



City of
Bellevue

Post Office Box 90012 • Bellevue, Washington • 98009 9012

November 25, 2013

James Irish
Sound Transit
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, 98104

RE: Sound Transit Long Range Plan Update

Dear Mr. Irish:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the update of Sound Transit's Long Range Plan in preparation for the third major phase of the regional light rail system (ST3). As the region continues to grow the high capacity transit (HCT) system will need to keep pace. The expansion options now being explored through the long rang plan update will be critical to sustaining the region's mobility, economy and quality of life. The City of Bellevue supports Sound Transit's update of the Long Range Plan and will continue to be engaged in the important discussions about the options moving forward.

Bellevue has supported the efforts to build a regional HCT system, including voter support for the ST2 ballot measure in 2008, the support reflected in the City's 2005 "Future High Capacity Transit Interest Statement" (attached). The statement highlights Bellevue's role has an economic hub for the region and the east side in particular. East Link will connect Bellevue with other major employment centers, primarily along the I-5 corridor. An expanded network will create a better link among east side cities and improve connections from the east side to other parts of the region. This HCT system should implement the regional growth centers strategy of *Vision 2040*, further the implementation of *Transportation 2040*, and strengthen our growing economy as envisioned by the *Regional Economic Strategy*.

The following comments are directed specifically at the scope of the Long Range Plan Update:

- We want to reaffirm our support for the final extensions of rail approved in ST2, namely extension of rail from Overlake to Downtown Redmond. We also support extensions to Tacoma and Everett going forward.
- Bellevue believes it is important to take a broader view of HCT and that the update should study the future system in the context of a multi-modal system that includes automobile, transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities as all being part of that regional system. For example, local, sub-regional and regional bus service should be an integral component of the HCT system by providing reliable, frequent service to HCT stations;

- Corridor studies and the update should recognize the confluence of travel on the east side, specifically that peak period trips are also among east side cities and not just back and forth to Seattle and, in particular, that Bellevue is both an origin and a destination for peak period trips;
- Specifically, Bellevue supports advancing connections between Downtown Bellevue to Kirkland and Downtown Bellevue to Issaquah and a method to connect all three of our cities that interlines well with East Link all the way to Downtown Redmond.
- Bellevue supports the near-term inclusion of bus rapid transit (BRT) on I-405 as a key component of the regional HCT system for the east side and future passenger rail consideration;
- Bellevue supports and appreciates that the update includes a study of the Eastside Rail Corridor in tandem with the I-405 BRT, it is critical that future system improvements in these corridors be designed to conveniently link with other modes (i.e. light rail, bus, and non-motorized) serving the east side and the region;
- Corridor studies and the update should reflect the regional and local land use plans and regional designations for future growth of east side cities;
- The update should include a study of the capacity and siting of the east side park-and-ride system, including Sound Transit, Metro and WSDOT facilities to ensure system integration with the future HCT and bus networks;
- Finally, the Long Range Plan should strengthen system integration and continuity among all transit providers through continued commitment to connecting our region's centers and providing appropriate feeder service to the regional rail spine. Bellevue's Transit Master Plan (Bellevue's Proposed Frequent Transit Network map is attached) is a critical component to improving future mobility for the east side and as such it should be integrated into the analysis of HCT corridors and other service improvements to optimize the effectiveness of the future HCT network.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the scope for the Long Range Plan Update. Bellevue looks forward to working with Sound Transit and other agencies and jurisdictions to craft the next phase of regional HCT expansion for our region. Please

James Irish, Sound Transit
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contact either of us or Kim Becklund (425-452-4491, kbecklund@bellevuewa.gov) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Berg', with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

David Berg, P.E., Director
Transportation Department

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Salomone', with a stylized, flowing script.

