



## Planning Commission

# TRANSMITTAL

DATE: November 16, 2017

TO: Mayor Stokes and Members of the City Council

FROM: Stephanie Walter, Chair  
Members of the Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Final Review Recommendation for 2017 Comprehensive Plan Amendments  
(CPA): **Complete Streets CPA, File No. 17-109009 AC**

The Planning Commission recommends by a 3-2 vote (Commissioner Laing absent) that the City Council adopt the recommended Complete Streets CPA into the Comprehensive Plan.

### I. SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

The Complete Streets CPA proposes to amend the Transportation Element to fully support a Complete Streets program in Bellevue. Consistent with City Council direction, the Transportation Commission worked extensively to recommend amendments to seven existing policies in the Transportation Element, add narrative language, and create a new graphic call-out text box in the Comprehensive Plan. See Attachment A.

#### **Complete Streets**

Complete Streets is a national movement intended to inspire communities to consider *all* modes of travel in the planning, design, implementation, maintenance, and operation of their transportation systems. Cities use a Complete Streets framework to ensure safe, reliable mobility options and access for all modes and users of these systems.

The Washington State Legislature enacted Complete Streets legislation in 2011.

### II. PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission finds that all the Final Review Decision Criteria have been met for this proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment as set forth in the Land Use Code (LUC 20.30I.150). The Commission's recommendation highlights the following decision criteria conclusions:

The proposed amendment **addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire city** because it *supports amending the Comprehensive Plan with policies that address Transportation Commission-identified gaps in Bellevue's approach to implementing Complete Streets—a national movement intended to inspire communities to consider all modes of travel in the planning, design, implementation, maintenance, and operation of their transportation systems;*

The proposed amendment **demonstrates a public benefit** because it *supports fully embedding Complete Streets concepts and ethics into all aspects of street corridors and networks in Bellevue. The demonstrable benefits of such full embedding include measurable increases in community health indicators, measurable increases in operations and performance of such street corridors and networks, and leveraging a Complete Streets policy presence in the form of grants, awards and other sources of transportation project funding from sources outside of city government.*

The Commission recommendation includes amending text in the Performance Measures section of the graphic call-out (“blue”) box:

➤ ***Performance Measures*** – *Complete streets performance is measured against adopted level-of-service standards and mode-specific plans including the Traffic Standards Code, Downtown Transportation Plan, Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, and the Transit Master Plan.*

and adding new text in the Complete Streets narrative section (paragraph 2):

*...The Transportation Element supports a complete, connected, and resilient multimodal transportation system. City staff incorporate Complete Streets best practices and consider all roadway users and all modes of travel as they scope project concepts, plan for alternative approaches, design the preferred solution, build the project, then maintain and operate the project. Staff should evaluate applicable Complete Streets policies in each biennium relative to the desired outcome for the complete streets network, and make adjustments accordingly.*

The Commission’s divided vote on Complete Streets reflects reservations about the Commission’s role in reviewing proposed policy whose purpose has already been established through ordinance. The Commission discussed the ambiguity of Final Review Decision Criteria under such circumstances—e.g. significantly changed circumstances were the result of the adopted Complete Streets Ordinance, and that the Complete Streets policy recommendations appeared to be backfill for actions that have already occurred through the Ordinance, such as the award of Complete Streets funds that have already been obligated.

Further, without key performance indicators (KPI) measures Complete Streets policy might not accomplish more than what is already being done—obviating the need for an umbrella policy approach.

### III. BACKGROUND

On September 19, 2016, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 6308 to clarify how Bellevue currently addresses Complete Streets concepts and establishing a policy framework. The ordinance expanded on the existing policy expressed in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and Transit Master Plan and 31 applicable policies in the Comprehensive

Plan to create an overarching Complete Streets framework. Ordinance No. 6308 included a new Complete Streets section in the Transportation Development Code (BCC 14.60), endorsed the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide for use by the city, and acknowledged the role of previously adopted Vision Zero concepts and policies in Complete Streets implementation.

Finally, the City Council used the ordinance to direct the Transportation Commission to assess the city's Complete Streets readiness by reviewing and identifying policy gaps in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Transportation Commission delivered its assessment and recommendation, and the City Council initiated a Comprehensive Plan amendment for Complete Street policies in the Transportation Element.

On October 4, 2017, the Planning Commission held a study session to review the Transportation Commission recommendation. Transportation Commission Chair Vic Bishop provided a detailed overview of the recommendation and provided insight to his Commission's discussions and rationale in preparing the recommendation.

#### **IV. PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT**

The City Council initiated Final Review on March 20, 2017 of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment to fully embed Complete Streets into the Transportation Element. On October 4, 2017, the Planning Commission held a study session to review the proposed amendment. Notice of the November 1, 2017, Final Review Public Hearing before the Planning Commission was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on October 12, 2017, and included notice sent to parties of record.

