

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

May 23, 2019
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Wu, Commissioners Bishop, Chirls, Lampe, Marciante, Teh

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Woosley

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Franz Loewenherz, Chris Iverson, Ming-Bang Shyu, Andreas Piller, Mike Ingram, Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Lee

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Wu who presided.

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Chirls, who participated via telephone; Commissioner Marciante who participated via telephone until her arrival at 6:55 p.m.; and Commissioner Woosley, who was excused.

A motion to allow Commissioner Chirls to participate remotely was made by Commissioner Lampe. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Teh and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion allow Commissioner Marciante to participate remotely was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Teh and the motion carried unanimously.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe.

Commissioner Chirls noted that his absence from the May 9 Transportation Commission meeting resulted in a 3-3 tie vote on the Transportation Facilities Plan. He moved to amend the agenda to include under Unfinished Business a vote on the Transportation Facilities Plan under. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante.

Commissioner Chirls read from the Commission bylaws to substantiate readdressing a tie vote.

Commissioner Lampe asked if staff concurred with Commissioner Chirls. Principal Transportation Planner Kevin McDonald said it was his understanding that any member of the Commission could bring forward a motion to vote on an item that had previously been voted on resulting in a tie.

The motion to amend the agenda carried unanimously.

A motion to amend the agenda to add under Unfinished Business an item to discuss seeking from the Council direction about developing a transportation master plan was made by Chair Wu. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bishop.

Commissioner Bishop said he supported amending the agenda because he had some specific language he wanted to have discussed at the appropriate time. He suggested, however, that the intention of the Chair appeared to be to talk about a transportation master plan as part of the vote on the TFP.

Mr. McDonald suggested the latter could be an item embedded in the transmittal memo to the Council, seeking their direction to develop a transportation master plan.

The motion to amend the agenda carried unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Will Knedlik, PO Box 99, Kirkland, spoke as president of the Washington State Good Roads and Transportation Association, an organization that was founded in 1889 for the purpose of developing multimodal transportation before the first car arrived in the state. The organization was a major proponent of the 18th amendment which established a state constitutional trust for certain state funds, mainly the gas tax, that are dedicated exclusively for highway purposes. In 1983 the city of Bellevue applied for funds from the state constitutional trust for Main Street. If the city intends to make changes to the operations of Main Street that undermine the notion of using the trust funds exclusively for highway purposes, which would include bicycles, the city will need to be prepared to return the previously borrowed trust fund monies to the state in real or adjusted funds. At the time the city borrowed the funds, it signed a contract indicating it would in fact maintain Main Street for highway purposes forever. If the Commission intends to represent to the City Council that they should violate the state constitution, it should be made clear as part of the transmittal memo. Main Street cannot be converted to anything less than full highway purposes for anything less than a full refund to the state constitutional trust, and there will not be a violation by the Commission or the city of its contractual obligations to uphold the constitution of the state.

Mr. Bob Pishu with Kemper Development Company, 575 Bellevue Square, pointed out that at the May 9 meeting of the Transportation Commission it was stated that the May 23 meeting of the Transportation Commission would focus on Vision Zero and the bike share pilot, and that the Commission would not address the Main Street issue until June. Given that the Main Street issue was the sole issue on the agenda for the current meeting, time to review the data and the proposals and to talk with businesses along Main Street that will be heavily affected has been cut out. The switch is concerning and does not allow the public adequate time to analyze the proposal for what is a major east-west route that also crosses the freeway. He proposed holding off any discussion of Main Street to allow the businesses, the public and the neighborhoods the opportunity to weigh in.

Mr. Brad Haverstein, 110 110th Street, said as a bicycle commuter, bicycle infrastructure is very important to him. He said the bicycle lane pilot project on 108th Avenue NE has made a big difference in terms of riding comfort and safety. He said before the project was initiated he did not commute by bike, and added that without the project he likely would not have chosen to commute by bicycle. He urged the Commission to take up the issue of route options. The Department of Transportation has done a very thorough analysis of the kinds of impacts that will be seen.

Creating a more complete bicycle network will greatly enhance the usefulness of the demonstration project.

Mr. Mark Baraka, director of government affairs for REI, 6750 S. 228th Street, Kent, noted that the organization would within the next year move to the Spring District. He spoke in support of the work the Commission and the Council have done to date to increase access to safe cycling throughout Bellevue. He said he was in particular very pleased to see the work done on the north-south route along 108th Avenue NE. He noted that the manager of the Bellevue REI was present in the audience and said the organization is excited to be opening and operating boathouses at Enatai and Meydenbauer Bay and pointed out that parking at those locations is difficult to obtain. One of the best ways to access some of Bellevue's outdoor activities is and will be by other modes of transportation, including bicycles. Change is hard but the work being done by the Commission and the city to accommodate change is appreciated. The city will not survive as a wholly car-centric city, thus there is a clear need to provide multimodal travel options. It is clear that transportation is a hot button issue with passions running high on all sides, but the Commission should continue to be forward looking in planning to make Bellevue a city of the future. Bellevue's willingness to look to the future is one of the main reasons REI chose to place its headquarters in the Spring District.

