



DATE: July 6, 2021

TO: Chair Hummer and Members of the East Bellevue Community Council

FROM: Kevin McDonald, AICP, Principal Transportation Planner, 425-452-4558  
*Transportation Department*

SUBJECT: Courtesy Hearing – Transportation Comprehensive Plan Amendments

## I. Introduction

At the July 6 courtesy hearing, staff will review the recommendation from the Transportation Commission to amend policies in the Transportation Element related to multimodal concurrency and a recommendation from staff to repeal the Comprehensive Transportation Project List in Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan.

## II. Comprehensive Plan Amendments Overview

Two separate areas of transportation policy are addressed through the recommended 2021 annual amendments to the Comprehensive Plan:

- **Mobility Implementation Plan (MIP) Multimodal Concurrency:** Transportation Commission recommendation. Amend/repeal certain Transportation Element policies and add new policies regarding a multimodal approach to transportation concurrency. Policies to support a multimodal concurrency standard will replace the vehicle-focused concurrency policies embedded in the Transportation Element. This is a component of the Transportation Commission's ongoing work to prepare a Mobility Implementation Plan as directed by the City Council.
- **Comprehensive Transportation Project List (CTPL):** Staff recommendation. Created in 2015 in the major update of the Comprehensive Plan, the CTPL consolidated nearly 800 transportation projects from subarea plans and transportation facility plans. To add, change or repeal a CTPL project requires a Comprehensive Plan amendment. Staff recommends the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to replace the CTPL as the "inventory" of all transportation projects. The TIP is updated annually with a Transportation Commission recommendation (after study sessions and a public hearing) and City Council adoption. The TIP project list is the first step toward implementation through the financially constrained Transportation Facilities Plan and full project funding in the Capital Investment Program Plan. Typically, to be eligible for the TIP, a transportation project concept would first be identified and vetted through a long-range planning process.

## III. Background/Analysis

### A. The Mobility Implementation Plan – Multimodal Concurrency

On January 4, the City Council approved a consultant contract and scope of work for a Mobility Implementation Plan (MIP). The MIP is envisioned as the planning document that will articulate a multimodal approach to mobility in Bellevue. The MIP will broaden the City's vehicle-focused

transportation concurrency standard to define a multimodal approach. Within the MIP, the Transportation Commission will define transportation system Performance Metrics and Performance Targets for all modes. A multimodal approach to concurrency will match the “demand” for mobility from new development with the “supply” of transportation facilities to ensure that projects for all modes are identified, prioritized and implemented to support planned growth. On April 5, the City Council initiated a Comprehensive Plan amendment with direction to embed multimodal concurrency policy in the Transportation Element. After three study sessions, culminating on June 10, the Transportation Commission voted 5-1 to approve policy recommendations to support multimodal concurrency.

#### Transportation Commission Policy Recommendation

Washington state law, through the Growth Management Act (GMA) (RCW 36.70A), requires local jurisdictions to ensure the planned transportation system will accommodate planned land use. This requirement is called “concurrency”. Rather than prescribe a universal approach, the GMA allows jurisdictions to describe and establish a transportation concurrency standard to reflect the community vision for land use, mobility and other factors. Further, the Washington Administrative Code (WAC 365-196-840) provides guidance for implementation to jurisdictions that pursue a multimodal approach to concurrency.

Policies in the Transportation Element provide direction on Bellevue’s approach to transportation concurrency. The existing suite of policies describes the long-standing vehicular level-of-service standard that defines the performance of the transportation system. The multimodal approach will also consider the performance of the system for people walking, riding a bicycle, or taking transit. During study sessions, the Transportation Commission reviewed existing policy and made a determination to edit or repeal policies, or to add policies as needed to create the policy support for multimodal concurrency.

Specific policy recommendations from the Transportation Commission are in Table 1. Attachment A contains the complete “crosswalk” of all policy recommendations, including a recommendation and rationale to repeal certain policies.