Transportation Department staff acting as the applicant offered testimony at the November 1, 2017, public hearing. Two other speakers offered testimony, speaking to the overall growth in the numbers of mode trips expected in the Downtown by 2030, and addressing funding inequities implementing multimodal projects on streets.

#### **V. STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)**

The Environmental Coordinator reviewed the proposal under the State Environmental Policy Act and determined that it will not result in any probable, significant adverse environmental impacts, and therefore issued a Determination of Non-Significance on October 12, 2017.

#### **VI. REVIEW PROCESS AND APPLICATION OF DECISION CRITERIA**

The Planning Commission finds that the Final Review Decision Criteria have been met for this proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment as set forth in the Land Use Code (LUC 20.30I.150). A proposal must be found to have met all of the decision criteria to be recommended for approval.

##### **A. There exists obvious technical error in the pertinent Comprehensive Plan provision, or**

*Not applicable to this proposal.*

**B1. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other goals and policies of the city, the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP), the Growth Management Act and other applicable law; and**

*The proposed amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan because it provides a comprehensive policy framework articulating the completeness, connectedness, and resiliency of Bellevue's transportation system and affirming Bellevue's existing commitment to provide safe and reliable mobility options for people wherever they need to go throughout the city, whether they are walking, riding a bicycle, taking transit, or driving a car;*

*The Comprehensive Plan includes 31 policies that articulate key elements of the Complete Streets approach. Policies express a commitment in Bellevue to provide safe and reliable mobility options for people wherever they need to go throughout the city, whether they are walking, riding a bicycle, taking transit and/or driving a car.*

Transportation Element **Goal:** *"To maintain and enhance a comprehensive multimodal transportation system to serve all members of the community."*

**TR-4.** *Incorporate transit-supportive and pedestrian-oriented design features in new development through development review.*

**TR-20.** *Manage the multimodal transportation system in a corridor approach within and across Mobility Management Areas.*

**TR-21.** *Ensure that the transportation system infrastructure in Bellevue provides mobility options for all modes, and accommodates the mobility needs of everyone, including underserved populations.*

**TR-22.** *Implement and prioritize transportation system improvements to meet the level-of-service standards and other mobility targets for all transportation modes, recognizing the range of mobility needs of each corridor and Mobility Management Area.*

**TR-23.** *Coordinate improvements and operations among travel modes and provide connections between modes.*

**TR-24.** *Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements into roadway projects in accordance with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.*

**TR-25.** *Incorporate transit/high-occupancy vehicle facility improvements in accordance with the Transit Master Plan and corridor studies.*

**TR-26.** *Increase system connectivity for all modes by providing for roadway, pedestrian, and bicycling connections in newly developing and redeveloping areas.*

**TR-27.** *Design, implement, and maintain transportation system improvements and deliver transportation services and programs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).*

**TR-30.** *Establish multimodal level-of-service and concurrency standards and other mobility measures and targets for transportation corridors and in each area of the city in consideration of planned development patterns and mobility options.*

**TR-32.** *Utilize level-of-service standards for transportation corridors that reflect the range of available and intended mobility options.*

**TR-33.** *Utilize concurrency standards that consider the available and intended mobility options for transportation corridors, Mobility Management Areas and implementation and management priorities.*

**TR-34.** *Monitor the level-of-service for all modes and adjust programs and resources as necessary to achieve mobility targets and objectives.*

**TR-48.** *Employ intelligent transportation system technology and infrastructure to support the efficient movement of people and vehicles throughout the city.*

**TR-51.** *Provide sufficient arterial rights-of-way to provide space for street trees and landscaping, and to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle facilities, while considering neighborhood character and context.*

**TR-52.** *Design arterials and streets to fit the intended character of the areas through which they pass.*

**TR-53.** *Maintain and enhance safety for all users of the roadway network.*

**TR-61.** *Allow for repurposing of travel lanes for other uses such as parking, transit or pedestrian and bicycle facilities where excess vehicular capacity exists and/or to optimize person throughput along a corridor.*

**TR-73.** *Implement infrastructure and technology to support reliable transit arrival time and travel time along the frequent transit network.*

**TR-78.** *Develop and implement, in conjunction with the transit providers, an integrated way-finding system to facilitate transit ridership that incorporates principles of universal design and uses multiple languages.*

**TR-103.** *Promote and facilitate walking and bicycling.*

**TR-104.** *Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities along with other mobility options in planning, developing and maintaining the transportation system.*

**TR-111.** *Consider the personal health benefits and the community environmental benefits of walking, jogging, and bicycling in pedestrian and bicycle project design and funding.*

**TR-116.** *Improve the opportunities for pedestrians to safely cross streets at intersections and designated mid-block locations.*