Ms. Pamela Johnson, 3741 122nd Avenue NE, agreed with the need to focus on the future. She said she wondered how close the future is given how many open issues there currently are. The city will not change fast but it needs to prepare for changes. The BelRed area is not yet built out, nor is the Wilburton area. Those are the main areas around which people will want to be biking. New routes are needed and they will need to be accessible to everyone. Currently, bicycle facilities are not accessible to everyone. She noted that getting around by bike from her house is not practical for her given the elevation gain. In Copenhagen, however, travel by bicycle is the fastest way to get around. The plans for bicycle facilities that have been shared so far do not show that the fastest way to get around will be by bicycle. It will take much better facilities to effect a social change.

Ms. Claire Martini spoke on behalf of the Cascade Bicycle Club, 7787 67th Avenue, Seattle, said it is known by the data that the 108th Avenue NE demonstration project was a success. The data shows minimal effect to vehicles, that the street is now safer for everyone, and that people on buses, in cars and walking prefer the new street configuration. Those who ride bikes certainly prefer it. The robust analysis demonstrates how bikeways are a benefit to the downtown. The data shows on 108th Avenue NE and across the United States that bikeways show no negative impacts to businesses, and in fact they show net positives. Bicycle facilities are one thing companies look for when choosing to relocate to Bellevue. As Bellevue grows, adding more vehicles will not be possible, but adding more bicycle facilities will mean people will have options to just driving a car. It is urgent that the Commission make a recommendation to the Council given the regional investments that are coming online by 2023 for which connections will need to be ready on day one. The city is behind in meeting its 2009 plan goals for east-west and north-south routes. There no real reason to not maintain momentum toward realizing the goals. The groundwork has been laid with the 108th Avenue NE project and the lessons learned should be applied to other projects. There is also an urgency to assure that streets are safe, efficient and livable for all. In Bellevue, people who are walking and biking are overrepresented in fatalities and serious injuries. Whether or not Vision Zero is on the agenda, it is underscoring and fundamental to the work of ensuring that streets work for those getting around by bike or on foot. One death is too many. The long-planned east-west connection plan should be advanced.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS

AND COMMISSIONS, AND MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Councilmember Lee thanked the Chair Wu and the Commission for the recommendation presented to the Council regarding the 108th Avenue NE demonstration program, and the proposal to continue with tests on Main Street. He said the Council received the recommendation with great appreciation for the deliberate discussion of the Commission. He noted that Mayor Chelminiak commented both publically and privately how impressed he was with the work of the Commission.

5. STAFF REPORTS – None
6. PUBLIC HEARING – None
7. STUDY SESSION

A. Main Street Bike Lane Demonstration

Principal Transportation Planner Franz Loewenherz said he was seeking the consensus of the Commission on a potential Main Street bike lane project. He urged the Commission to limit its discussion to the only new item associated with the discussion topic, namely the new alternative 2.1. He said Chair Wu joined staff on May 13 in presenting the Council with an update on the 108th Avenue NE demonstration project. At that meeting the Council directed the Commission to evaluate a potential Main Street bike lane project and to then follow up with an update to the Council. He stressed that the Council was not asking for a recommendation from the Commission. The Mayor was very clear that the Council has provided the Commission with ample policy guidance and that it has entrusted the decision making in the process to the Commission.

Mr. Loewenherz commented that three Commissioners joined staff earlier in the week for a discussion of Topic 1, the intersection of Main Street and Bellevue Way. He said the recommendation of staff was to focus on what is new and not incorporated in the memo.

Commissioner Marciante agreed that the appropriate approach would be to simply present the new information. Where additional clarification is needed, she said she assumed staff would be able to provide it during the discussion.

Commissioner Bishop suggested the Commission should in fact spend time discussing the various topics and avoid simply brushing them by. The Council brought the topics forward and asked the Commission to look at them. The Commission should dig into the details of what could be a very important decision to change the whole concept of how downtown Bellevue is dealt with.

Chair Wu directed staff to provide a summary of the points and allow for asking questions as they arise.

With regard to Main Street and Bellevue Way, Mr. Loewenherz stressed the importance of understanding what has occurred at the intersection over time. He noted that in 2016 there was some rechannelization work resulting from development review work done for a project in Old Bellevue. Two eastbound through lanes on Main Street were converted to one right-turn lane and one through lane as recommended by the traffic engineering team based on the movements observed. Given that there was no need for two receiving lanes on the east leg of the intersection, in 2017 as part of a broader pedestrian and bicycle enhancement project, a bike lane was created through the intersection to the opposing side.

Mr. Loewenherz said in the communications received, including from Commissioners Bishop and Woosley, it was noted that the table reflecting results from the concurrency report for 2016, 2017 and 2018 indicated a worsening of conditions in the V/C ratio. The messaging conveyed was that the 2016 and 2017 reconfiguration of the intersection was the factor contributing to the degradation. There were in fact two contributing factors, the first being changes made to the LOS tool and the way V/C is calculated at the direction of the Commission. The modification was made to account for real world conditions, specifically the pedestrian volumes. Where there are a lot of pedestrians moving through an intersection, the vehicle capacity of the intersection is impacted. From the 2017 count year that informs the 2018 concurrency report, it was observed that there were 242 pedestrian crossings, which in turn reduced the intersection vehicle capacity by four percent. Given the addition of the pedestrian count lookup, the numbers were rerun in order to compare apples to apples. With the updated LOS tool for the years 2017 and 2018, and with the reconfiguration of the intersection, the concurrency report no longer returned a figure of 0.74, rather it was 0.84.

Commissioner Bishop pointed out that by adding pedestrians into the LOS calculation, the resulting four percent reduction in the capacity triggers a two-level jump in LOS from C to D+.

