

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES

May 11, 2023  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Hybrid Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Stash, Vice Chair Helland, Commissioners Kurz, Magill, Marciante

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: Commissioner Ting

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Rebhuhn

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Andrew Singelakis, Eric Miller, Paula Stevens, Kate Johnson, Colin Munson, Chris Iverson, Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Zahn

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:29 p.m. by Chair Stash who presided.

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Vice Chair Helland who arrived at 6:36 p.m., and Commissioner Rebhuhn.

Chair Stash welcomed new Commissioner Drew Magill. Time was taken to make introductions all around.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Marciante. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kurz and the motion carried unanimously.

3. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Principal Planner Kevin McDonald noted the receipt of numerous written items of correspondence and having forwarded them all to the Commissioners.

Alex Tsimerman, began with a Nazi salute and called the Commissioners dirty crooks and damn fascist mobsters and banditos. With regard to bicycles, the situation in Bellevue is absolutely idiotic. Bikers do not pay taxes or have to buy a license and they never ride by the rules. Millions of dollars are spent on them even though there are only a couple dozen of them. The question is why the Commission and the Council approve bike projects. It just makes work for Democrats and is important for elections. The city should instead put money into building homes for poor people. The Commissioners never react to such statements and they just look like happy cows. A few months ago a King County Councilmember introduced a bill to cover the expenses for a Seattle tunnel that cost \$6 billion. For five or six years work on the tunnel

proceeded. And all the people of King County must pay for it. The question is why should Bellevue and other cities pay for the decisions made by idiots.

Vic Bishop, 2114 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, a retired professional transportation engineer and former Transportation Commissioner, spoke representing the Eastside Transportation Association as a board member. With regard to the curb management plan, which could fundamentally change city policy regarding traffic congestion, the Commissioners were urged to ask staff to develop guidelines to determine when to prepare a traffic study during the process. The review should start with the unanimously adopted Comprehensive Plan policy TR-2 which in part calls for aggressively expanding transportation investments to reduce congestion. There should be some reflection on how people really get around in Bellevue. The city has a travel forecast model that shows 82 percent of the person trips in the city are by cars, followed by walking at 12 percent, transit at four percent, and bicycles at 1.3 percent. It should be remembered that traffic congestion has long been the number one concern of Bellevue citizens as noted in the semi-annual budget survey. The curb management plan will set policies on how to use the curb lane that is currently used for car traffic on most arterials; on some arterials where the street width is wide enough and the traffic volumes permit, the curb lane is identified for other things. The city needs a tool for evaluating curb lane usage changes in terms of impacts to the community. Guidelines are needed for when to prepare a traffic study for things like delay, queueing, level of service and safety. A traffic study should be done when an existing travel lane is proposed to be removed from the vehicular system, particularly between and at intersections.

Laura Gardner, a resident of Lake Hills, voiced wanting to see car trips replaced by bike trips. However, the infrastructure in Bellevue does not enable or encourage anyone with high anxiety to get around by bike. Thus trips to the grocery are by car, as are trips to the Downtown and nearby appointments and errands. Reducing car dependency has triggered a passion to engage locally. By making efforts to enable and encourage people to get around without a personal vehicle, many issues the communities are struggling with can be improved, including traffic congestion, climate change, sustainability, affordability, public safety, mental and physical health, equity, accessibility community and connectivity. The more done to reduce car dependency, the more benefits will be gained. The Bike Bellevue project is a fantastic step in the right direction.

Jodie Alberts spoke as vice present for government affairs for the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce. The staff and the Commission were thanked for all the work done in developing curb policies. As requested, the document now includes typology maps to help understand the future intent and the current use of the curb; the digital governance recommendations supporting a data-driven analysis for curb activity; and the overall and exhaustive stakeholder process. Mitigating curb conversion impacts will be vital going forward. Throughput should be prioritized, especially in high-traffic areas. Mobility hubs should also be prioritized. The upcoming light rail should be made easy and comfortable to use. Clean and safe mobility hubs allow for things like micromobility and achieving the city's sustainability goals. Concerns and questions have been voiced about curb pricing, the logistics involved and how it will affect the patron experience. Finally, safely implementing bike infrastructure will also be critical going forward. Bike infrastructure that is safe for both bicyclists and motorists will ensure its use.

Mariya Frost, transportation director for Kemper Development Company, thanked the Commissioners for their continued work on the curb management plan. The ongoing communication with and exceptional responsiveness from city staff throughout the process has been especially appreciated. Kemper Development Company supports a curb management plan

that is responsive to travel and curb demand with a process for suggested changes that is rooted in curb activity data, traffic analysis and public accountability. The Commission should urge the staff to consider a few adjustments to the curb management plan. First, language should be added requiring a traffic study and mitigation for curb modifications that would impact travel lane or intersection capacity. The curb changes that should trigger a traffic study include removal of any vehicular travel lanes to convert the curbside lane to another use, and modifications to any signalized intersection that changes the vehicular capacity of the intersection. A traffic study is not a full traffic impact analysis; rather, it is a smaller effort that considers specific traffic operation elements that can be completed in as little as two weeks. Should a study show an increase in vehicular delay, travel times or queuing, the city should consider alternatives to the proposed curb modification, including a no action alternative. Second, language should be added to require a parking demand study for curb modifications that would impact off-street or on-street parking capacity. Examples of what should trigger the study are the removal of any on-street parking, the removal of any on-street passenger or commercial loading, changes to on-street parking time restrictions, or changes to on-street parking pricing. There is limited lane capacity in the Downtown which is and will continue to be critical and primary to the reliable movement of drivers, emergency responders, transit, and freight.

