

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

December 5, 2016
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Stokes, Deputy Mayor Chelminiak, and Councilmembers Robertson, Robinson, Slatter, and Wallace¹

ABSENT: Councilmember Lee

1. Executive Session

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m., with Mayor Stokes presiding. There was no Executive Session.

2. Study Session

- (a) Review of the Planning Commission recommendation to amend the Comprehensive Plan with the Vision Zero Policies 2016 Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA), as part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Amendment work program adopted by the City Council on July 18, 2016.

City Manager Brad Miyake recalled that the Council adopted the Vision Zero Resolution in December 2015 and directed the Transportation Commission to prepare policy recommendations related to the Vision Zero program. The Planning Commission reviewed those recommendations to develop a proposed Vision Zero Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA). Staff is requesting feedback on the proposal in anticipation of adoption of the CPA on December 12.

Dan Stroh, Planning Director, said the Comprehensive Plan is amended annually and the Vision Zero CPA is the only item for the 2016 CPA work program.

Kevin McDonald, Senior Planner, introduced John deVadoss, Planning Commission Chair, and Janice Zahn, Transportation Commission Chair, to present the recommendations of the two commissions.

¹ Councilmember Wallace joined the meeting at 6:22 p.m.

Transportation Commission Chair Zahn recalled that Resolution No. 9035 adopted by the Council on December 7, 2015, endorsed the Vision Zero program as part of a comprehensive effort to strive to achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries on Bellevue streets by 2030. She said the Council asked the Transportation Commission to review the Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element to determine whether any updates, revisions or additional policies are needed to incorporate the Vision Zero framework.

Ms. Zahn presented data regarding traffic fatalities and serious injuries involving pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. She described the Vision Zero crash map portal, which is an interactive tool that enables the user to view collisions by mode citywide.

Ms. Zahn recalled that, on March 7, 2016, the Transportation Commission transmitted its Vision Zero policy recommendation to the Council. At that time, the Council initiated the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process, and the Planning Commission began its review.

Planning Commission Chair deVadoss described the Planning Commission's recommendation for four new policies and a revision to existing policy TR-55. The new policies are to: 1) strive to achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030; 2) develop a programmatic approach that integrates Vision Zero's six components; 3) design and manage streets to foster safe and context-appropriate behavior for all roadway users; and 4) strive to provide separation between motorized vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles as feasible, while maintaining adopted level-of-service (LOS) standards for all modes. Policy TR-55 is amended as follows: Maintain a collision reduction program to identify high collision locations, evaluate and prioritize potential safety improvements, and implement recommended changes.

Mr. deVadoss said the Commission recommends a programmatic approach that: 1) incorporates the six E's of the Vision Zero model: Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, Equity, and Evaluation; 2) updates Vision Zero strategies as needed, and 3) provides Vision Zero status reports that aggregate and analyze data, document efforts, and communicate progress to the City Council and the community.

[Councilmember Wallace joined the meeting.]

Councilmember Robinson thanked the Commission Chairs for the presentation. She said she likes the concept of equitable safety for all modes of transportation as well as equitable service levels. Responding to Ms. Robinson, Mr. McDonald said staff would provide more details regarding the higher number of incidents in 2008. Mayor Stokes recalled there was more snow than usual in December 2008.

Councilmember Slatter thanked the commissioners for the information and recommendations. She expressed support for the aspirational vision for 2030 and the equity concepts regarding travel modes and service levels. She observed that, with the programmatic prioritization of infrastructure, the crash map portal could guide the City in identifying areas of congestion and other issues. She questioned how that would be overlaid with other infrastructure planned by the City.

Ms. Zahn referred back to the four new policies and highlighted the following language in the fourth policy: "...while maintaining adopted level-of-service standards for all modes." She said the language was added by Planning Commission. She said the Transportation Commission would be discussing multimodal levels of service during its December meeting. This includes determining how the travel modes fit, especially within more congested areas, and reviewing the map of injuries and fatalities to help prioritize the Vision Zero efforts.

Responding to Councilmember Slatter, Mr. deVadoss said the target date of 2030 was identified as a mid-range date to guide the City's efforts and hold it accountable.