Mr. Loewenherz stated that had the pedestrian factor in the previous number of 0.74 been accounted for, the increase would have been more gradual to 0.84. When the numbers are run for the before and after conditions in 2017, it can be seen that the changes made to the intersection resulted in a more favorable V/C LOS when compared to prior conditions. The main contributing factor is the significant increase of vehicle volume in the westbound left-turn movement from 295 vehicles in 2016 to 411 in 2017. Had the reconfiguration not been implemented, the intersection would operate at a lower level of service for vehicles than it does currently.

Transportation engineer Chris Iverson stated that the initial report showed an increase in the vehicle delay at the intersection of Main Street and 108th Avenue NE with the alternatives that were presented. Staff agreed to look to see if there were other alternatives available to reduce the delay. He called attention to the east side of the 108th Avenue NE intersection and pointed out that due to some excess roadway width, there is the ability to rechannelize and align the lanes with any bike lane project that would go on the west side. That would present clarity for the experience of drivers by not having to make a quick weave.

Commissioner Bishop asked if the bus stop on the east side would remain under any of the alternatives. Mr. Iverson said it would remain unchanged no matter what is done. There are no bike elements proposed east of 108th Avenue NE.

Referring to the hatched area on the graphic showing the west leg of the intersection, Commissioner Marciante asked if the depiction was of the actual alignment that would show on the street. Mr. Iverson said the design has not been finalized. The intent is to make things clear for eastbound drivers, and what is shown hatched could be designed to serve as a bus pull away area.

Mr. Iverson said under Alternative 1 one eastbound and one westbound lane would be repurposed between 105th Avenue NE and 108th Avenue NE yielding a westbound bike lane protected by a parking zone and a buffer area going eastbound. Under Alternative 2 there would be two westbound lanes through the entire segment, and there would be buffered bike lanes in both directions, though the westbound bike lane would lose its buffer west of 107th Avenue NE. Alternative 2.1 includes the addition of an eastbound right-turn pocket at 108th Avenue which would reduce the intersection total delay. The tradeoff would be minimum width bike lanes in both

directions, and the travel lanes would also be fairly narrow at ten feet and ten and a half feet. The alternative does provide for increased vehicle efficiency for the intersection. The bike lanes would be striped and there would be no buffer.

Commissioner Bishop asked if there are any ten-foot lanes currently in the downtown. Mr. Iverson noted that there are a handful of them on 108th Avenue NE. Bellevue Way between Main Street and NE 2nd Street also has ten-foot and ten-and-a-half-foot lanes.

Mr. Iverson shared with the Commissioners the estimated evening peak vehicle travel times for each alternative. He noted that under Alternative 1 travel time could be expected to increase in both the eastbound and westbound directions. Under Alternative 2, there would essentially be no change in travel time for either direction. Alternative 2.1 would yield no change in the westbound direction but would reduce travel time in the eastbound direction. For the morning peak, there would be essentially no change in the westbound direction for each of the alternatives, while for the eastbound direction there would be almost negligible increases in the travel time. At the intersection level for 108th Avenue NE/Main Street, the vehicle delay is 17.6 seconds under existing conditions. Under Alternative 1 that would increase to 35.5 seconds. Alternative 2 would increase delay to 24.5 seconds, and Alternative 2.1 would increase delay to 22.5 seconds.

Commissioner Bishop asked why the switch was made from measuring intersections in terms of their V/C ratio to using total intersection delay. Mr. Iverson said the V/C metric and the microsimulation approach involve two different analyses. Mr. Loewenherz said the V/C figures are derived from the BKR model while the intersection delay figures are determined by Sim Traffic. The approach is consistent with how staff have been sharing information with the Commission to date on the alternatives. Both travel times and seconds of delay per vehicle have been shown for both the morning and afternoon peak periods along with the level of service grade. Sim Traffic allows for a more granular level of analysis for assessing alternatives.

Commissioner Lampe noted that the westbound left-turn lane at the intersection of 108th Avenue NE and Main Street is an important feature for those who live in the neighborhood there, particularly Surrey Downs which lost access to 112th Avenue NE. He asked what the average delay is during the peak hour for the westbound left-turn lane onto 108th Avenue NE under both current conditions and Alternative 2.1. Mr. Iverson said he did not have the numbers with him but pointed out that consideration is being given to adding a flashing yellow arrow at the intersection to allow for a protected westbound to southbound phase. The analysis showed a decrease in travel time for the westbound to southbound leg which could be improved by adding a flashing yellow.

Mr. Iverson pointed out that for the 106th Avenue NE/Main Street intersection, each alternative would yield a slight increase in travel time, with Alternative 1 adding the most and Alternative 2.1 the least. For the intersection of Bellevue Way/Main Street, Alternatives 1 and 2.1 would add minimal travel time, while alternative 2 would yield a minimal decrease.

Turning to the discussion topic of NE 2nd Street, Mr. Loewenherz explained that during the Council's May 13 deliberations the suggestion was made that NE 2nd Street be considered as an alternative east-west connection. From a policy standpoint, Main Street is clearly identified in the city's Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan as a bicycle priority corridor, and it is part of the Lake to Lake trail. NE 2nd Street, while also an important part of the bicycle network in the plan, it does not have the same policy priority, partly because of network connectivity. Main Street offers a much more direct connection. A deviation to use NE 2nd Street would entail an additional 3800 feet, or 40 percent longer, to get through the downtown. With regard to bicycle facility comfort, he said the volume of travel on NE 2nd Street as compared to Main Street makes the

latter the less stressful route. There is a pronounced difference in the rider experience between Main Street and NE 2nd Street, with Main Street having a much more gradual terrain to navigate.