Chris Means voiced support for the Bike Bellevue project and noted having been hit by a car while riding a bike in Bellevue on May 10. While traveling southbound in a bike lane, a northbound driver suddenly turned left to enter a hotel parking garage. The result of the collision was minor injuries and damage to the bike and helmet. While riding, effort is always put into trying to do everything right in terms of stopping at signals, riding under the speed limit, the use of hand signals, and by using bicycle infrastructure where provided and where it feels safe. At the time of the collision, the only thing separating the bicycle rider from the car driver was a thin line of paint. Paint is not enough. Flex posts are not enough. Good infrastructure should completely avoid conflict points, but where that is not possible, the conflict points need to be abundantly clear to drivers via colored paint, decals and traffic calming mechanisms like raised lanes that force drivers to slow before entering a conflict zone. If Bellevue wants to meet its Vision Zero goals, infrastructure will be needed to provide more than a false sense of security. Infrastructure will be needed that is safe for everyone to use. The city should fully fund the Bike Bellevue project.

Chris Randalls spoke on behalf of Complete Streets Bellevue, an organization that is working to make Bellevue a city where everyone can get around safely regardless of their mode of travel. The organization strongly supports the staff proposal because it is seen as laying the groundwork for what is needed for Bellevue to meet its sustainability, accessibility, and safety goals. When completed, Bike Bellevue will make it easier for people to cycle, those who already cycle and those who do not currently but want to due to a lack of safe infrastructure. The Commission was urged to go bold because the year 2030, the year the city is supposed to meet its climate target and Vision Zero goals, is only seven years away. Safety should be prioritized for all users. More corridors within the study area should be planned and built. The plan should be delivered as quickly as possible. In addition, staff was commended for their due diligence in drafting the curb management plan. The proposed plan will help bring Bellevue into being a 21<sup>st</sup> Century city and will help fulfil the city's vision of being a place people want to be. The curb space needs to fulfill many needs while supporting community building and multimodal travel.

Kian Bradley, a Mercer Island resident, noted coming to Bellevue frequently to shop and visit with friends. Whenever possible, the trip is made by bicycle. Bellevue is doable by bike, but

one must be a fairly competent rider. People choose driving primarily because it is the only really safe and quick option. Bellevue has wide lanes and mostly free parking, which encourages people to travel by car. In going through the Bike Bellevue project, the city should be willing to make serious sacrifices for improving bike infrastructure, more than just painted lanes. There needs to be a good network of barrier-protected bike lanes, or full separate bike lanes where possible.

Carl Vander Hoek with Vander Hoek Corporation located in Old Bellevue agreed with the recommendations of Vic Bishop and Mariya Frost. Comprehensive Plan Policy TR-2 sets forth the goal of reducing congestion. The Commission should make a recommendation for the curb management plan to require a traffic impact analysis for any curb management policy or change that impacts the current transportation capacity. If the results of such a study determine that there would be significant impacts from a proposed change, the change should be reconsidered to preserve travel lane capacity. The Commission should also make a recommendation to the staff that any proposal that involves curbside uses or typologies that will take away existing supply of public on-street parking should trigger a parking demand analysis to examine the impacts and propose mitigation if necessary. Parking is a publicly funded city resource for the benefit of all. If not maintained or identified for use by only a few user groups, that should be identified through an equity lens. Ground floor retail is required along the majority of the streets in the Downtown area and the success of that retail is heavily dependent on customer access to parking and street capacity. The draft curb management plan recommendations call for added resources for curbside enforcement and compliance. More should be spent on enforcement, but the first step should be to reverse the staff's internal direction to direct Diamond Parking to not enforce infractions on commercial delivery vehicles citywide. The policies being considered are missing valuable input from important stakeholders, like large employers, shuttle bus drivers, delivery companies, rideshare drivers and the police department, as well as Diamond Parking. Staff should be directed to seek feedback from all those with an interest and firsthand experience before the curb management plan goes to the City Council. Otherwise, the policies will only create more headaches and city businesses will suffer.

Nicole Myers asked the Commission to include Access paratransit providers to the list of those to be consulted when looking at loading zones. The construction impacts on curbs and detours should be considered in regard to pedestrians as well as traffic. Developers should be required to consider all pedestrian detours, particularly for long-term projects, to make sure all detour routes are ADA compliant. When working on cycling issues, gender equality should be considered. Women are just as interested in cycling as men. The fact that there currently are more men than women using Bellevue's bike facilities is partly due to safety concerns, including the need for separation from cars. Many Bellevue neighborhoods have safe streets, but if they become car storage zones, that will change. The Commission should consider that neighborhoods with RPZs in place that control parking should get credits based on the amount of curb frontage and viable parking spots, as well as for retaining trees.

