

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

Eastgate Transportation Study - The Transportation Commission is transmitting its final report on the Eastgate Transportation Study, a project initiated by Council and funded through the Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity and Congestion Levy.

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DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

ACTION

Accept the Transportation Commission's final report on the Eastgate Transportation Study.

Initiate a 2019 Comprehensive Plan Amendment under LUC 20.30I.B.1 that would amend the Volume 2 Comprehensive Transportation Project List with projects recommended by the Eastgate Transportation Study; adding new projects to the list, revising project descriptions for existing projects, and repealing existing projects that are superseded by this recent analysis.

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Transportation Commission's final report on the Eastgate Transportation Study and initiate a Comprehensive Plan Amendment proposal into the 2019 CPA Work Program under LUC 20.30I.B.1 to add the Eastgate Transportation Study projects to the Comprehensive Transportation Project List.

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

Eastgate Transportation Study Final Report

On November 28, 2016, then Mayor John Stokes proposed to Council that a traffic study be performed in the Eastgate/I-90 Interchange area along 148th - 150th Avenues SE to identify improvements that could ease traffic congestion. Council concurred and directed the Transportation Commission to prepare a recommendation for projects that could reduce congestion. Council suggested that a detailed traffic analysis should incorporate planned transportation projects and land use assumptions. The Eastgate Transportation Study was funded by the Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity and Congestion Levy and the final report transmitted by the Transportation Commission responds to this Council direction.

The Transportation Commission took an objective look at existing conditions and a 2035 forecast; using metrics, standards and guidelines to describe and quantify congestion along arterial corridors and at intersections within the Eastgate Study Area. The forecast for the 2035 Baseline conditions

included Bellevue CIP transportation projects and the capital and service projects planned and funded by WSDOT, King County Metro and Sound Transit. Assumptions about land use for 2035 were derived from forecasts of potential development under the existing zoning.

The Transportation Commission identified potential project concepts by first looking at intersections and corridors that either now, or in the future (2035), show signs of congestion – described as delay at intersections and in travel time/travel speed along corridors.

Transportation modeling analysis revealed the locations and magnitude of congestion and helped inform the project concepts to provide congestion reduction. Most of the recommended projects add vehicle capacity at intersections – turn lanes and thru travel lanes. One project would restripe the existing 150th Avenue SE bridge over I-90 to add a 4th southbound travel lane. As this is a WSDOT facility, City staff have and will continue to coordinate with WSDOT on the potential implementation of this design.

Most intersection and corridor projects can be accomplished within existing City right-of-way. In some instances, the right-of-way needed may be acquired as a condition of redevelopment approval on adjacent parcels.

The recommended projects would reduce the growth of vehicle congestion and would provide for the planned facilities for people walking, riding a bicycle or taking transit. Each of the projects includes (or does not preclude) the planned facilities for non-motorized mobility. Providing for these mobility options would help ensure that the transportation system is equitable and accessible.

Finally, not all congestion reduction is accomplished by expanding infrastructure. The Commission's recommendation acknowledges that Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is an effective tool to reduce the vehicle demand especially in peak commute periods. TDM is shown to reduce vehicle delay at intersections and along corridors in this setting by 3-5 percent.

Some recommended projects may be implemented more quickly and inexpensively than others. Signal timing adjustments or other operational improvements, plus restriping the existing pavement to expand vehicle capacity, could be accomplished within a few years. These early implementation projects are identified in the final report. For instance, at Factoria Boulevard at SE 38th Street, restriping on the westbound approach plus signal modifications can provide PM peak congestion reduction for T-Mobile commuters.

In the Transportation Commission's efforts to connect with the neighbors most affected by existing congestion and who would benefit from congestion reduction projects, they held three meetings at the South Bellevue Community Center (June 14, 2018, January 24, 2019, and June 27, 2019). This Bellevue Parks and Community Services facility was an ideal location for the Commission and the community to communicate about mobility challenges and the potential projects to address those challenges.

With regional and local growth continuing, the Commission's work on the Eastgate Transportation Study focused on minimizing the adverse effects of growth on mobility. Recommended projects would

expand vehicle capacity and achieve congestion reduction within the 2035 planning horizon versus doing nothing. Expanding vehicle capacity in Eastgate and Factoria would provide a measure of vehicle congestion reduction in the context of a comprehensive multimodal approach to mobility.

Initiating a Comprehensive Plan amendment

The goal of the Comprehensive Transportation Project List (CTPL) is to identify the road and transit facilities needed to implement the City's transportation policies in the Comprehensive Plan. The City Council adopted the CTPL as part of the Comprehensive Plan with its 2015 Ordinance No. 6251 adopting the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan (the 10-year Comprehensive Plan Update.) It is appropriate for the City Council to use its legislative authority at LUC 20.30I.B.1 to initiate a Comprehensive Plan amendment to amend the CTPL for this goal.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

The projects recommended in the Eastgate Transportation Study would implement Comprehensive Plan policies that support developing a multimodal transportation system that can accommodate growth and the mobility needs of the community. While the Transportation Commission's work was focused largely on vehicle congestion, and the recommended projects would expand vehicle capacity, Commissioners were mindful of Complete Streets, Vision Zero, Multimodal Level-of-Service and other Comprehensive Plan policy that provides direction in the planning and implementation of the transportation system.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with accepting the Transportation Commission's final report on the Eastgate Transportation Study, nor is there a fiscal impact in initiating a Comprehensive Plan Amendment. The latter action would give these projects standing and make these projects eligible for grants and CIP funding to support design and implementation, but there is no funding commitment associated with this action.

OPTIONS

1. Accept the Transportation Commission's final report on the Eastgate Transportation Study and initiate a 2019 Comprehensive Plan Amendment under LUC 20.30I.B.1 that would amend the Volume 2 Comprehensive Transportation Project List with projects recommended by the Eastgate Transportation Study; adding new projects to the list, revising project descriptions for existing projects, and repealing existing projects that are superseded by this recent analysis.
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

- A. Transportation Commission Transmittal Letter (June 27, 2019)
- B. Eastgate Transportation Study Final Report
- C. Eastgate Transportation Study Final Report Appendices

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

Eastgate Transportation Study Final Report and Appendices