Chris Salomone, Director
Planning and Community Development

Attachments:

City of Bellevue Future High Capacity Transit Interest Statement (June 20, 2005)
City of Bellevue Proposed Frequent Transit Network Map

Cc: Bellevue City Council
Brad Miyake, Acting City Manager
Joyce Nichols, Director, Intergovernmental Relations
Kim Becklund, Transportation Policy Advisor
Michael Kattermann, Senior Planner

CITY OF BELLEVUE: FUTURE HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT INTEREST STATEMENT

Revised and Updated by Council June 20, 2005

Introduction: High Capacity Transit is one of four elements of Bellevue's *Regional Transportation Vision* (in addition to Regional Bus, General Purpose, and HOV). Bellevue's *Regional Transportation Vision* was adopted in 1999 to articulate the City's investment priorities. These investments are considered essential to support economic development and livability for our region and City's long term growth. Bellevue's continued interest in high capacity transit as a component of a regional transportation solution is based upon the *Guiding Principles* listed below.

Context: Sound Transit is responsible for planning, building, and operating a high capacity transportation system for the urbanized portions of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. Sound Transit initiated planning for the second phase of Sound Transit investments in April 2004. The City will play an important role in helping to assess and direct resources to key new HCT projects.

Guiding Principles: Future High Capacity Transit projects shall:

1. ***Measurably enhance Bellevue's place in the regional economy by better connecting urban centers. Ensure that the HCT system supports the City's economic development goals by providing direct service to the City's major employment centers, particularly Downtown Bellevue.***
2. ***Provide reliable, high-performance, attractive alternatives to SOV travel, especially during peak periods. It is essential that HCT add new travel capacity within its own right-of-way in order to maximize speed and reliability for HCT service without adversely impacting other modes.***
3. ***Recognize Bellevue's investment and preservation of its neighborhoods and minimize local impacts. HCT planning should acknowledge and be consistent with planning that has been done to date, and should seek to maximize providing amenities to neighborhoods while also being sensitive to neighborhood and quality of life.***
4. ***Provide ample opportunity for meaningful public involvement by residents, neighborhood groups, business leaders, and other informal and formal stakeholders. Members of the community should have opportunities throughout the HCT planning and implementation process to help shape the ultimate configuration of an HCT system in Bellevue and throughout the Eastside.***
5. ***Be consistent with regional and local land use and transportation plans¹. Bellevue continues to play a critical role in local and regional planning that affects all aspects of our community—ensuring adherence to these efforts assists in incremental achievement of the City's land use and transportation Visions.***
6. ***Recognize and be consistent with corridor work completed since the 1996 vote on Phase I (Sound Move²). Strive to work within the parameters of the corridor plans completed to date, and control costs by strategically phasing HCT implementation to meet the ultimate solution on each corridor while getting the most out of these incremental investments. Implementation should remain flexible and adaptive to technological advances.***
7. ***Support Continued Adherence to Sound Transit's Sub-area Equity Financial Policy. Bellevue supports the existing Sound Transit Financial policies related to sub-area equity, the principle whereby local tax revenues are used to benefit Sound Transit District's five subareas based on the share of revenues each subarea generates, and strongly urges the Sound Transit Board to continue to uphold this principle for current and future phases of HCT planning, funding and implementation.***

¹ Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Destination 2030) adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council in 2002 and Vision 2020; (2) Sound Transit's 1996 Long-Range Vision; (3) Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan; and (4) Bellevue's Regional Transportation Vision and related Corridor Interest Statements.

² Including, for example, the FEIS/Preferred Alternative for I-405, I-90 Steering Committee's adoption of R8A as the Preferred Alternative for I-90 Two-Way Transit/HOV Project (addition of new HOV lanes to I-90's outer bridges), and TransLake/SR 520 EIS work still ongoing.

- **I-90 Corridor**

The I-90 corridor is the City's first priority for HCT Across Lake Washington. Bellevue supports HCT development in I-90's center lanes as the appropriate near-term HCT corridor crossing Lake Washington to Bellevue and on to other points on the Eastside. This is consistent with planning efforts from SR 520/TransLake EIS, the 2004 Amendment to the 1976 I-90 Memorandum of Agreement, Eastside Transportation Partnership positions, Sound Transit decisions and numerous corridor analyses conducted over the last 15 years.