Matt Jack with the Bellevue Downtown Association congratulated the Commission for making it to the curb management plan milestone. The BDA's transportation committee met 13 times over the course of the development of the curb management plan before finally delivering a recommendation to the board of directors which was ultimately endorsed. The curb management plan is a well-organized document that nicely packages all of the different components that were developed over the past year. The scope and strategies in the plan are consistent with the BDA's desired outcomes. Appendix A, the curbside practices guide, succeeds in laying out actual steps for curb improvements with appropriate tools for measuring impacts, identifying costs and engaging priority stakeholders. The BDA also appreciates the

adaptive management strategies that use metrics to inform decision making. Appendix B, the curb pilot roadmap, is a thoughtful approach for rolling curb updates in a manner that measures for impacts and creates baselines. The approach will be helpful for working out kinks, building confidence in the community, and setting the plan up for future success. The draft curb management plan does not account for privately owned public spaces and how uses interact with those curb spaces, information that is important for ensuring that the curbonomics measurement tool monitors for the appropriate amount of supply and demand. The city is not in a position to take inventory of privately owned curb spaces and should instead partner with a trusted group to identify those spaces in a manner that can integrate with the M.A.P.S. modeling system. The draft curb management plan does not include traffic study language; such language should be clearly included. The draft plan does not highlight the boundaries of public rights-of-way, something that is necessary for helping stakeholders understand the parameters of what spaces can be activated along the curb with or without a permit. The information should be added either to the curb management plan or by future initiative.

Scott Kuznicky spoke representing the ACES Northwest Network, a collaborate effort of organizations, partners and nearly 3000 affiliates working together to promote the adoption of automated, connected, electric and shared vehicle technologies that will increase safety and reduce carbon emissions by addressing congestion. The city recently released the draft curb management plan. If managed to primarily serve transportation uses and minimize congestion on the street network, the curb space will remain an opportunity to reduce energy consumption and increase economic productivity. The management of curb space requires an ongoing analysis of curbside demand and traffic operations without preference, penalty or discrimination. Such analysis will preserve the function of the street network. From a network perspective that supports a Vision Zero goal that the primary function of the street network in Downtown Bellevue is to provide access to adjacent properties while attracting trips to the arterial streets and the freeway system, supporting the function will be the context of curb space where two key goals are kept in mind: the prioritizing the use of public rights-of-way for transportation purposes where and when demand exists to promote system performance and safety, and the reduction of costs related to short-term and transit uses of the curb space accomplished by maximizing the availability and accessibility of the curb. Those goals should be kept in mind when considering changes to the curb space, something that is typically accomplished through a traffic study. The impacts for all users should be considered, including those walking and cycling. Traffic operations in the vicinity of any proposed change should also be considered, including at adjacent intersections and along parallel blocks that are likely to be affected by the diversion of trips. Curb space availability reduces the demand for parking, which reduces the volume of traffic on arterials and city streets, allowing for increased flexibility and accommodating pedestrian and bicycle trips. Parking is likely to become more scarce as Bellevue's growth accelerates.

There was consensus among the Commissioners to extend the public comment period to accommodate three more speakers.

Betsi Hummer, 14541 SE 26th Street, voiced an interest in seeing how Bike Bellevue turns out. Strategic goals and measurable metrics should be applied, and the program should be reviewed and revised as needed to make sure any new mode of travel meets the goals. It is a good thing that the Council approved Policy TR-2 aimed at reducing traffic congestion. The East Bellevue Community Council voted to have a traffic study associated with affordable housing, and a traffic study should be done for anything that involves a change of the curb lane and overall transportation.

Esteban, a resident of Redmond, remarked that recently on NE 4<sup>th</sup> Street westbound a glowing sign warned visitors of potential waiting times in their cars. It is clearly no secret that Downtown Bellevue suffers from high volumes of automobile traffic that clogs the roads. If the city is serious about reducing traffic and waiting times for cars, it will need an ideological shift. An abundance of single occupant automobiles confined in a small space causes congestion. The only way to decrease the impact of automobile traffic is to reduce the car volumes. To lessen car volumes, designers should prioritize the ease of public transportation and terms of walking and biking. The discussion in March emphasized the need for parking spaces along the curb, and that is a representation of Bellevue's overall traffic engineering principle of cars first, everything else last. Better use of the space can be achieved by widening sidewalks in high-volume areas and by adding protected bike lanes and designated spaces for delivery vehicles. In the Downtown core where nearly every building has an underground parking garage, the city should not even consider allocating space for single-occupant car parking along the curbs. Often private cars take up space needed for important construction and delivery vehicles, causing blocked sidewalks and streets. As Downtown Bellevue grows, the city must seek to disincentivize driving and incentivize alternatives. At a previous Commission meeting the question was asked about how transit ridership can be increased. Currently buses are the only option in the Downtown and frequencies and travel times are an issue. The RapidRide B Line that goes to Redmond has double buses that are routinely full, illustrating the demand for public transport. The travel time on the bus between the Bellevue transit center and the Redmond transit center is about 50 minutes; by car it is about 33 minutes. So long as car trips take less time, people will choose to drive. To reduce the travel time discrepancy, the city can add bus-only lanes and transit-priority lights in high-traffic areas, such as on NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street from 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and on Bellevue Way.