**TR-126.** *Provide for the needs of freight movement in managing the existing transportation system and developing new facilities.*

**TR-139.** *Develop the transportation system in Bellevue to minimize environmental and neighborhood impacts, while addressing the city's long-term transportation and land use objectives.*

**TR-146.** *Consider neighborhood traffic and livability conditions and address potential adverse impacts of public and private projects during the planning, designing, permitting, and construction phases.*

**TR-147.** *Evaluate neighborhood impacts as part of corridor and subarea transportation studies.*

*Also, in the Urban Design Element:*

**UD-63.** *Ensure continuous and safe sidewalks wide enough to serve current and planned uses along arterials that are integrated with abutting land uses.*

**UD-66.** *Ensure that sidewalks, walkways, and trails are furnished, where needed and appropriate, with lighting, seating, landscaping, street trees, planter strips, trash receptacles, public art, bike racks, railings, handicap access, newspaper boxes, etc. without interfering with pedestrian circulation.*

**UD-72.** *Work with the community to identify and develop a system of neighborhood greenways that offer safe alternative routes for pedestrians and bicyclists.*

## **Growth Management Act**

*The proposed amendment is consistent with GMA urban growth planning goals encouraging development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner; and with transportation planning goals encouraging efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.*

## **Countywide Planning Policies**

*The proposed amendment is consistent with the overall intent of the King County Countywide Planning Policies (KCCPP) to provide for an “efficient transportation system that provides multiple options for moving people and goods.” The Countywide Planning Policies also recognize that “Mobility is necessary to sustain personal quality of life and the regional economy. For individuals, mobility requires an effective transportation system that provides safe, reliable, and affordable travel options for people of all ages, incomes and abilities.” Specific KCCPP **policies** that address safety and mobility include the following:*

- **Policy T-1:** *Work cooperatively with the Puget Sound Regional Council, the state, and other relevant agencies to finance and develop a multi-modal transportation system that enhances regional mobility and reinforces the countywide vision for managing growth. Use VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040 as the policy and funding framework for creating a system of Urban Centers and Manufacturing / Industrial Centers linked by high-capacity transit, bus transit and an interconnected system of freeways and high-occupancy vehicle lanes.*
- **Policy T-9:** *Promote the mobility of people and goods through a multi-modal transportation system based on regional priorities consistent with VISION 2040 and local comprehensive plans.*

- **Policy T-12:** *Address the needs of non-driving populations in the development and management of local and regional transportation systems.*
- **Policy T-14:** *Prioritize essential maintenance, preservation, and safety improvements of the existing transportation system to protect mobility and avoid more costly replacement projects.*
- **Policy T-19:** *Design roads and streets, including retrofit projects, to accommodate a range of motorized and non-motorized travel modes in order to reduce injuries and fatalities and to encourage non-motorized travel. The design should include well-defined, safe and appealing spaces for pedestrians and bicyclists.*
- **Policy T-21:** *Provide opportunities for an active, healthy lifestyle by integrating the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in the local and regional transportation plans and systems.*
- **Policy DP-32:** *Adopt a map and housing and employment growth targets in city comprehensive plans for each Urban Center, and adopt policies to promote and maintain quality of life in the Center through: ...Planning for complete streets to provide safe and inviting access to multiple travel modes, especially bicycle and pedestrian travel; ...*

**B2. The proposed amendment addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire city as identified in its long-range planning and policy documents; and**

*The proposed amendment addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire city because it supports amending the Comprehensive Plan with policies that address identified gaps in Bellevue’s approach to implementing Complete Streets; Existing policies, programs, direction and endorsements include the:*

- *Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan (2009) that identifies and prioritizes projects to create a complete and connected bicycle system throughout the city; and*
- *Transit Master Plan (2013) that provides a basis to advance proposed capital projects for study, design, prioritization and implementation with the policy vision to provide efficient, useful, attractive service for most people, to most destinations, most of the time.*
- *Projects for each mode need not be mutually exclusive, and the Complete Streets model that is supported by the recommended policies seeks to resolve potentially competing interests with a multimodal approach on a corridor basis.*

**B3. The proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions since the last time the pertinent Comprehensive Plan map or text was amended. See LUC 20.50.046 [below] for the definition of “significantly changed conditions”; and**

**Significantly changed conditions are defined as:** Demonstrating evidence of change such as unanticipated consequences of an adopted policy, or changed conditions on the subject property or its surrounding area, or changes related to the pertinent Plan map or text; where such change has implications of a magnitude that need to be addressed for the Comprehensive Plan to function as an integrated whole. *This definition applies only to Part 20.30I Amendment and Review of the Comprehensive Plan (LUC 20.50.046).*

*The proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions because there are more people using Bellevue's transportation systems, requiring a commitment to provide safe and reliable mobility options for people wherever they need to go throughout the city, whether they are walking, riding a bicycle, taking transit, or driving a car.*