*Table 1. Transportation Commission Policy Recommendation*

| Policy       | Transportation Commission Final Recommendation, June 10, 2021   |
|--------------|---|
| New Goal     | GOAL: To improve all mobility options so that everyone in Bellevue has a safe, comfortable, reliable, and efficient experience on their preferred mode, while encouraging and transitioning to more environmentally and fiscally sustainable modes.   |
| TR-2         | Improve the multimodal transportation system and the quality of the travel experience for all users.  |
| TR-20        | Scope, plan, design, implement, operate, and maintain a complete and multimodal transportation system in accordance with the Performance Metrics, Performance Targets and Performance Management Areas as established in the Mobility Implementation Plan.  |
| TR-30        | 1. Monitor and document transportation system performance in accordance with the Performance Targets and Performance Management Areas established in the Mobility Implementation Plan.<br>2. Engage the community to evaluate and modify the Mobility Implementation Plan as needed, in concert with each update of the Comprehensive Plan, or as warranted by changed circumstances. |
| TR-34        | Evaluate the performance of all modes and engage the community to identify projects, priorities, programs and resources to meet Complete Streets goals and the Performance Targets through updates to the Transportation Facilities Plan.   |
| TR-73        | Implement infrastructure and technology to support reliable transit arrival time and travel speed along the Frequent Transit Network between Activity Centers.  |
| TR-132       | Provide and prioritize transportation funding to meet Performance Targets for people walking, biking, riding transit, and travelling in a car.  |
| New Policy A | Employ a citywide multimodal level-of-service concurrency standard that provides transportation facilities that meet the demand from new development.   |
| New Policy B | Plan for transportation system projects to accommodate the forecast demand and to meet Performance Targets in each update of the Transportation Facilities Plan.  |

## **B. The Comprehensive Transportation Project List**

The [Comprehensive Transportation Project List](#) (CTPL) was developed by the Transportation Commission as part of the 2015 update to the Comprehensive Plan. The six transportation facility plans and several subarea plans that were in Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan contained 781 transportation projects – since these lists were so old and had not been updated, many of the projects were completed, outdated, redundant, conflicting with one another, or inconsistent with current land use planning objectives. Subsequent transportation planning – for example, the Downtown Transportation Plan and the Eastgate Transportation Study – added new projects to the CTPL through amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. The consolidation of these project lists in 2015 was the mechanism to repeal completed or outdated projects, and to eliminate redundancies and conflicts that existed between the project descriptions in different plans. Now that all the projects have been consolidated and the CTPL is up to date, this project list may be moved outside of the Comprehensive Plan to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for which a required annual update keeps the TIP project list current. On April 5, the City Council initiated a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to repeal the CTPL.

### Transportation Improvement Program

The [Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#) is the project inventory for the local transportation system. In most instances, projects must be included on the Bellevue TIP to be eligible for state and federal grants.

Unlike the Capital Investment Program Plan and the revenue-constrained 12-year [Transportation Facilities Plan](#), the Bellevue TIP is not "revenue constrained," nor is the list of projects prioritized. The City may include all projects that it would choose to implement within the six-year time frame if funding was available. Projects are typically created and vetted through long-range planning with the community that is focused on a specific geographic area such as a subarea or a transportation corridor.

The TIP is required by state law (RCW 35.77.010), a mandate for local jurisdictions to annually adopt and submit to the state a six-year program of transportation improvements. The state Department of Transportation and the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) use local TIPs to coordinate the transportation programs of local jurisdictions with those of regional agencies. The PSRC monitors local TIPs for projects of regional significance, which are modeled for regional air quality conformity with federal standards, and to track projects supported by federal funds.

### TIP Annual Update

Each year, the Transportation Commission recommends a TIP to the City Council. To prepare its recommendation, the Commission considers that some projects have been completed (these are recommended to be deleted) some projects have been identified through long-range planning (these are recommended to be added - an example is the Eastgate Transportation Study), and some project descriptions are changed through further planning and engineering. The Transportation Commission conducts study sessions and holds a public hearing before making a final recommendation to the City Council. This process occurs in Q1 through Q3 of each year, so the project list in the TIP stays current. The Transportation Commission held a public hearing on the update to the TIP on April 8. The Council adopted the 2021 TIP on May 10, Resolution No. 9932.

The TIP project list essentially duplicates the CTPL, however the TIP is more responsive to changed circumstances because it is updated annually. In contrast, to update the CTPL requires an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan – a process that may be done annually, but that requires several additional steps, including initiation by the City Council, studies and a recommendation from the Transportation Commission, and study sessions, public hearing and recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Because of this extra process to amend the Comprehensive Plan, that in the end creates a duplicate project list, staff recommends repealing the CTPL and using the TIP as the one aggregated transportation project list for Bellevue.

#### **IV. Action requested of the EBCC**

The EBCC is requested to hold the courtesy hearing on the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments. Following the courtesy hearing, staff anticipates returning at a future meeting for the public hearing and action on the amendments.

Staff and the Transportation Commission Chair will be present at the July 6 courtesy hearing to answer any questions the EBCC may have. If there are questions in advance of this meeting, please contact Kevin McDonald at 452-452-4558 or at [kmcdonald@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:kmcdonald@bellevuewa.gov).

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Transportation Element Concurrency Policy Table