Brin Lei, a bike commuter, said to induce transit ridership the city and transit agencies need to increase service frequencies and design comfortable bus stops in order to stop making transit users feel like second-class citizens. The transit center is usually filthy, and other bus stops in the city are just as bad. Many are little more than a pole in the ground. Utilization will improve by making bus stops comfortable, clean and safe. With more people riding transit, there will be less congestion. Bicycling is an alternative to driving. The majority of all car trips are six miles or less, and that is a realistic bicycling distance, especially with the popularity of e-bikes. However, in Bellevue it is unsafe to bike, especially on NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street. There is not a single street in Downtown Bellevue with fully protected bike lanes, and there is little connectivity among the various bike segments that do exist. When people feel safe cycling, they will. Drivers currently use painted bike lanes for parking and as turn lanes, or they are just ignored. One road that could use a major bicycle-inspired overhaul is 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue where regardless of the weather it is common to see several cyclists braving the conditions of unprotected bike lanes next to high-speed vehicles and parked cars. There is a clear demand for bicycling to, from and within the city. Walking is a shorter-range option than transit or bicycling, however walkability is also an integral part of transit given the need to walk from bus stops to destinations. Walking in Bellevue is frankly horrible. It is unpleasant walking on the tiny, terminally torn up sidewalks next to loud, polluting cars going up to 40 miles per hour. Narrowing lanes will serve to slow cars. Pedestrian lights should be prioritized. At NE 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Bellevue Way there is an unacceptably long waiting time for pedestrians due to the prioritization of vehicle traffic. A scramble crosswalk there would be an amazing addition. The city should lessen pedestrian waiting times everywhere, especially at well-used crossings. Bellevue has to stop pretending it is just a suburb that can rely on cars for transportation. Bellevue is a densely packed city and economic center.

#### 4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL,

## BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, AND MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Councilmember Zahn voiced appreciation for the thoughtful consideration given by the Commissioners to the public comments. Bike Bellevue is a far more catchy name than Bicycle Rapid Implementation Program (BRIP) as it was formerly called. It is exciting to see the Commission's work on the curb management plan coming to fruition. The next meeting of the Regional Transit Committee will include a focus on flexible services, the on-demand transit routes. When the bus rapid transit runs along I-405 it will be via double-decker electric buses. Later in the month the I-405/SR-167 executive advisory group will meet to continue discussing how to make those freeways work better.

### 5. STAFF REPORTS

Kevin McDonald shared with the Commissioners a management brief from Senior Planner Dr. Kate Nesse in the Department of Community Development that included a status update regarding the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and the related draft environmental impact statement. The 45-day public comment period on the draft EIS will close on June 12. There are three upcoming opportunities for public comment: an in-person meeting at Crossroads, an in-person meeting at Bellevue City Hall, and a virtual meeting. Information about each is available on the Comprehensive Plan update website.

Kevin McDonald noted the receipt of an award to the city from the American Planning Association that represents work done by the Commission on the Mobility Implementation Plan and multimodal concurrency. The award honors outstanding contributions to the planning profession.

### 6. PUBLIC HEARING

#### A. 2024-2029 Transportation Improvement Program

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Vice Chair Helland. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante and the motion carried unanimously.

Implementation Planning Manager Eric Miller noted staff had at a previous meeting provided the Commission with a detailed description of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mandated by state law, the TIP preliminary project list must be the subject of a public hearing. Two new projects were added to the TIP, project reference numbers 105 and 106.

Alex Tsimerman began with a Nazi salute and called the Commissioners dirty crooks and damn Nazi fascist mobsters and psychopaths. The TIP is a good plan, and the Commission should approve it. It does not matter because nothing will be changed, and conditions will get worse and worse. The question is how to fix the problem. For many years 90 percent of the city residents have been low-level idiots, and they just elect the same Councilmembers over and over to serve for ten, twenty or thirty years, and conditions grow worse and worse. Next year 30,000 idiots will come from Amazon from the jungle and it will be a nightmare. New York did not accept Amazon, but Bellevue did because the Council did, and the Commission supports the Council. Everyone will be happy because they will continue to elect the same idiots. Someone new is needed. All Bellevue residents are just happy cows and f...king idiots.

Chris Randall with Complete Streets Bellevue expressed appreciation for the work done by city

staff Kristi Oosterveen and Eric Miller. It is a good thing that consideration is being given to reviewing a transportation benefit district to fund infrastructure. Support was voiced for bringing the citywide transportation maintenance system program into the TIP so that the programs can be funded with Capital Investment Program (CIP) dollars and offered a special shoutout to and appreciation of including the maintenance of sidewalks, walkways and bicycle facilities in the maintenance program. In the coming weeks there will be conversations about which projects should be included in the TFP, and the Commission should recommend the multimodal capital projects. According to staff assumptions related to the Mobility Implementation Plan, by 2044 the pedestrian and bicycle network will only be 59 percent and 62 percent completed respectively. There is a clear need for the city to get serious about identifying projects that will bring both to 100 percent completion, and about where to find the necessary funding. If Bellevue wants to be a Vision Zero city, there will need to be targets, projects and funding in place to get the walking, biking and transit networks to full completion in a rapid timeframe.

Betsi Hummer, 14541 SE 26th Street, commented four or five bus lines run close to the neighborhood on 145<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. The projects on the proposed TIP appear to be focused on reducing traffic congestion and making any kind of access safer and more efficient for everyone. There has been a lot of cut-through traffic in neighborhoods and there is a need to improve the arterials and fund the I-405 master plan to improve getting people to and from their jobs. The new traffic light at 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and Lake Hills Boulevard is great and having it will help greatly. With regard to all the paving going on throughout the city, Main Street between 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE has been a big mess. There remains a real need to fix potholes.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Vice Chair Helland. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kurz and the motion carried unanimously.