*The proposal addresses significantly changed conditions where changes related to the pertinent Plan map or text have implications of a magnitude that need to be addressed for the Comprehensive Plan to function as an integrated whole given the 2016 Vision Zero CPA adoption.*

*Acting with Council direction, The Transportation Commission worked extensively to recommend amendments to seven existing policies in the Transportation Element, add narrative language, and create a new graphic call-out text box in the Comprehensive Plan to more fully embed Complete Streets in scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating, and maintaining street corridors and networks in Bellevue.*

**B4.If a site-specific proposed amendment, the subject property is suitable for development in general conformance with adjacent land use and the surrounding development pattern, and with zoning standards under the potential zoning classifications; and**

*N/A.*

**B5.The proposed amendment demonstrates a public benefit and enhances the public health, safety and welfare of the city.**

*The proposed amendment demonstrates a public benefit and enhances the public health, safety and welfare of the city because it supports fully embedding Complete Streets concepts and ethics into all aspects of street corridors and networks in Bellevue. The demonstrable benefits of such full embedding include measurable increases in community health indicators, measurable increases in operations and performance of such street corridors and networks, and leveraging a Complete Streets policy presence in the form of grant and transportation funding from sources outside of city government.*

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

The Planning Commission recommends by a 3-2 vote (Commissioner Laing absent) that the City Council adopt the recommended Complete Streets CPA into the Comprehensive Plan.

## **VIII. ATTACHMENTS**

D1. Complete Streets CPA – Planning Commission Recommendation



Bellevue Comprehensive Plan

Complete Streets Narrative

The transportation system in Bellevue provides safe and reliable mobility options for people to travel throughout the city. A Complete Streets network enables equitable access for all people and all travel modes. Each street in Bellevue is unique, and each street must serve a range of users with a design that is compatible with the context of the corridor and community. Complete Streets may also create great places that encourage people to gather in public spaces.

The Transportation Element supports a complete, connected, and resilient multimodal transportation system. City staff incorporate Complete Streets best practices and consider all roadway users and all modes of travel as they scope project concepts, plan for alternative approaches, design the preferred solution, build the project, then maintain and operate the project. [Staff should evaluate applicable Complete Streets policies in each biennium relative to the desired outcome for the complete streets network, and make adjustments accordingly.](#)

A Complete Streets network approach provides access for all modes along convenient alternate routes in situations where it is not possible, practical, or desirable to incorporate facilities for all modes on a particular street.

The Transportation Director maintains and updates a Transportation Design Manual that incorporates best practices to implement a Complete Streets approach, using design guidance from professional organizations such as the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), and National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO).

**TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT GOAL** “To scope, plan, design, implement, operate, maintain and enhance a comprehensive, multimodal transportation system to serve all members of the community.”

Mobility Management Section

**TR-20.** Scope, plan, design, implement, operate, and maintain a complete and multimodal transportation system in a corridor approach within and across Mobility Management Areas.

**TR-22.** Implement and prioritize transportation system improvements to meet the multimodal level-of-service standards, Complete Streets goals, and other mobility targets for all transportation modes, recognizing the range of mobility needs of each corridor and Mobility Management Area.

**TR-23.** Coordinate improvements and operations among travel modes and provide facilities to support people who are making connections between modes.

**TR-26.** Increase system connectivity for all modes by providing for vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycling facilities to create a Complete Streets network throughout the city.

**TR-32.** Utilize multimodal level-of-service standards for transportation corridors that reflect the range of available and intended mobility options.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Section

**TR-104.** Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities along with other mobility options in scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating and maintaining the transportation system.

Neighborhood Protection Section

**TR-147.** Evaluate neighborhood impacts and Complete Streets implementation opportunities as part of corridor and subarea transportation studies.

WHAT IS A COMPLETE STREET\*

- **Roadway Users and Modes** – Complete Streets are for people of all ages and abilities walking, bicycling, and using public transit, and for those driving private automobiles, freight and delivery vehicles, and emergency vehicles.
- **Projects and Phases** – Complete Streets applies on the public rights-of-way and easements for all project phases including scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating, and maintaining the transportation system.
- **Clear, Accountable Exceptions** – The conditions for granting exceptions are specific and require approval from the Transportation Director.
- **Network Connectivity** – Complete Streets promotes a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes.
- **Design** – Complete Streets uses a best practices approach and practices balance and flexibility to accommodate the needs of all roadway users.
- **Community Context** – Complete Streets solutions complement the context of the corridor and surrounding community.
- **Performance Measures** – Complete streets performance is measured against adopted level-of-service standards and mode-specific plans [including the Traffic Standards Code, Downtown Transportation Plan, Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, and the Transit Master Plan.](#)

*\*Adapted for Bellevue from the National Complete Streets Coalition*