1. HCT System Characteristics

In keeping with the general principles above, the Eastside HCT system must:

- a. Operate in it's own dedicated right of way in order to provide the most efficient and reliable transit service; and
- b. Link the downtown Seattle central business core to Downtown Bellevue and Downtown Bellevue to the Overlake Transit Center first with a system that provides a seamless ride and identify a phased implementation plan to link other destination points on the Eastside (downtown Redmond, Kirkland, Totem Lake, Eastgate and Issaquah) giving priority to segments with the greatest ridership potential; and
- c. Consider whether the existing South Bellevue Park and Ride lot can be utilized to accommodate HCT, while also minimizing environmental and neighborhood impacts; and
- d. Utilize an alignment that efficiently connects population and employment centers in downtown Seattle and downtown Bellevue; and
- e. Provide transportation capacity through a new HCT system, while maintaining general purpose lane capacity of surface streets from I-90 to Downtown Bellevue and support every reasonable effort to improve general purpose capacity as companion improvements to the system; and
- f. Consider and compare aerial, at grade, and tunneling grade separation options for the system to identify the aesthetic, design, cost, operation and environmental aspects of each option; and
- g. Minimize environmental and noise impacts in order to protect Bellevue's residential and commercial neighborhoods within and surrounding potential HCT alignments and seek to provide neighborhood access to the HCT system; and
- h. Include station locations and access points to serve major retail, employment and residential uses in Downtown Bellevue, the medical institution district and along the corridor, striving to locate stations within a maximum walking time of 10 minutes from major high density land uses; and
- i. Include stations in the Bel-Red corridor as part of the alignment to the Overlake Transit Center in order to maximize ridership and system performance and to accommodate future land use and economic development in the Bel-Red/Overlake areas; and
- j. Provide reliable access to the system by ensuring that adequate existing and new park and ride lot capacity, neighborhood bus connections and local and regional express bus services are available.

2. HCT Alternatives

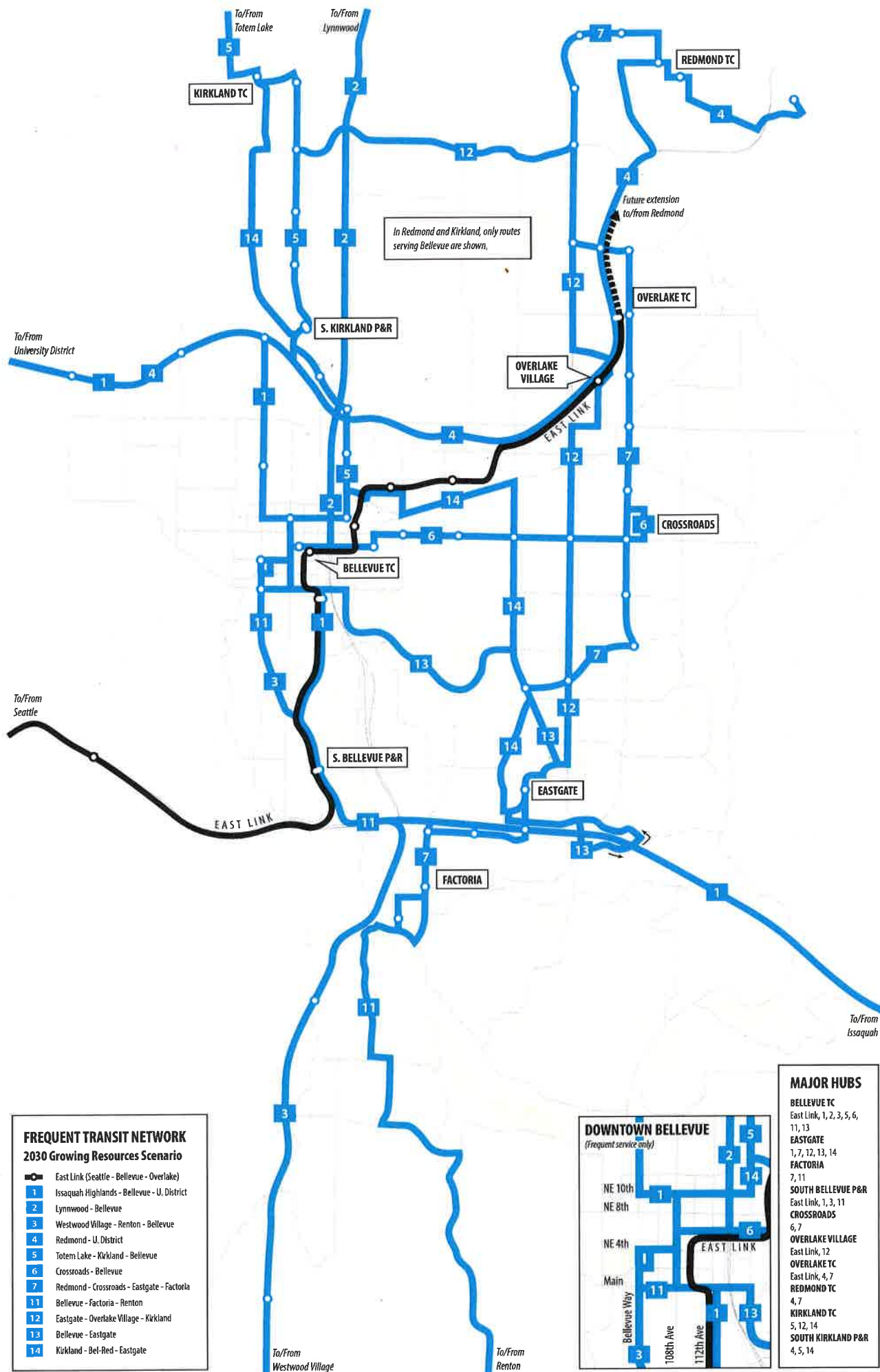
- a. In order to meet the general principles and system characteristics specified above, and to provide the best system continuity to riders, Bellevue supports Sound Transit advancing a light rail and a bus rapid transit alternative (calling out the incremental cost and impacts of converting bus rapid transit to light rail) along the same corridor into the project level analysis for the I-90 corridor.