## 7. STUDY SESSION

### A. 2024-2029 Transportation Improvement Program

Eric Miller sought from the Commission a recommendation regarding the TIP and approval of the transmittal memo. The TIP is mandated to be updated annually. Projects in the TIP flow from a variety of sources, including the Comprehensive Plan, various long-range and functional plans, the Mobility Implementation Plan, the Transportation Facilities Plan and the Capital Investment Program. Also included in the TIP are regional or outside agency-led projects the city may choose to support or participate in financially. The city's TIP is ultimately transmitted to the PSRC for inclusion in the regional TIP, and to the state for inclusion in the state TIP.

Projects in the TIP are divided into four sections. In Section I are the projects that are included in the adopted 2023-2029 Capital Investment Program. Section II are the projects in the adopted 2022-2023 Transportation Facilities Plan. Section III includes unfunded local projects identified and scoped by completed alternative analyses, planning studies or pre-design studies. Section IV has the regional or outside agency-led projects in which the city may choose to participate financially. For the update, Section I includes seven new projects and has removed three projects that have been completed. There are nine projects in Section II that are transferring between sections in the TIP. Two new projects are included in Section III, and there are no changes to the projects in Section IV.

Project 105 was recommended by staff to be added to Section III of the TIP. Project 105 is a



package of transportation system maintenance work and it includes filling and mitigating potholes, asphalt repairs, sidewalks, walkway repairs, street lighting, and roadside vegetation maintenance, all of which has typically been funded by the operating budget. The idea is to make them eligible for the Council formation of a transportation benefit district. To be eligible to spend revenues generated by such a district, they need to be in an adopted city plan.

Project 106 was recommended by the development review staff and is related to a specific development in the northwest area of Downtown Bellevue called Pinnacle Development that involves more than 3000 residential units and the relocation of the QFC. As part of the mitigation, the recommendation is for the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of NE 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 102<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NE. The city recently built a roundabout just to the west at NE 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Having the project in the TIP allows for conditioning the development to dedicate the property and some of the construction costs.

Vice Chair Helland asked if it is possible to add or remove projects from the TIP as necessary throughout the year. Eric Miller said updating the TIP just once a year is usually enough. A lot of grant programs require that projects be in the document in order to be eligible to apply for funding. Updating the TIP outside of the regular schedule would require the holding of another public hearing and making another recommendation to the Council.

Commissioner Ting asked if there have been any issues with unbalanced traffic flow associated with the roundabout at NE 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Eric Miller said no backups of anything noteworthy have been noticed. Commissioner Ting suggested that when creating a new roundabout, especially a small one, functionally the traffic into the roundabout needs to be balanced, otherwise one particular entry may get starved by having to yield to those in the roundabout.

With regard to lifecycle costs, Commissioner Ting noted Kristi Oosterveen previously said there is a general formula used to determine lifecycle costs based on construction costs. The public may benefit from knowing the general guidance or formula. Eric Miller said staff is very aware of the comments received regarding lifecycle costs. The city programs dollars to implement projects and as they go through their early phases it becomes clear what it is going to take to maintain and operate the project on an ongoing basis.

Commissioner Marciante noted that several years back someone from the Washington State Department of Transportation provided the Commission with a full overview of roundabouts. The presentation was very informative.

In terms of operations and maintenance budgets, there are recommendations for how much to include as a placeholder during the planning process. Eric Miller said there are often specific numbers included with fully funded Capital Investment Program projects. The city has very detailed spreadsheets concerning every little thing that needs to be maintained and operated.

Answering a question asked by Vice Chair Helland, Eric Miller said projects being included in the TIP that are coming out of a planning study include only concept level cost estimates. Once the projects are moved on to the TFP, which is revenue constrained, there is a far more detailed but still preliminary estimate.

Commissioner Marciante asked if the TIP has a website listing all the projects. Eric Miller allowed that there is. Commissioner Marciante suggested adding to that webpage information about how to reach out for additional information concerning any specific project on the list.

A motion to approve the 2024-2029 TIP project list was made by Vice Chair Helland. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the transmittal letter for the 2024-2029 TIP project list to the City Council was made by Commissioner Marciante. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kurz and the motion carried unanimously.

Eric Miller said the TIP is tentatively scheduled to be delivered to the Council on June 5. The Council-approved TIP must be submitted to the PSRC and the state by the end of June.

## B. Curb Management Plan

Senior Transportation Engineer Chris Iverson reminded the Commissioners that the curb management plan is the culmination of about a year and a half of planning and engagement on how to best manage the curb space within Bellevue's urban core neighborhoods, specifically Downtown, BelRed, Wilburton and East Main. The plan includes a handful of chapters and four appendix documents. There are four main sources of information in the plan: the curb practices, the curb pricing framework, the curb typology and maps, and the curb pilot roadmap. The first several chapters talk about existing conditions; highlights the definition of the curb, the curbside lane, the curbside area, and what curb management is broadly; highlights key findings from the state of the curb document, which is the existing conditions report; discusses current approaches and how the curb is currently used; highlights themes from initial public engagement activities; and recaps the pertinent Comprehensive Plan policies adopted by the Council in December 2022.