Commissioner Chirls said as a cyclist who has ridden on both Main Street and NE 2nd Street many times, he would much rather ride on Main Street. The grade going up NE 2nd Street comes close to double digits at its steepest, while the grade on Main Street never goes higher than four percent. Only avid cyclists in excellent condition will make it up NE 2nd Street without getting off their bikes.

Commissioner Bishop asked the staff to produce as part of the report specific information about the grade differences between NE 2nd Street and Main Street.

With regard to lane repurposing, Mr. Loewenherz said it would be necessary to use one eastbound lane on Main Street between 105th Avenue NE and 108th Avenue NE. For NE 2nd Street, none of the lanes between Bellevue Way SE and 112th Avenue NE would need to be repurposed. However, there would be a need to repurpose some westbound right-turn lanes at Bellevue Way NE and 106th Avenue NE.

Main Street has no on-street parking, so there would be no parking impacts. For NE 2nd Street, an estimated 25 on-street parking spaces, or 25 percent of the existing total, would need to be removed.

There is construction activity on both of the corridors. The Alamo Manhattan II project on Main Street east of 106th Avenue NE intersection is nearing completion and the associated staging area will be removed. Other construction projects on the two routes are at various stages of completion.

The extensive outreach undertaken in 2017-2018 included keypad polling, an open house and an online questionnaire confirmed 108th Avenue NE as the priority route. Main Street came up as the next-highest ranked priority in terms of points received, followed by NE 2nd Street.

Moving on to the discussion topic relative to I-405, Mr. Loewenherz said the question posed was whether or not there are implications for the Bellevue-Renton project as it relates to implementing bicycle lanes on Main Street, given the uncertainty around interchange improvements. He said there is a lot of uncertainty currently about which of the locations will move forward, but there is also a long lead time in terms of when a decision will be made and when the project will come into play. In the opinion of staff, the I-405 related project is not an impediment to moving forward with a relatively low-cost rapid implementation bicycle lane project on Main Street between Bellevue Way and 108th Avenue NE. The project could be completed during the summer of 2019.

Commissioner Bishop said it was his understanding that WSDOT would be tearing down the Main Street bridge starting in 2020, possibly as early as fall 2019. The bridge would then be under some kind of temporary construction for a period of a year or more. That will impact the Lake to Lake trail and everything associated with Main Street and access to the downtown. The other issue is that the Council has approved and the staff are working on a downtown access to southbound I-405 analysis. That will impact all proposals for Main Street.

Chair Wu asked about the status of the access plan analysis. Mr. Loewenherz pointed out that the memo noted the construction time period for the Main Street bridge. Senior Transportation System Analyst Ming-Bang Shyu said analysis project timeline runs through the end of the year. A report will be ready in early 2020. The focus will be on working with WSDOT to evaluate all scenarios.

Commissioner Bishop said the I-405 master plan shows a half diamond interchange at NE 2nd Street and a bridge that does not currently exist. He said the staff analysis is intended to look closely at whether NE 2nd Street or Main Street will provide the best access to I-405.

Mr. Loewenherz pointed out that the project termini is 108th Avenue NE, not all the way over to the bridge structure. That is why the agenda memo states that the I-405 related projects are not impediments with moving forward with a rapid build option.

In regard to the discussion topic relative to assessment, Mr. Loewenherz said the question raised was whether or not the same level of assessment undertaken with the 108th Avenue NE corridor should be launched in implementing the Main Street bike lane project. He said the position of the staff is that such an assessment is not needed. The staff do plan to monitor traffic operations including travel time along the corridor and collisions. Bluetooth travel time collection hardware will be installed at four locations along Main Street and thus it will be possible to report out on that over time.

Commissioner Bishop asked if the reporting will include bike counts. Mr. Loewenherz said funding to implement thermal sensors has not been committed.

Mr. Loewenherz said there has been a sentiment that the series of bike lane projects being added to the system represents a significant impact to the total lane miles in downtown Bellevue. He said staff have estimated that in the downtown there are 41 lane miles. The 108th Avenue NE and Main Street projects together will bring the total to 40.3 lane miles.

Commissioner Bishop observed from the agenda memo that the 108th Avenue NE bike lane project between Main Street and NE 12th Street was two miles long. He said he had always understood that Bellevue is based on 16 blocks per mile, yet it is only 12 blocks between Main Street and NE 12th Street which multiplied by two would only be a mile and a half. Mr. Loewenherz allowed that the numbers are rounded but stressed the key number to focus on is what will get repurposed. Of the bike lane project, 0.5 miles are repurposed.

Transportation Planner Andreas Piller explained that the two mile estimate is a lane mileage estimate. It counts miles on both sides of the street cumulative. He added that 108th Avenue NE previously entailed an unbalanced cross section with an additional southbound lane. To add it all up, there are three-quarters of a mile times two plus the additional southbound lane for portions of the corridor, yielding a total of two lane miles on 108th Avenue NE previously.

With regard to the discussion topic relative to legislation, Mr. Loewenherz said an interest was expressed in understanding the implications of the new Vulnerable user/Safe passing legislation on vehicle capacity. He said the interpretation of the staff is that under the new law, if Main Street were not reconfigured with a buffered bike lane, drivers would be required to move over into the next lane to accommodate people riding bicycles.