- **520 Corridor**

- a. Bellevue supports inclusion of HCT on SR 520 as part of the Updated Sound Transit Long Range Plan.

- **I-405 Corridor**

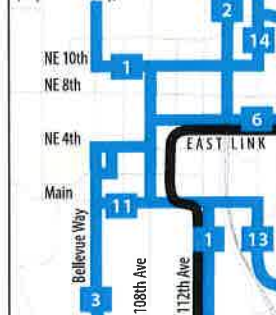
- a. Bellevue supports HCT on I-405 serving Tukwila, Renton, Newcastle, Bellevue, Kirkland and Bothell as part of Sound Transit's Long Range Plan, including near-term implementation of a Bus Rapid Transit system (with access to the system at Downtown Bellevue and Factoria) as identified in the I-405 Corridor Master Plan.



FREQUENT TRANSIT NETWORK 2030 Growing Resources Scenario

- East Link (Seattle - Bellevue - Overlake)
- 1 Issaquah Highlands - Bellevue - U. District
- 2 Lynnwood - Bellevue
- 3 Westwood Village - Renton - Bellevue
- 4 Redmond - U. District
- 5 Totem Lake - Kirkland - Bellevue
- 6 Crossroads - Bellevue
- 7 Redmond - Crossroads - Eastgate - Factoria
- 11 Bellevue - Factoria - Renton
- 12 Eastgate - Overlake Village - Kirkland
- 13 Bellevue - Eastgate
- 14 Kirkland - Bel-Red - Eastgate

DOWNTOWN BELLEVUE (Frequent service only)



MAJOR HUBS

- BELLEVUE TC**
East Link, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 11, 13
- EASTGATE**
1, 7, 12, 13, 14
- FACTORIA**
7, 11
- SOUTH BELLEVUE P&R**
East Link, 1, 3, 11
- CROSSROADS**
6, 7
- OVERLAKE VILLAGE**
East Link, 12
- OVERLAKE TC**
East Link, 4, 7
- REDMOND TC**
4, 7
- KIRKLAND TC**
5, 12, 14
- SOUTH KIRKLAND P&R**
4, 5, 14