



# Bellevue Planning Commission

September 25, 2019

## PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION ITEM

### SUBJECT

Amend the Comprehensive Transportation Project List in Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan to include the projects recommended to the City Council by the Transportation Commission in the Eastgate Transportation Study Final Report.

### STAFF CONTACT(S)

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### POLICY ISSUES

The projects recommended in the [Eastgate Transportation Study Final Report](#) implement existing Comprehensive Plan transportation policies that: 1) support developing a multimodal transportation system to accommodate growth and 2) serve the mobility needs of the community.

The recommended projects must be included in the Comprehensive Plan to give them “standing” with respect to eligibility for funding and as a condition of private-sector development approval.

### DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

#### **ACTION**



#### **DIRECTION**



#### **INFORMATION ONLY**



Tonight’s study session item will review the Transportation Commission recommendation and set an October 23 Final Review public hearing date for this proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

Attachment 1 is a map that shows the locations of recommended projects and brief project descriptions. Attachment 2 is the complete proposal of specific amendments to the Comprehensive Transportation Project List, or CTPL.

### BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

On July 15, 2019, the Transportation Commission transmitted its Eastgate Transportation Study Final Report to the City Council following a year-long technical analysis and engagement with the Eastgate/Factoria community.

In accordance with City Council direction on the Study, the Transportation Commission’s work focused largely on vehicle congestion in the Eastgate/Factoria areas and on expanding intersection capacity. Facilities—existing or planned—for people walking, riding a bicycle, or taking transit were included in the baseline. Commissioners were concurrently mindful of Complete Streets, Vision Zero, Multimodal Level-of-Service and other Comprehensive Plan policies that provide direction in the planning and implementation of the city’s transportation system.

With a 6-0 vote the City Council then initiated 2019 Comprehensive Plan Amendment (19-120260 AC) to amend the Volume 2 Comprehensive Transportation Project List with the projects recommended in the Eastgate Transportation Study; adding new projects to the CTPL, revising descriptions for projects currently in the CTPL, and repealing CTPL projects superseded by this more recent analysis.

## **What is the Comprehensive Transportation Project List?**

The *Comprehensive Transportation Project List* (CTPL), together with the *Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan* (Ped-Bike Plan 2009) and the *Transit Master Plan* (TMP 2014), identify the transportation facilities needed to implement transportation policies in the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan. The CTPL is a collection of the transportation projects previously contained in Volume 2 of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, as well as projects identified in the *Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project* (2012) and the *Downtown Transportation Plan Update* (2013).

### *What does the CTPL Include?*

The projects included in the CTPL are primarily of three types:

- roadway capacity projects e.g. road construction, widening and/or extensions, lane rechannelization;
- intersection capacity projects e.g. turn lane additions, signal additions or modifications;
- multi-modal projects e.g. road construction with new sidewalks and bicycle lanes.

### *What does the CTPL not include?*

Projects from the Ped-Bike Plan and the Transit Master Plan are not included in the CTPL because both of those plans have been adopted separately by City Council resolution. Their respective project lists are considered to be of equal standing to the CTPL and are included by reference in the Comprehensive Plan. As a result, exclusively non-motorized projects (e.g. sidewalks, bicycle lanes, trails) and transit projects (e.g. HOV/BAT lanes, queue jump lanes) are generally not included in the CTPL with few, specific exceptions. Such exceptions include:

- (1) Projects in which a non-motorized or transit project is already in design (e.g. the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail), and
- (2) Projects in which the *Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project* or *Downtown Transportation Plan Update* introduced a non-motorized or transit project that the related mode-specific plan does not include (e.g. Project CTPL-95: Downtown mid-block crossings).

### *How was the CTPL developed?*

The Comprehensive Transportation Project List was developed by the Transportation Commission and staff as part of the 2015 update to the Comprehensive Plan. The six Transportation Facility Plans and Bel-Red Subarea Plan cumulatively contained 781 projects, many of which were completed, outdated, redundant, or conflicting with one another or with projects contained in the *Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project* or the *Downtown Transportation Plan Update*, which together account for an additional 88 projects not previously incorporated into Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan. Consolidating these project lists made it possible to repeal completed or outdated projects, and eliminate redundancies and conflicts that existed between the project descriptions in different plans.

## **Eastgate Transportation Study**

On November 28, 2016, Mayor John Stokes proposed to Council that a traffic study be performed in the Eastgate/I-90 Interchange area along 148<sup>th</sup>—150<sup>th</sup> 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, and to include a detailed traffic analysis that incorporated planned transportation projects, forecasts, and land use assumptions. The Eastgate

Transportation Study Final Report prepared and transmitted by the Transportation Commission responded to this Council direction.

### *Forecasts and Assumptions*

The Transportation Commission examined existing conditions and the 2035 Baseline forecast using accepted metrics, standards and guidelines to describe and quantify congestion at intersections and along arterial corridors within the study area (encompassing most of Eastgate and part of Factoria). The forecast for the 2035 Baseline included Bellevue CIP transportation projects and the capital and service projects planned and funded by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), King County Metro, and Sound Transit. Assumptions about 2035 land use were derived from forecasts of potential development under existing zoning. These were provided to the Transportation Commission by Community Development staff.

The Transportation Commission identified project concepts by first looking at intersections and corridors that currently, or in the 2035 Baseline, show signs of congestion—described as delay or volume/capacity (v/c) at intersections, and in travel time/travel speed along corridors.

Traffic modeling analysis revealed the locations and magnitude of congestion and informed the design of project concepts. Most of the recommended projects add vehicle capacity at intersections in the form of turn lanes and thru-travel lanes. One project, for example, would restripe the existing westbound approach to Factoria Boulevard on SE 38<sup>th</sup> Street to provide a left-turn lane, a left/thru lane and a right-turn lane to better accommodate PM peak traffic from businesses and residences.

### *Project implementation*

The recommended projects are intended to reduce the rate of growth in vehicle congestion. Each of the street projects includes or does not preclude planned facilities for non-motorized mobility. Continuing to provide for these non-motorized mobility options helps ensure that the transportation system continues to be equitable and accessible.

With regional and local growth continuing, the Transportation Commission's work on the Eastgate Transportation Study focused on accommodating that growth and minimizing adverse impacts on mobility. Recommended projects expand vehicle capacity and reduce congestion relative to the 2035 Baseline. Finally, not all congestion reduction is accomplished by expanding infrastructure. The Transportation Commission's Final Report acknowledged that transportation demand management (TDM) is an effective tool to reduce travel demand, especially in peak commute periods.

Some recommended projects identified in the report may be implemented earlier and less expensively than others. Examples include signal timing adjustments or other operational improvements and restriping existing pavement to expand vehicle capacity (the Factoria Boulevard/SE 38<sup>th</sup> Street project).

Most intersection and corridor projects can be accomplished within existing city right-of-way. In some instances, redevelopment of adjacent private properties will be necessary to secure the needed right-of-way as a condition of development approval.

### *Community Engagement*

In addition to the three study sessions held on the topic at City Hall, the Transportation Commission held three meetings at the South Bellevue Community Center; on June 14, 2018, and on January 24 and June 27, 2019, to engage with stakeholders simultaneously most affected by existing congestion, and most benefited from future congestion reduction projects. This Parks & Community Services facility was an ideal location for the both the Transportation Commission and stakeholder communities to communicate about mobility challenges and the potential projects to address those challenges.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Eastgate Transportation Study –Map of Recommended Projects
2. Comprehensive Transportation Project List: Amendments for Eastgate Transportation Study Projects