

December 11, 2017

## **CITY COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

### **SUBJECT**

Ordinance adopting the Downtown Transportation Plan – Downtown Subarea Plan (DTP-DSP, 17-120230 AC) 2017 amendments to the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Bellevue, pursuant to Chapter 36.70A RCW (Growth Management Act, as amended) and Chapter 35A.63 RCW; and establishing an effective date.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Adoption of the 2017 amendment to the Comprehensive Plan sets City policy. Though there is no direct fiscal impact to the adoption of this amendment, implementation may influence future decision making and proposed investments. Investments outside of the scope of the current biennial budget may be proposed in future budget processes for Council approval.

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### **POLICY CONSIDERATION**

#### **Growth Management Act**

The Growth Management Act states that comprehensive plans may be amended no more frequently than once per year (with limited exceptions) so that the cumulative effect of the proposals can be considered. The effect of such review is to keep the plan current and relevant.

#### **Comprehensive Plan**

Should the City amend the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate amendments resulting from the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Amendment work program? Bellevue's annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment work program includes privately-initiated amendment proposals that have advanced into Final Review, and city-initiated amendments by action of the City Council under LUC 20.30I.130. B.1.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Council reviewed details of the Planning Commission's recommended approvals of the 2017 plan amendments at Study Session on November 27 including the Downtown Transportation Plan – Downtown Subarea Plan (17-120230 AC) to amend the Downtown Subarea Plan only with transportation and facility-related amendments resulting from the 2013 update of the Downtown Transportation Plan.

### November 27, 2017 Study Session

At the November 27, 2017, Council Study Session some councilmembers expressed a desire for additional study of the Downtown Transportation Plan – Downtown Subarea Plan amendment. While the Council moved the proposal forward for action consideration at tonight’s meeting, the Council discussed the possibility for changes before consideration of adoption:

### Councilmember Robertson (November 27, 2017 Study Session):

- *Please clarify the intent and import of language advocating charging for parking.*  
New policy S-DT-157.3 recommends developing a proposal for a pay for parking program. Parking pricing is a common tool used to manage on-street parking as a public asset. The Transportation Commission extensively studied parking space supply and demand, managing the public asset for a broader public benefit, and examined the relationship between revenue and enforcement. This new policy is part of a larger body of work by the Transportation Commission—including a new section on curbside uses—to better match parking supply and demand in Downtown Bellevue.  
  
The Planning Commission in turn examined the use of pricing in policy during its review, deciding ultimately to not amend its recommendation. Acknowledging that pricing is a tool that has long been available to building managers to help reduce the rate of single occupant vehicle commuters, manage the supply of parking and support the maintenance of parking spaces, and with a public benefit in reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips, the Commission nevertheless offered a caveat about the use of pricing as inconsistent with the Commission’s past perspectives and legislative actions.
- *Why delete neighborhood edges and transitions policies?*  
These 2004 Downtown Subarea Plan policies (S-DT-118, -119, and -122) were moved to the Transportation Element during the 2015 CPU as applicable citywide, not just in the Downtown.
- *Why remove parking as a Downtown Mobility goal?*  
The amended language emphasizes a transportation network that provides facilities for people to get around by their mode choice, and to make parking implicit with the car as a one of those choices.
- *Do the amended statistics remain realistic in the Goals statement on p. 21?*  
Existing population and employment statistics related to population and employment in the Downtown Land Use and Transportation section have been updated as requested.
- *Why was language in S-DT-128 deleted on arterials functioning as alternatives to freeway access?*  
The amending policy refocuses on the use of these for regional trips rather than for local access.
- *Could amended policy lead to repurposing and “road diet” actions without Council oversight?*  
Decisions to examine roadway modal capacity would be determined through traffic studies and modeling. Decisions would be based on existing data, long-range plans and projections, and engineering standards, and would be vetted with the Transportation Commission. Ultimately, major projects would come before the City Council for review and approval.

Councilmember Robinson (November 27, 2017 Study Session):

- *Please provide information on the traffic studies done for Main Street bicycle lanes*

After 2016 redevelopment was completed west of Bellevue Way, city traffic engineers requested the conversion of two eastbound through lanes on Main Street to one right turn lane and one through lane to improve intersection capacity for eastbound, right turning p.m. peak traffic using the intersection. This redevelopment also greatly improved walking, with wider sidewalks and crosswalks and ADA curb ramps on and across Main Street and Bellevue Way.