Councilmember Robertson noted that the 2030 date is reflected in the Council Resolution as well. For the next discussion with the Council, she is interested in seeing how the City intends to use the policies in the implementation of projects and services. She suggested that items could be prioritized as part of the Budget One process and/or documented in the Capital Investment Program (CIP) project description or transportation project evaluation forms.

Mr. McDonald said the programmatic approach of Vision Zero consolidates a great deal of work that is already underway by the City. The Vision Zero focus will combine and utilize scoring across multiple projects and programs that are currently separately scored, which provides the opportunity for a more effective and efficient use of CIP resources.

Ms. Robertson observed that some projects might reduce congestion, improve traffic flow, and/or enhance safety. She said it would be helpful for budget proposals to include at least a one-sentence evaluation relative to the Vision Zero objectives.

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak thanked the commissions for their work. He said he is seeing an increase in aggressive driving and speeding, as well as drivers making U-turns mid-block and in intersections. He questioned how the concepts of education and enforcement will be addressed.

Chair Zahn said the City's policies currently reflect the principles of engineering, education and enforcement. She suggested that adding the Vision Zero elements of encouragement, equity, and evaluation might help improve in the others areas.

Mr. Chelminiak observed that the City has historically done a good job of keeping fatalities and serious injuries at very low levels. He looks forward to seeing how the Vision Zero framework is reflected and implemented through the recently approved neighborhood transportation connectivity and safety ballot measure. He is encouraged by the policy recommendation for separated bicycle facilities where feasible. He thanked the Transportation and Planning Commissions for working together on this topic.

Ms. Zahn commended City staff for their work with the commissions. Mayor Stokes said there was a great deal of community involvement in the policy review, including through a public hearing. Mr. deVadoss thanked staff for their expertise and work as well.

Councilmember Slatter referred to the graph depicting serious injuries and fatalities and questioned whether the City evaluates the locations to determine whether modifications are needed.

Mr. McDonald said many existing projects are focused on areas with an increased number of incidents, including through the Neighborhood Traffic Safety program and the Accident Reduction program. He said Bellevue is evolving in its engineering standards to be more progressive in terms of defining spaces for different types of users in a way that will heighten their awareness of the overall transportation environment.

Mayor Stokes thanked everyone for the presentation and discussion.

(b) Destination Development Plan Conceptual Framework Briefing

City Manager Miyake said that creating the Destination Development Plan was a key component within the City's Economic Development Strategic Plan adopted by the Council in 2014.

James Henderson, Economic Development Director, thanked Micah Phillips, Project Manager, and Jesse Canedo, Economic Development Manager, for their work in managing the development of the plan. He thanked Stacy Graven, Executive Director of Meydenbauer Center; Sharon Linton, Marketing and Communications Manager, Visit Bellevue Washington; the Visit Bellevue Washington Advisory Committee; and the consultant selection committee for their participation and work as well.

Mr. Henderson said the Destination Development Plan reflects one of the main objectives of the Economic Development Strategic Plan and is intended to promote leisure and business travel to Bellevue. He commented on the connection between tourism and economic development, both of which depend on Bellevue's key assets including a safe community, vibrant business culture, and close proximity to regional amenities.

Mr. Henderson said the consultant selection committee included representatives of the Bellevue Arts Museum and downtown hotel and retail businesses that support tourism. The consultant selected by the committee is Resonance, which is based in Vancouver, B.C., and has considerable expertise in blending both economic development and tourism objectives into a robust implementation plan.

Mr. Henderson said tonight's agenda item presents the results of the situational analysis, which provides an overview of the data and background information, as well as the conceptual framework completed to develop the action plan. Phase 2 of the consultant's work will complete the implementation plan by the summer of 2017.

Ms. Graven described Phase 1 and the situational analysis completed to provide an overview of the tourism and visitor sector in Bellevue, compare Bellevue to other communities, and to analyze Bellevue's current competitive identity. The analysis included tourism asset mapping (e.g., attractions, activities, restaurants, entertainment, hotels, and other elements); stakeholder

engagement; an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; and an online survey from August 11 through August 29, 2016. Of the 881 survey respondents, 41 percent were previous visitors and 59 percent live or work in Bellevue. Ms. Graven noted that individuals who live and work in Bellevue are considered tourists and visitors as well.