Commissioner Lampe asked what that implies for the rest of the bike lanes in Bellevue, including sharrows. Mr. Loewenherz said where there are two travel lanes and no designated bicycle lane, drivers must move to the inside lane to pass cyclists.

Commissioner Bishop said the actual impact of the new law will depend on the number of bikes per day that must be accommodated. That is why there is a need to know what the bicycle facility utilization rates will be. Mr. Loewenherz said the only cyclists usage data available for the corridor is what was drawn from the bike share GPS study. The Council simply asked what the

implications of the new law were. Staff were not asked to model what the resulting implications would be based on the number of cyclists traversing the corridor.

Mr. Loewenherz sought from the Commission consensus on the potential Main Street bike lane project between Bellevue Way and 108th Avenue NE. He allowed that the draft transmittal memo was in need of significant modifications, including the fact that it said the Commission would provide a recommendation to the Council. The Council is not in fact seeking a recommendation from the Commission, and staff will be providing the Council with an update on the decision of the Commission.

Commissioner Bishop pointed out that the second paragraph of the memo references the March 28 Commission meeting and suggested it really should reference the May 23 meeting. Mr. Loewenherz agreed.

Commissioner Bishop announced his intention to vote against the proposal. First, it is premature given that the Commission has not heard yet any robust discussion from the community regarding the Main Street bike project. There has been clear input from the bicycle community, but nothing has been heard from the general business community. The Bellevue Downtown Association is slated to discuss the subject in a couple of weeks. He suggested the issue was being rushed through to avoid appropriate community dialog on what represents a significant change in the philosophy of how transportation is done in downtown Bellevue. There is no great timeline that says the issue must be concluded right away. Second, the planning effort undertaken by the modeling staff will open up the possibility of lots of different ways to think about to address multimodal traffic flow throughout the south end of the downtown. The proposal will create a precedent that will be difficult to overcome. Over the next six to ten months the city will have a golden opportunity to evaluate the overall planning thinking about access from the downtown to the regional system. Third, the current WSDOT plan regarding the Main Street bridge is to rebuild the structure with four travel lanes and a 14-foot-wide multipurpose trail on the south side. The bicycle community has complained loudly about the same feature on the NE 12th Street bridge. Time should be taken to think things through clearly. Fourth, there is the issue raised by Mr. Knedlik about the use of specifically protected gas tax monies used to build Main Street. The Commission at least should have a legal opinion offered.

Commissioner Lampe thanked the staff for their excellent and thorough work on the proposal. He said the challenges for him were similar to those voiced during the discussion on the TFP and the fact that the forecasts showed a number of failing intersections in the system. He noted that the intersection of Main Street and 112th Avenue NE currently has an LOS of 0.95, but by 2030 it is forecasted to be at 1.15. At least one adjacent neighborhood has weighed in as being opposed to the project. It would be worthwhile to conduct some more analysis about whether NE 2nd Street or Main Street is the best option. Given that there is no real urgency, the best thing to do would be to take a step back. The changes that have come about in the city recently, including the announcement by Amazon to bring a large number of employees to the downtown, will stress the transportation system. He said he would vote against the proposal.

Commissioner Marciante thanked the staff for their transparency and for explaining difficult technical concepts. She noted that some opposing views had been heard from the community and from some Commissioners. She said the city has committed to providing facilities that will allow for bike riders to safely get around the downtown area. That means there needs to be a corridor across the downtown. The plan does not call for giving every corridor over to bicycles, rather it revolves around choosing the most appropriate locations. Along with safe passage will come continuity. She said it did appear as though there are alternatives for how to go about providing

safe corridors. It would be great if there were sufficient funding to construct an elevated guideway across the city, but the city is not in that position. It would also be wonderful if the city could make significant investments toward increasing overall capacity of the city's roadways to allow for free-flowing traffic, but there are constraints to the physical environment. Development continues to add trips to the system, so there will be more congestion. Even so, that does not remove the city's commitment to provide safe facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. She said in navigating priorities she would always choose safety for the most vulnerable communities. There are a number of community members who have indicated in their communications that bicycle lanes deteriorate the intersection of Main Street and Bellevue Way. The claim that bicycles are deteriorating the downtown capacity is a misrepresentation. The staff have thoroughly investigated the matter and found that the capacity reduction at that intersection is based on a completely separate element, namely construction of the light rail line. The staff should by all means look into the risks associated with allocating space to bicycle facilities in line with city policy, but that should not stop the Commission from making decisions. With regard to timing and the degree to which the community has been engaged, she said it has been claimed that the Commission is rushing too quickly toward making a decision before everyone's voice can be heard. The fact is that the original process involved a number of community engagement processes during which the Bellevue Downtown Association said it wants both the 108th Avenue NE and Main Street facilities on the strength of their importance to downtown businesses. The Commission is not in fact rushing too fast given the level of input to date from the public. The most important thing is the commitment to provide safe bicycle infrastructure, which should be given priority over travel time delay.

Commissioner Teh asked if the evaluation of the Main Street proposal was ever accelerated. Mr. Loewenherz said on May 13 the City Council directed the Commission to investigate a bike lane on Main Street. That guidance was the impetus for the evaluation.