With only one eastbound vehicle travel lane west of Bellevue Way after the improvements, the second travel lane on Main St. east of Bellevue Way was converted to a bicycle lane for bicyclists traveling through the intersection. City staff monitor signalized intersection operations at Bellevue Way and Main Street and adjust as needed to ensure safe and efficient travel lanes operations.

After the changes, in 2017 the city also improved pedestrian facilities on the east side of Bellevue Way in addition to the added bicycle lanes on Main Street. The city replaced aging curb, gutter and sidewalk segments with upgraded curb ramps, pushbuttons, lighting, and a wider crosswalk.

- *Please provide information on the bike lanes demonstration project*

Staff is working with the Transportation Commission, the Bellevue Downtown Association, and stakeholder communities to provide a demonstration Downtown bike corridor. Public input is sought on creating an east-west route on Main Street or NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street or a north-south route on 106<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Each of these streets are identified in the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and the 2013 Downtown Transportation Plan. Bicycle facility types would vary depending on existing street conditions.

A City Hall open house was held on November 30, 2017. An on-line questionnaire has received over 700 responses. The BDA's recommendation is expected in December. The Transportation Commission will study the options and make a recommendation early in 2018, with installation of a demonstration bicycle corridor likely before summer.

The City Council directed staff to have individual briefings of Councilmembers to discuss comments, concerns, or proposed changes to the Downtown Subarea Plan CPA.

Individual Councilmember briefings November 30 – December 7, 2017

In separate briefings with Transportation and PCD staff, Councilmembers confirmed policy intent with additional comment, and made text amendment recommendations. Staff compiled all of these comments and proposed changes. These are summarized below, identified by Councilmember, and included in the draft Downtown Subarea Plan and ordinance. These comments and suggestions, in staff's opinion, do not materially change the intent of Council policy.

Councilmember Lee (November 30, 2017 briefing):

- *Regarding the proposed Economics policy labelled "LU-29" could it be expanded to include the existing and future role of Downtown Bellevue as also a regional provider of goods and services?*

***Councilmember Lee proposed the following text amendments for Council consideration:***

***S-DT-17.1.*** Promote Downtown as the primary commercial area to provide ~~local~~ goods and services to the residents and employees within the district and to the residents of surrounding neighborhoods and the Eastside Region.

- *The proposed Downtown Subarea Plan Goal statement on p.1 added new “commercial” text to the list of uses located in distinct, mixed-use neighborhoods connected by unique public places and great public infrastructure. The General subsection Goal statement on p.4 should also add “commercial” to its list of desired uses.*

***Councilmember Lee proposed the following text amendment for Council consideration:***

[Subarea Plan] Goal: To become the symbolic and functional heart of the Eastside Region through the continued location of commercial, cultural, entertainment, residential and regional uses.

- *Make sure that the pedestrian system is accessible to everyone, is connected, comfortable and safe, weather protected, and grade-separated where needed.*  
A whole section of the Downtown Subarea Plan (pp. 30-33) addresses pedestrian mobility. New narrative provides context and intent, and new policies support improvements to sidewalks, intersections, mid-block crossings and through-block connections. This ensures the city strives to make walking an easy and safe way to get around Downtown. (Separately in the Downtown Livability Initiative provisions were adopted to provide for weather protection and connections through and between buildings.)
- *The policies should not be prescriptive, but rather provide an overarching and comprehensive vision. Mid-block crossings and through-block connections are important.*  
Some policies are general and provide overarching guidance while others are focused to support action in specific situations. For example, policy provides general guidance in *S-DT-39: Design and manage the Downtown streets to provide mobility and to promote a safe attractive environment*, whereas policy is specific in *S-DT-41: Prioritize vehicular flow in the design and management of auto priority streets*. Similarly, policies S-DT-41.1 and S-DT-41.2 speak to pedestrian priority streets and transit priority streets, respectively.
- *Key to Downtown viability is accessibility. There are many ways to do this and with all modes of transportation.*  
The DTP-DSP Comprehensive Plan Amendment recommends an “all of the above” mobility strategy when it comes to providing options for people to move to, from and within Downtown. For each transportation option—driving, walking, riding a bike or taking transit—amendments are recommended that reflect Transportation Commission work on the 2013 Downtown Transportation Plan and are consistent with and supportive of the Planning Commission’s work on the recently adopted Downtown Livability Initiative.

