, unchanged. The existing language provides direction on transit speed and frequency.
- Staff changed the recommendation for TR-79 from repeal to modify. The modified policy directs the city to support transit connection across the Eastside.
- Retain a policy on cut through traffic.
 - Staff still recommend repealing (old number) TR-154 because it is redundant with the broader policy, TR-134. They both discourage cut-through traffic.
 - Staff still recommend modifying TR-134. It directs the city to discourage cut-through traffic on residential streets as one of several measures to slow traffic.
- Manage parking for transit use.
 - Staff still recommend repealing (old number) TR-79 because new park-and-ride facilities are not planned as part of future development of the transit network in Bellevue. Policy TR-6 provides direction to manage parking with transit agencies, employers and others as part of a transportation demand management system. TR-6 was updated with minor changes to language since the commission reviewed it last.
- Include direction for the provision of short-term bicycle parking.
 - Staff still recommend retaining, unchanged, TR-10. It directs the city to provide for bicycle parking in new developments.
 - Staff changed the recommended modification to TR-96. The updated modification broadens the provisions to include all active transportation and it identifies on-site bicycle parking be provided in new developments.
- Retain language that promotes transit ridership.
 - Staff changed the recommendation for TR-82 from repeal to modify. As modified, it provides broad direction to create transit stations that are valued places in the community.
 - Staff changed the recommendation for TR-83 from repeal to retain. It supports cooperation to improve transit infrastructure such as stations.
- Retain policies on noise in the Environmental Protection subsection.
 - Staff still recommend repealing (old number) TR-145. There have been several policies added to other Comprehensive Plan elements to address noise.
- Traffic calming and pedestrian safety are important to retain in the policies.
 - Staff changed the recommended modification to TR-57. The changes were for readability, and did not impact the intent. The policy directs the city to holistically address safety challenges for pedestrians and bicyclists in the city as part of the Vision Zero initiative.
 - Staff still recommends the many other policies addressing safety throughout the transportation network. Additional policies addressing safety have not been changed since the Commission last reviewed them.
- Combine some policies to reduce redundancy and focus direction.

- While 5 policies have been added (one of which was the result of splitting an existing policy into two), the Transportation Element has a net decrease of 23 policies through repealing redundant policies, moving policies to other elements and combining policies.
- Include a glossary for the Commission at the time of policy review.
 - The glossary has been included as an attachment to this memo (Attachment B).

Since the Transportation Commission last reviewed the policy changes, several reports and analyses have been released including the [Draft Environmental Impact Statement \(DEIS\)](#), the [Racially Disparate Impact \(RDI\) Analysis](#), the [Economic Analysis](#), and the [Climate Vulnerability Analysis](#) (CVA). Staff anticipated the results of most of these analyses with their recommendations. Many of the mitigation measures related to transportation suggested in the DEIS are policies and programs the city has already adopted. The RDI Analysis suggested changes to,

- (old number) TR-7
 - Staff still recommend moving to the Land Use element and addressing the suggested changes there.
- TR-110
 - Staff changed the recommendation from retain, unchanged, to modify. As modified, it broadens the policy to include minimizing all impacts of state highway improvements.
- TR-127
 - Staff changed the recommended modification. The policy, as reviewed by the Commission in December 2022, addressed the recommendations of the RDI. Staff recommend a slight change in wording to improve the readability of the policy.

The Economic Analysis was focused on the economics of Neighborhood Centers, small commercial hubs outside of the city's major employment centers (for example, Kelsey Creek Shopping Center and Newport Hills Shopping Center). There was one transportation-related recommendation, to invest in pedestrian infrastructure around these centers. Staff do not recommend adding any new policies related to transportation in these centers but continue to support the many policies regarding active transportation. The primary policies can be found in TR-20 and in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation (Active Transportation) subsection (TR-92 to TR-105).

The CVA suggested two changes to policies in the Transportation element. These suggested changes duplicate policies regarding encouraging flexible work arrangements (TR-6 and TR-8) promotion of all modes of transportation (TR-17 and TR-18). Staff do not recommend incorporating the suggestion for a policy directing the city to create redundancy in the transportation network as it is not clear how that would integrate into the performance metric system. Staff did change the recommendation in one policy to consider climate change:

- TR-30
 - Staff changed the recommended modification. The policy now directs the city to design, maintain, and protect the transportation network to be resilient to impacts related to climate change as well as disaster.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (publication anticipated Q1 2024) may reveal that additional policy amendments may be needed to address transportation issues and opportunities that are disclosed in this document.

NEXT STEPS

Following the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement in Q1, 2024, staff will return to the Transportation Commission with any new Transportation Element policy amendments that are informed by the FEIS document and analysis. Then, staff will seek a final recommendation for the Transportation Element policy amendments and a transmittal to the Planning Commission.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A. Draft Staff Recommendation for Transportation Element Policy Amendments

Attachment B. Draft Glossary