The onus of the project is to plan for growth. As the city grows, so will mobility demands along the curbside and practices to manage that demand. Currently operations are handled on a case-by-case basis and decisions are made ad hoc across different groups and city departments, and there is not a lot of transparency. The permitting and pricing approach is inconsistent and arguably inequitable, and curbside enforcement resources are very limited.

One big component of the curb management plan is the concept of curb supply and demand. It is based on the recognition that there is a limited supply of curb space, and the fact that the demands are changing all the time. The curb supply element is addressed in the plan through a curb typology based on a block-by-block mapping exercise that identified the potential uses of the curb space based on long-range plans and policies and other data sources. The second element is the pricing framework. It includes strategies such as updating the permitting approaches, thinking about ways to generate additional taxing revenue for the benefit of the community, and looking at pricing strategies for things such as on-street paid parking and load zones.

The curb practices guide provides a high-level overview of the details included in Appendix A. In all, 28 curb practice recommendations across six categories are spelled out. The curb practices are an outline of the way some of the curb management approaches are embodied. Some of the near-term practices identified in the document include adding resources for curbside enforcement; performing implementation studies for paid parking programs; building and expanding the accessible parking inventory; creating more passenger and commercial loading zones; and expanding curbside placemaking.

The curb pilot roadmap talks about six specific curb pilot project concepts to address present-

day curb challenges.

The final chapter of the plan focuses on looking forward and addresses the intersection of equity and curb management; identifies the performance indicators to be tracked over time; talks about staffing and funding considerations; and addresses implementation guidance for delivering the practices and pilot programs.

Chris Iverson said the draft plan has been available for public review for about a month. A number of different audiences have weighed in, including the Bellevue Downtown Association, the Chamber of Commerce, the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network, individual residents, local businesses and regional employers. One item heard repeatedly is the idea of ensuring that some type of traffic analysis will be conducted when there is a proposed change to a curbside lane. The intent is to add such language to the plan.

Vice Chair Helland voiced the assumption that the city was already doing traffic analyses but without being clear about it. The question was whether every project that is going to make a change to a lane or impact traffic will trigger a traffic analysis. Chris Iverson said staff envisions a traffic analysis that accounts for all of the performance targets for all modes, as identified in the MIP. Where a change is proposed to use a curbside lane for another use, it would first be determined if the impact would be significant. The auto impacts would be tied to V/C ratio calculations at intersections as well as corridor travel speed. Additionally, the bicycle mode would be tracked in line with the level of traffic stress denominators. The transit mode would also be assessed, all with an eye on providing the information to the community in order to be responsive to public feedback.

Commissioner Marciante suggested fine-tuning how the assessments will be done as quickly as possible, identifying which approach will give sufficient accuracy relatively quickly. At the end of the day it will be necessary to be able to communicate with the community in a transparent manner. There should also be a method in place for reversing decisions if something is tried and it does not work. Chris Iverson said the intent of any individual project moving forward will be to make the analysis appropriate to the level of impact. A proposed small change may not require a full traffic analysis to the same degree larger scale changes may.

Commissioner Kurz voiced the understanding that the auto mode is the easiest when it comes to measuring impacts, and pedestrian, transit and bicycle is much more difficult to measure. Chris Iverson said under the context of the MIP, the calculations for vehicles are the V/C ratio and corridor travel speed. For bicycles, the calculation looks at the type of facility compared to the speed limit and the volume.

Commissioner Marciante said it is not a traffic impact analysis rather a multimodal analysis needed for every change. There are people with interests concerning every mode of travel and the Commission is not in the position to make decisions that benefit one mode over another. There will need to be some important conversations about the tradeoffs. Every decision made to make a change is to benefit something the city wants to achieve, but each decision might impact something else. The methodologies will need to be transparent but also quick to implement.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Magill, Chris Iverson allowed that the proposed edits to the draft curb management plan are outlined in the staff memo. The changes will occur in the next revision.

Chris Iverson stated that the intent of the curb management plan is to have a framework that

accounts for the city's rapid growth. The project is very innovative, and few cities nationwide have taken a comprehensive look at the curb. With the approach comes new territory and strategies that might work in the short term may not work ten years out, triggering the need to make updates and changes to the plan. In recognition that things change quickly, it will be necessary to continue collecting data and public feedback. Curb management is not a zero-sum strategy or approach. It is focused on continuing to establish a multimodal system that works for all.

Action on the curb management plan will be sought from the Commission on May 25. A tentative date in July has been set for the Council to consider the Commission's recommendation.

Commissioner Marciante praised the staff for the work done in developing the curb management plan, adding that the document clearly reflects the complexity of the concepts and the approach. In making decisions, it will be important to zero in on solving the problems faced by specific spaces rather than zeroing in on the specific problems faced by the individual modes. The outcomes should be designed to accommodate everyone.

Commissioner Ting also congratulated the staff on all the hard work put into developing the plan and agreed that the transportation system and the curb should be thought of as a network with different uses that interact with each other. Consideration should be given to return on investment. Metrics in the MIP are based on utilization but also on type and level of facility, but in all cases decisions around spending money should be centered on getting the most bang for the buck and maximizing the benefits. Inclusion of the impact studies will help people feel better about making changes to curb typologies.