Commissioner Teh added his appreciation for the detailed analysis offered by staff. He said what it all comes down to is balancing the constraints. There is the fear that bike lanes will increase congestion. He said he trusted the analysis of the staff and suggested that additional analysis would not gain anything. The multimodal aspects of the transportation system must be balanced with vehicular traffic, especially as growth continues. Building more roadway capacity will result in more cars using the streets, impacting the overall flow. Congestion is not going to go away. All alternative methods of travel must be considered. The argument that the proposed project will not fix future congestion problems is true, but incremental decisions to chip away at the problem need to be made given that there are limited resources. He said he would support the project.

Commissioner Chirls allowed that he was tempted to delay for the reasons stated by others, but also allowed that additional study was unlikely to yield any additional data that would substantively change what is already known. The issue has been discussed many times by many different groups since 2009 when the original plan was adopted to have east-west and north-south bicycle routes through the city. The issue is clearly an emotional one, but that is why it is all the more important to look at the data. The more important a decision, the more important it is to quantify the different factors involved. From a general data perspective, just looking at cities around the world shows that congestion problems cannot be solved by increasing capacity for automobiles. Congestion problems are solved by providing alternative modes of transportation. That is the prime issue and it involves an emotional and major transition. He thanked staff for doing the thorough analysis that shows a more connected route for bicycles can be provided via Main Street without impacting automobile traffic to a significant degree. On that basis, it is time for the Commission to make a decision and to implement the proposal as quickly as possible so the results can be seen and any necessary refinements can be made. He said he would be voting for one of

the alternatives.

Chair Wu said she favored giving the Bellevue Downtown Association the opportunity to weigh in with their views. The organization has many members in the downtown and it would only be fair to hear from them first. She said she also did not want to see the proposed project preclude any scenarios from the access analysis. Development on the south side has not happened yet and the city needs to be creative in terms of what can be done for better bicycle facilities. She said she would be voting against supporting the project.

A motion to approve the Main Street bike project and to select one of the alternatives was made by Commissioner Chirls. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Teh.

Commissioner Marciante proposed adding language about the decision being subject to the agreement of the Bellevue Downtown Association relative to the chosen alternative. Commissioner Chirls said he would accept the suggestion as a friendly amendment.

Commissioner Chirls withdrew his motion and Commissioner Marciante withdrew her proposed amendment.

A motion to move forward and agree on the Main Street project, subject to the approval of the Bellevue Downtown Association, at which point the alternatives should be considered and voted on.

Commissioner Marciante said her desire was to vote on the appropriate alternative given the information that is in hand. If there is agreement on an alternative, the vote of the Commission could be made subject to concurrence by the Bellevue Downtown Association.

Commissioner Chirls said if the Bellevue Downtown Association does not approve, it does not matter which alternative the Commission chooses. The Bellevue Downtown Association should indicate it wants to move forward with the Main Street project before the Commission considers the alternatives.

Chair Wu sought a second to the motion made by Commissioner Chirls.

Commissioner Marciante sought clarification before allowing Commissioner Chirls to restate his motion. She said it was her understanding that the Bellevue Downtown Association had already approved moving forward with the Main Street bike lane. That was part of the input they previously provided. What they have not seen is the alignment. The Commission could choose to wait to hear from them on the alignment, but they have already agreed there should be a bike lane on Main Street between Bellevue Way and 108th Avenue NE.

Mr. Loewenherz clarified that during the Bellevue Downtown Association's transportation committee's deliberation there was a motion made to package together 108th Avenue NE and Main Street. That was not what ultimately came forward from the Bellevue Downtown Association board, however.

Commissioner Chirls said his motion was to move forward with the Main Street to 108th Avenue NE bike project, contingent on approval from the Bellevue Downtown Association, and to discuss and vote on the alternative if approval is received from the Bellevue Downtown Association. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante.

Commissioner Bishop said he opposed approving such a convoluted motion, especially a motion that makes a decision made by the Commission dependent on an outside organization. He said that would be totally inappropriate. He said he continued to favor delaying making a decision at all until hearing from the Bellevue Downtown Association. He said he would vote against the motion. Commissioner Lampe concurred.

The motion failed 4-1, with Commissioner Lampe casting the lone vote in favor. Commissioner Marciante did not vote.

A motion to delay making a decision on the Main Street bike lane project to the next Commission meeting to allow the Bellevue Downtown Association time to weigh in, was made by Commissioner Chirls. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Mr. Loewenherz offered the Commission some timeline considerations to review. He said staff had been invited to join the Bellevue Downtown Association's transportation committee for a conversation on the Main Street bike lane alternatives. That group, however, is not the group that would ultimately develop a recommendation; that would fall to the Bellevue Downtown Association board, thus there is no guarantee that an official recommendation from the Bellevue Downtown Association will be in hand for the Commission's June 13 meeting. He said the issue could be placed on the Commission's calendar for June 27 and still be in time for the July 8 City Council briefing.

Chair Wu said she would prefer not to seek a vote on the issue until much later, and would prefer to not see the project implemented during the summer of 2019, allowing for time to see how everything will work together.

A motion to delay making a motion on the project until the Commission's July 25 meeting was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Teh.

Commissioner Lampe questioned the rationale behind putting forward a firm date for taking action. Commissioner Bishop said he did not want to see the Commission put off making a decision, but did want to see all interested parties be allowed enough time to weigh in. He allowed that there was nothing magical about the July 25 date.

Commissioner Lampe said his inclination was to leave it open ended.

Commissioner Chirls agreed. He suggested allowing staff to drive the timing of the next discussion. He recommended using feedback from the Bellevue Downtown Association and others as the primary factor in determining when the Commission should again discuss the issue.