Councilmember Zahn (December 4, 2017 briefing):

- *In the section for Downtown Curbside Uses, amend Policy 157.3 to reflect an opportunity for evolving consideration as a first step towards developing an on-street parking program.*

**Councilmember Zahn proposed the following text amendments for Council\* consideration:**

S-DT-157.3. ~~Consider d~~Developing a proposal to implement a pay for on-street parking program.

Councilmembers Robertson and Robinson (December 6, 2017 briefing):

**Councilmembers Robertson and Robinson proposed the following text amendments for Council consideration:**

- *In the section for Downtown Streets, amend the text:*  
Auto-priority streets provide a pleasant ~~pedestrian-non-motorized~~ environment, but are designed and intended to accommodate large numbers of vehicles...Other ~~and often~~ Downtown streets are said to be mode- neutral.
- *Parks and Community Services Board consulted on the need for any park policy changes (p. 16)?*  
Policy S-DT-109 regarding east-west Lake-to-Lake Trail system connections is being deleted from the Downtown Subarea Plan because it is covered in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan. Policy S-DT-114 regarding strengthening pedestrian connections between Downtown Park and other Downtown destination features is updated to reflect the buildout of these other destination features.
- *Amend Policy S-DT-39.1:*  
Blend engineering standards, traffic operations techniques and urban design components to enhance mobility and foster livability and safety on Downtown streets.
- *In the section for Downtown Mobility amend the Goal text:*  
To provide a multimodal transportation network with options for people to get around on foot, on bicycle, riding transit, or in a private or shared vehicle.
- *In the section for Downtown Transit Mobility amend the Transit Coverage text:*  
Well distributed frequent transit service routes will provide abundant access that is ~~be accessible~~ within a short walk ~~to-of~~ an estimated 97% of Downtown residents and employees in 2030 (up from 86% in 2010).
- *In the section for Downtown Transit Mobility amend the Transit Speed and Reliability text:*  
Using technology ~~and prioritizing streets for on~~ transit priority streets will help to expeditiously move bus passengers to and through Downtown Bellevue. Speed and reliability improvements along designated transit priority corridors-streets and at intersections will benefit transit passengers and overall mobility.
- *Amend Policy S-DT-135.1:*  
Locate and develop bus layover space and other transit facilities in partnership with transit agencies to support Downtown transit service while minimizing impacts on residential areas, businesses and the pedestrian, bicycle and auto environment, and complementing the Downtown district character.

- *Amend Policy S-DT-143:*  
Enhance the city's intelligent transportation system to maximize the efficient use of the Downtown streets for all types of vehicles, and to improve transit speed and reliability.
- *Amend Policy S-DT-144:*  
Provide mid-block access connections within Downtown superblocks designed in context to accommodate vehicle access to parking areas, loading/delivery access, and/or to augment safe pedestrian circulation.
- *In the section for Downtown Off-Street Parking Demand and Utilization amend the text:*  
If parking demand management does not lower the utilization rate to under 85 percent, then additions to the parking supply may be warranted.
- *In the section for Downtown Curbside Uses amend the Pay-for-Parking text:*  
The city should consider studying a~~A~~ Downtown pay-for-parking program that would utilize electronic pay stations where drivers pay a fee for the short-term use of an on-street public parking space. Parking program revenue that exceeds enforcement and maintenance costs would be invested in Downtown streetscape improvements.
- *In the section for Downtown Curbside Uses amend the Taxi Stands text:*  
Vehicle Queues for Taxis ~~Stands~~ and Other For-Hire Vehicles  
~~Taxi stands~~ Queues for taxis and other for-hire vehicles are typically established at major attractions such as hotels, convention venues, shopping/entertainment centers, and transit/light rail stations. ~~Taxi stands~~ These work as a first-come, first-served queue, with the ~~taxieab-vehicle~~ taxi at the front of the ~~line~~ queue serving the first passenger to arrive, then each ~~taxieab-vehicle~~ taxi behind it moves ahead. Currently there are no designated on-street ~~vehicle queues~~ taxi stands in Downtown Bellevue. Off-street ~~taxi stands~~ vehicle queues may be ~~be~~ are incorporated at major hotels. Temporary ~~taxi stand~~ use of the curbside for vehicle queues may be desirable during evenings and weekends to support nearby entertainment venues.