Commissioner Ting asked for two additional changes, beginning with the statement about workers in poverty who commute based on one mode versus another. The statement could be misinterpreted by readers of the document, and it should either be clarified to talk about absolute numbers, or it should be described why the statement is made. Second, consideration should be given to how RPZs will be handled in terms of permit fees. Many neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown are concerned that they may have to pay for permits in order to fund the enforcement of their individual RPZs, an unfair approach given that the cause of the change is due to curb management in the Downtown. That issue will need to be addressed.

Chair Stash referred to page 8-9 and commented that the while the yellow-starred priority projects clearly have high impact but there are some medium-impact projects shown as having priority and some shown as having high priority. The question asked was how that decision was made. Chris Iverson allowed that there had been a typo and stated the yellow-starred projects are intended to reaffirm priority from a time standpoint rather than an importance standpoint.

Commissioner Kurz agreed with the need to indicate where the work will begin and to outline the work ahead. There is a limited number of places where things conflict, so while things cannot be changed very much, there is less to fight over. The public should be clear about where changes will be made if there are changes that are going to be made. Chris Iverson agreed and stressed that the typology is a starting point, a synthesis and cataloging of all the plans. There are overlapping curb types which means difficult decisions will need to be made in the future about which curb type should be moved forward.

Vice Chair Helland said the question on many minds is what will ultimately be done with the issues outlined on page 54. In the absence of a declarative statement, people have acted on their

own to fill in the blanks. It should be made clear what it means going forward. Chris Iverson allowed that there are opportunities to expand on the narrative of the curb types.

### C. Bike Bellevue

Chris Iverson said the Bike Bellevue is a new initiative recently launched by the Council. At the Commission's May 25 meeting concurrence will be sought relative to the public engagement strategy for the project.

The major endeavor builds on work over the last 15-plus years. In 2007 the Council directed staff to develop an update to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan. The currently adopted Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan formulates a vision and goals and objectives for non-motorized transportation and assesses gaps in the non-motorized network. It includes a robust project list for pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The plan, however, did not come with a funding package so over the years only a little progress was made until 2015 when the Council provided reassurance and direction to go forward to advance the implementation of the planned bicycle corridors and the facilitation of continuous travel along a connected grid of safe facilities throughout the city. That immediately preceded the launch of the Bicycle Rapid Implementation Program (BRIP), which was an endeavor to develop a deliberate and rapid implementation approach to bicycle infrastructure development. The year 2016 saw a lot of public engagement, all of which dovetailed with adoption of the Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity and Congestion levy. Passage of the levy provided the financial resources to develop bicycle infrastructure. From passage of the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan through 2016, a total of 17 miles of bike facilities were installed; from 2017 to 2022 there were 59 miles of bicycle facilities installed.

Following adoption of the levy, city staff receive interest from the community about developing dedicated and protected bicycle infrastructure within the Downtown area. There was a robust public engagement process launched which led up to the 2018 installation of the 108th Avenue NE demonstration project. During an eight-month period, there was monitoring of the outcomes and continued public outreach. The project proved to be very successful, and the Council ultimately approved 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE as a permanent bicycle facility.

The adoption in 2022 of the Mobility Implementation Plan and the bike performance target Level of Traffic Stress was in part a reflection of all previous bicycle facility planning efforts. There are, however, a number of identified bicycle facility gaps in the urban core region where the bicycle mode performance targets remain unmet. All of the work was the precursor to the capital improvement project PW-W/B-85 which has been named Bike Bellevue. Council has provided \$4.5 million to design and implement bicycle facilities in the urban core, with a specific focus on addressing the gaps and establishing a grid of safe and comfortable connections to key destinations for use by people of all ages and abilities.

Vice Chair Helland asked how the LTS ratings are determined. Chris Iverson explained that the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan included a grand bicycle network. The MIP establishes Performance Management Areas (PMAs), with the urban core falling into PMA-1 in which primary bicycle corridors should have an LTS-1 goal, meaning usable by people of all ages and abilities. Other routes were identified as LTS-2 or LTS-3 in the broader bicycle network, but not necessarily the primary bicycle network. There is a table in the MIP that describes talks LTS achieved for each facility based on traffic volumes and speed limits along the corridor in relation to the type of bicycle facility. The facilities shown on the bicycle facilities map in green are those that meet the target LTS. Those shown in blue do not meet the

LTS target.

Bike Bellevue zeros in on PMA-1 and highlights corridors that are gaps in the existing bicycle network based on the LTS metric.

Commissioner Magill asked how the scope was established given that the 20 year levy approved in 2016 was supposed to be for the entire city. Chris Iverson explained that the CIP project description approved by the Council effectively defined the scope and the geography, and it specifically talks about developing bicycle infrastructure in the Downtown, Wilburton and BelRed area.

A motion to extend the meeting by half an hour was made by Commissioner Marciante. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kurz and the motion carried unanimously.

Chris Iverson said many of the projects align with the city's Safe Systems approach to Vision Zero. There are numerous and recurring updates to the Vision Zero Action Plan that identify building out a connected and protected bicycle network in the city. The eight Bike Bellevue principles that were approved by the Council in March talk about safety, connectivity, comfort, evaluation, coordination, partnerships, engagement and equity.