Commissioner Teh said was exactly what the staff recommended in the proposed timeline. He agreed with the notion of having a date certain for making a decision; to leave it open ended will invite a free for all.

Commissioner Bishop allowed that there are two Bellevue Downtown Association board meetings prior to July 25.

Commissioner Marciante pointed out that the WSDOT study will not be done by July 25. If a date is chosen, it should be the date on which to make a decision. If no decision is going to be made, no date should be chosen.

Commissioner Bishop amended his motion to leave open the timeline for making a decision. The revised motion carried 4-2, with Chair Wu and Commissioners Bishop, Lampe and Chirls voting for, and Commissioners Marciante and Teh voting against.

((There was no motion to amend the main motion, and accordingly no second to amend the main motion. Commissioner Bishop acted unilaterally to amend his motion on the floor.))

The main motion as amended carried 4-2, with Chair Wu and Commissioners Bishop, Lampe and Chirls voting for, and Commissioners Marciante and Teh voting against.

8. DRAFT MINUTES REVIEW/APPROVAL – None

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Transportation Facilities Plan

A motion to support the TFP as proposed by staff was made by Commissioner Chirls. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante.

Commissioner Bishop proposed amending the motion to include in the communication to the Council an amended version of Chair Wu's email to the Commissioners earlier in the week. He first wanted to include the language that says the result of the current TFP DSEIS analysis is a transportation system that is projected to fail the Traffic Standards Code level of service standards by failing 37 of 99 system intersections, and three of 14 Mobility Management Areas, putting the city in violation of the Traffic Standards Code. He said that statement is fact and not opinion.

Senior Transportation Planner Michael Ingram responded that the final statement regarding putting the city in violation of the Traffic Standards Code is not correct. Commissioner Bishop argued that the results of the EIS shows a system that has 37 failed intersections and three failed MMAs. That puts the city in violation of the Traffic Standards Code. Mr. Ingram said that cannot be said. The Traffic Standards Code speaks to current performance, and for purposes of development and concurrency it looks six years out. It cannot be extrapolated out into the future to say the city is or is not in compliance with the Traffic Standards Code. Commissioner Bishop said the document clearly indicates the city is headed toward violating the Traffic Standards Code.

Commissioner Marciante pointed out that any failure would require a number of situations to occur, including development and assumptions in the projections coming to be true. The fact is that any modeled scenario is unlikely to occur exactly as projected. Making an assertion that the city will be out of compliance with the Traffic Standards Code way out in the future gives more power to the projection than is valid. The projection is only a tool for helping to understand future conditions, but it is not an assurance of a future condition. Mr. Ingram said that was a fair statement.

Commissioner Bishop also agreed the statement was fair but continued to argue that the planning document, that has gone through a rigorous analysis, says the system will fail by 2030. He said he wanted that highlighted for the benefit of the Council. He said he would agree to language stating the projection puts the city in potential violation of the code.

Chair Wu pointed out that no valid motion to amend the main motion was on the table.

Commissioner Lampe said he was persuaded by the lack of staff support for Commissioner

Bishop's amendment language. He said as such he would not be able to second such an amendment.

Commissioner Bishop moved to amend the main motion by revising Chair Wu's first bullet to have it read "The Transportation Commission recommends to Council that the city develop a transportation infrastructure system and plans of improvements and implementation that is consistent with the city of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan in the 30-year horizon." Commissioner Lampe seconded the motion to amend.

Mr. McDonald clarified that there is no 30-year horizon for the Comprehensive Plan. At the farthest, the Comprehensive Plan looks out to 2035.

A motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes was made by Commissioner Lampe. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bishop and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Chirls said he did not see the proposal as an amendment, rather it should be taken up as a separate motion. The issues of planning are something worthy of much more thought and discussion. While related to the TFP, it is not directly a function of approving the TFP that was proposed by staff. A separate motion should be used to address the topic, which should not be confused with approval of the current TFP. He said he would vote against the proposed amendment.

Commissioner Bishop said he was seeking to amend language used by Chair Wu in which she included the phrase "ultimate transportation infrastructure system." He noted that there is no tool available for evaluating an ultimate buildout of the Land Use Code. He said his intent was to put a horizon on the statement. If 2035 is as far as the Comprehensive Plan looks out, that is the year that should be highlighted.

Mr. McDonald commented that the Comprehensive Plan is updated every ten years. It was last updated in 2015. Commissioner Bishop said that is only five more years than the TFP analysis. What is really needed is a transportation master plan for the city. The Commission should work toward that end and should use the TFP failed system analysis to push in that direction. The city deserves it. There are a number of siloed plans that should be integrated into a transportation master plan.

Commissioner Chirls said he completely agreed with the need for a transportation master plan. He argued, however, that the way to get there is not by threatening the Council. A separate and positive statement should be drafted, one that is not confused with the TFP and one that does not use the TFP as leverage, and forwarded to the Council. The TFP should be voted on completely separately, after which the Commission should do all it can to stress the importance of developing a transportation master plan. He said he could see no reason why the Council would oppose going in that direction.

Chair Wu said the proposed TFP is the best it can be at the current time. It certainly exposes areas of concern. She also agreed with Commissioner Bishop about the number of transportation plans that are siloed and his call for folding them into a transportation master plan, but she also agreed with Commissioner Chirls that the issue should be taken up in a separate recommendation to the City Council.