*Staff note:* The Transportation Commission also recommended developing a proposal to establish taxi stands at high demand locations (S-DT-157.3). Councilmember suggestions here to be less prescriptive in policy by using “consider” would retain the Transportation Commission’s intent while providing for a process to determine what, if any, implementation is appropriate. The term “taxi stand” is somewhat obsolete, and Councilmembers suggested “for-hire vehicles” as a broader reference to both taxis and to shared-ride services such as Uber and Lyft.

- *Amend Policy S-DT-157.6:*  
Consider d~~Designate~~ eing permanent or off-peak curbside ~~taxi stands~~ vehicle queues in high-demand locations.
- *In the section for Downtown Pedestrian Facilities amend the Through-Block Connections text:*  
~~t~~Through-block connections break up the Downtown superblocks by providing walkways between or sometimes through buildings. The Land Use Code requires that new development provide through-block connections be implemented in each superblock, as part of new development except in Old Bellevue as noted. The design of through-block connections should include public access wayfinding,

utilize commonly recognizable paving material or inlays, and incorporate accessibility according to ADA standards.

- *Amend S-DT-164.2:*  
*Install public end-of-ride bicycle facilities such as bicycle racks ~~and~~ bicycle corrals or ~~bike-share docking stations~~ to meet the demonstrated or anticipated need for personal or shared bicycles.*

*Note on S-DT-164.2: Staff is working with the Bellevue Downtown Association, the Transportation Commission and the broader community to prepare a proposal for Council consideration that would permit a private operator(s) to implement a bike sharing in Bellevue.*

#### Councilmember Briefing Comments and Questions Not Included Through-block crossings

The recommended text to the Downtown Subarea Plan came about through a recommendation by the Transportation Commission to the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC in October 2013.

Changes recommended are to provide for greater legibility and accessibility in design treatments and wayfinding of these facilities for the general public. Minor amendments were adopted as an “early win” into the Land Use Code 20.25A.060.C (Ordinance 6277, 3/3/2016).

The Land Use Code requires the development of through-block connections through development review. The name of these facilities was changed from mid-block connections to through-block connections to avoid confusion with mid-block crossings (which separately provide for pedestrians to cross streets in between signalized intersections.) The substantive addition to the Code was the requirement for wayfinding, not just where applicable. The policy absence of such direction could create ambiguity in the development review process. This may result in fewer new design treatments and wayfinding of these facilities for the general public, when demand for pedestrian access in Downtown is increasing.

#### *Downtown Curbside Uses*

Integrating pick up and drop off, loading and unloading functions for curbside space was also recommended by the Transportation Commission to the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC in October 2013.

The frequent occasion of parcel deliveries and passenger pick-up and drop off to for-hire vehicles occurs “curbside” throughout Downtown because many blocks do not have established load zones along a building frontage where a vehicle can pull out of a travel lane and make deliveries. Minor amendments were adopted as an “early win” and further amendments were adopted into the Land Use Code at 20.25A.160.D, these curbside load zones would be developed in the future as frontage improvements, to the benefit of residents and businesses in the new buildings. S-DT-157.4 and S-DT 157.5 provide direction to development review staff to integrate such curbside improvements. The policy absence of such direction could create ambiguity in the development review process. This may result in fewer new curbside spaces for loading/unloading, when demand for such spaces is increasing.

#### **ADOPTION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS**

To be consistent with past City Council direction, action on the 2017 amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are considered by Ordinance, together with the action on a separate general Ordinance covering the amending actions to the Comprehensive Plan itself.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

If approved, this Ordinance becomes effective on December 21, 2017.

**OPTIONS**

1. Approve Ordinance adopting the Downtown Transportation Plan – Downtown Subarea Plan (DTP-DSP, 17-120230 AC) 2017 amendments to the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Bellevue, pursuant to Chapter 36.70A RCW (Growth Management Act, as amended) and Chapter 35A.63 RCW; and establishing an effective date.
2. Direct staff to modify the proposed amendment pursuant to Council direction and adopt the amended Ordinance.
3. Do not approve the proposed amendment.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends Option 1.

**MOTION(S)**

1. Move to approve Ordinance 6396 adopting the Downtown Transportation Plan – Downtown Subarea Plan (DTP-DSP, 17-120230 AC) 2017 amendments to the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Bellevue, pursuant to Chapter 36.70A RCW (Growth Management Act, as amended) and Chapter 35A.63 RCW; and establishing an effective date.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Proposed Ordinance No. 6396