The public engagement approach is intended to expand community awareness of the Bike Bellevue project; to enable the public to inform project design refinements; enable the public to inform project prioritization; and to report public input to the Transportation Commission. In addition to Commission meetings, the public will be able to provide input via focus groups; an online presence; a public open house; and through direct engagement. The public will also be able to become informed via a direct mailer and the media; and through coordination and collaboration.

The draft concept guide will be presented to the Commission in July. It will include the initial design concepts for all of the corridors, as well as details about traffic modeling and simulation. The community engagement process will allow the public to provide feedback on the design concepts and corridor prioritization. A recommendation will be sent to the Transportation Department Director in early 2024.

Commissioner Marciante noted that the issue of bicycle facilities has in the past proved to be contentious, primarily because the Council had deferred to the Commission making a decision as to which design should be chosen. The decision to repurpose a travel lane, however, had already been made. The Commission was powerless to decide otherwise. The question asked was if the Bike Bellevue project would involve taking away vehicle lanes, to which Chris Iverson nodded in the affirmative. Accordingly, Commissioner Marciante stressed the need to have a very robust engagement with the public given how controversial and emotional that will be. The engagement process should include the sharing of design alternatives with the community. The city is changing fast and there are many who want to see things change, but others feel things are changing too fast and do not want to see things change.

Vice Chair Helland suggested that at a minimum the public should be told that the plan was modeled and that the impacts are mostly known. Next it will be tested and measured. The public will be allowed to weigh in and the Director will ultimately decide based on the data.

Commissioner Marciante clarified that the Council has already made the decision. Chris Iverson agreed and said the Commission's recommendation will be to the Transportation Director, not

to the Council. The Commission is tasked with identifying the prioritization and the ultimate design of the corridors. There will be a detailed analysis that accounts for all modes.

Vice Chair Helland asked what exactly has already been decided. Chris Iverson said the bicycle corridors identified as having LTS gaps have been determined. There will be discussions about implementation details and prioritization. Those discussions will include tradeoffs and near-term, long-term and very long-term priorities. The designs are still at the conceptual level. They are more than just lines on a map, but they are not full-on engineering plans.

Commissioner Ting suggested that the Commission needs to be crystal clear in regard to what it is empowered to do and what it is directed to do. Chris Iverson agreed.

#### D. Transportation Demand Management Plan Update

Senior Planner Kate Johnson introduced intern Colin Munson and Amanda Mansfield, the new TDM Program Manager charged with being the lead for the TDM Plan update.

Colin Munson said Transportation Demand Management is all about maximizing the efficiency of the transportation system. It does not involve infrastructure improvements or development; it does involve information, incentives and encouragement geared toward reducing the number of persons driving alone in the city. The aim is to manage growth and reduce impacts from drive-alone travel.

There are two components to the TDM program: regulatory and non-regulatory. The regulatory element includes the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) code, which affects large employers, and the Transportation Management programs, which affects large buildings and developments. The non-regulatory components are largely done through a relationship with the Bellevue Downtown Association which along with the city manages the Choose Your Way Bellevue website and the Bellevue SchoolPool program.

The purpose of the TDM plan update is to guide the staff for the next ten years in seeking to meet the Comprehensive Plan targets and policies. The administrative plan does not require adoption by the Council. Colin Munson briefly reviewed the strategies from the 2015-2023 TDM plan, and the progress made toward meeting the targets from the 2012 baseline. The non-drive-alone rate for citywide residents was at the most recent datapoint higher than the target, which is good, but below the target for Downtown workers.

The 2024-2033 planning process will largely build on what was done in 2015. It will utilize the same structure and datapoints and bring them into the present. There will be a community engagement component, primarily through the EngagingBellevue webpage. There will be a total of four presentations provided to the Commission. The plan will have six chapters, the first four of which provide background information and datapoint to inform the eventual strategies. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the plan. Chapter 2 contains the demographic characteristics and trends with an eye on residential and employment data and changes since the 2015 TDM plan. Chapter 3 is divided into two halves, the first an evaluation of the 2015 TDM plan and the second looking at other relevant city plan efforts, such as the curb management plan. Chapter 4 coalesces various surveys and market research. Chapter 5 is the measurement chapter and outlines the planned accomplishments for the TDM plan, including the goals and targets. Chapter 6 houses the implementation strategies.

Colin Munson said the background chapter is very retrospective, while the rest of the plan will

be forward looking. A few key topic areas will be highlighted, including telework, hybrid work and office spaces; equity, housing costs and lengthening commutes; environmental stewardship ; and new transportation technologies.

Commissioner Ting asked staff to at a future meeting provide an analysis of why the future CTR drive-alone rate stands at 37.1 percent higher than King County, and what can be done to tailor the TDM program for Downtown workers to go from 35 percent to 46 percent. Kate Johnson said King County is largely influenced by Seattle, which has a denser urban core, greater transit service and very low drive-alone rates.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 9, 2023

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Vice Chair Helland. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante and the motion carried unanimously.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Commissioner Remote Participation for the May 25 Meeting

There was consensus to approve remote participation on May 25 for Commissioners Ting and Rebhuhn.

11. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None

12. REVIEW OF COMMISSION CALENDAR

A. Upcoming Agenda Items

Kevin McDonald briefly reviewed with the Commissioners the schedule of upcoming meeting dates and agenda items.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Stash adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.



6/8/2023

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Secretary to the Transportation Commission

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Date