Commissioner Marciante said there was clear agreement around the table in favor of developing a transportation master plan. She agreed it should be addressed separate from the TFP.

Commissioner Bishop said he appreciated the work of the Chair earlier in the week to draft a proposal that could bring the Commission to a consensus vote on the TFP. He said what she wrote represents a very good compromise, but it needs to be tweaked to some degree.

Commissioner Marciante said she would agree to remove from the statement that was the subject of the motion to amend the main motion the phrase "...consistent with the city of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan in the 30-year horizon..." since alignment with the Comprehensive Plan is a given and the fact that there is no 30-year horizon in the Comprehensive Plan. She also agreed the phrase "ultimate transportation infrastructure system" should be removed.

Chair Wu proposed including a statement about the Commission's overall recommendation to develop a transportation master plan that includes items 2 through 6, with some revisions to the language. Commissioner Marciante suggested simply working through the document and determining what the Commission wants to say.

Chair Wu said she supported removing the reference to the 30-year horizon. Commissioner Bishop said he would support that as a friendly amendment. The friendly amendment was seconded by Commissioner Teh. As read by the Chair, the motion to amend the main motion read "The Transportation Commission recommends to Council that the city develop a transportation infrastructure system and plans of improvements and implementation that is consistent with the city of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan." The motion to amend the main motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Bishop moved to amend the main motion by including item 3, developing systematic strategies for facilitating modal integration or addressing modal conflicts; item 4, updating the concurrency process so that there are opportunities at multiple timelines to ensure the transportation system keeps up with growth; and item 5, addressing the impacts of regional transportation to Bellevue's streets and incorporating Council's regional transportation priorities and strategies. The motion to amend the main motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and the motion to amend carried unanimously.

Commissioner Bishop moved to amend the main motion by revising and including item 6 reading "Provide a performance measurement that speaks to and informs the various stakeholder groups in the city, including the residential neighborhoods and the business community." The motion to amend was seconded by Commissioner Lampe.

A motion to extend the meeting by fifteen minutes was made by Commissioner Lampe. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Marciante said she took performance measurements that speak to and inform the community to mean indicators that are relevant to how transportation is experienced. The proposed clarification referencing the residential neighborhoods and the business community, which are collectively part of the community, would put the onus on the staff to develop performance metrics that speak to every unique individual and particular stakeholder groups advocating a position. Commissioner Bishop allowed that it would take significant effort to accomplish the task. Performance measurements are just one of multiple elements that would be required. He said his intent was to make sure that the residential neighborhoods and the business community are thought about.

Commissioner Marciante said she would prefer to see a broader reference to a thorough public

involvement process rather than just involving the residential neighborhoods and the business community. The most important thing will be to ensure that the community has the opportunity to provide input and to deliberate and understand what the metrics mean. She said her preference would be to have the statement read “Provide a performance measurement that speaks to and informs the community through robust community input.”

Commissioner Lampe said his inclination was to retain the original language proposed by Chair Wu. The heart of the issue is coming up with performance measurements. While that certainly should involve public input, at the end of the day the staff will put together the metrics. It should not be left completely open as to who gets to decide what measurements should be used.

Commissioner Marciante pointed out that as originally drafted the statement only references informing the community and does not call for community input. The language proposed by Commissioner Bishop would put staff in the position of having to parse and decide who the various stakeholder groups are that will be informed. A robust public input process is needed to inform the process.

Commissioner Teh cautioned against mincing every word in what is only a letter to the Council. The document is not a constitution or legislation. The intent of the document is clear.

The motion to amend the main motion, read by the Chair as “Provide a performance measurement that speaks to and informs the various stakeholder groups in the city, including the residential neighborhoods and the business community,” carried 5-1, with Commissioner Marciante voting against.

Chair Wu clarified that the main motion was that the Transportation Commission recommends the TFP as proposed by staff. Mr. McDonald noted that the amendments made were all to the components of the transmittal memo. Chair Wu stressed that the motion as amended included a recommendation to develop a transportation master plan.

Commissioner Bishop said he would vote against the motion on the grounds that the Commission rejected his primary issue.

The main motion carried 4-2, with Chair Wu and Commissioners Chirls, Marciante and Teh voting in favor, and Commissioners Bishop and Lampe voting against.

Mr. McDonald distributed to the Commissioners a draft of the transmittal memo that reflected the vote taken by the Commission. He said the memo would need to be revised to reflect the actions taken by the Commission relative to items 2-6. Mr. Ingram said the memo would also highlight the recommendation of the Commission to develop a transportation master plan.

A motion to have the Commission approve the transmittal memo subject to editorial work by the staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and the motion carried unanimously.

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Bob Pishu, 575 Bellevue Square, said he was unsure of staff’s explanation of the new V/C LOS calculation. He said the approach was only done on one intersection and there are multiple intersections across the city that are now 0.1 higher. That needs to be looked at. Additionally, he

said the calendar presented by the staff did not include anything about the Chamber of Commerce public affairs committee dates, or about the Eastside Transportation Association or any other business groups dates or calendars for consideration. All that the calendar references are dates for the Bellevue Downtown Association. He said the Bellevue Downtown Association should not be the goal posts given that there are many other interested groups in the city whose views should be given equal weight on transportation issues.

12. COMMISSION CALENDAR

Mr. McDonald briefly reviewed the Commission's calendar of meeting dates and agenda items.

13. ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Lampe. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bishop and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Wu adjourned the meeting at 9:37 p.m.

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

Date