Ms. Graven said the situational analysis work led to the presentation of the conceptual framework during a stakeholder meeting on October 19 involving 70 individuals.

Ms. Linton said the full situational analysis and conceptual framework is a 600-page report. She said one reason Resonance was selected as the consultant is its approach to using new technologies and user-generated ratings to understand the market. As examples, Ms. Linton described maps depicting shopping opportunities and high-quality culinary experiences based on reviews on the Yelp and Trip Advisor web sites. She said stakeholder engagement involved more than 50 individuals in group and individual sessions to address trends impacting Bellevue's tourism industry, product development needs, tourism growth and expansion opportunities, tourism industry actions, and policies and governance needed to support tourism.

Ms. Linton highlighted certain strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to Bellevue's tourism. She noted that Bellevue does not have a well-defined identity to distinguish itself from other destinations. Key opportunities for marketing include Bellevue's proximity and access to bodies of water, bicycling amenities, Eastside Rail Corridor, Grand Connection, Meydenbauer Center headquarter hotel, festivals, sports facilities, and cultural entertainment.

Ms. Linton said the purpose of the destination online survey was to understand who Bellevue is attracting and who it might attract in the future. The survey indicated that 50 percent of the respondents (both residents and visitors) are active adventurers (i.e., interested in nature, hiking, biking, etc.) and 40 percent are infrequent convenience travelers. The latter group is 70 percent female and is comprised of individuals who take fewer and shorter trips and are focused on shopping, dining, and fun attractions. Ms. Linton said issues to consider are family versus adult tourism, business versus leisure travel, day trips, and attracting visitors to return to Bellevue.

Ms. Linton said the conceptual framework established by the consultant identified seven general themes around which the Destination Development Strategy could be organized: 1) visitor activities and product development, 2) infrastructure development and physical assets, 3) market segments and visitor groups, 4) destination differentiators, 5) professionalizing the destination marketing organization (DMO), 6) regionalism, and 7) destination operations.

Ms. Linton said the project team recommends moving forward to Phase 2 to create the Destination Development Plan including strategies, programs, work plans, budget considerations, timing, performance measures, and monitoring mechanisms. This phase will involve the community in workshops, consensus building, and setting priorities.

Ms. Linton said the City funded Phase 1 of this work, and Phase 2 will be funded by Visit Bellevue Washington. She encouraged Councilmembers to attend the Tourism Spotlight Luncheon on Tuesday, May 16, at Meydenbauer Center.

Councilmember Robinson suggested a future bike tour through the Eastside Rail Corridor to Woodinville's wineries. She said tourism is one of the top four economic drivers in Bellevue. She said she likes the idea of considering residents and local employees as visitors and tourists as well.

Councilmember Robertson said Snowflake Lane, Wintergrass, and the Jazz Festival are well known local events. However, she suggested a stronger emphasis on marketing some of the smaller events. She referenced an article about Bellevue having some of the best Asian restaurants in the country and suggested that as a marketing opportunity as well. She encouraged focusing on both indoor and outdoor activities (e.g., shopping, spas, hiking, golf, kayaking, etc.).

Deputy Mayor Chelminiak thanked the guests for the update. He said it makes sense to highlight tourism as an important component of economic development. He suggested creating some type of signature event around technology, perhaps transportation technology. He observed that the Grand Connection and the Eastside Rail Corridor will be the major signature features in the future. He said it would be nice to have local events for nearly every week throughout the year. He said the growth in cultural and arts facilities (e.g., Tateuchi Center) will enhance tourism opportunities as well. Responding to Mr. Chelminiak, Ms. Linton said that fundraising events held at Meydenbauer Center raised \$10 million for nonprofit organizations in 2016.

Councilmember Slatter said she likes the idea of marketing to families. She noted the many activities available in Bellevue including the zip lines, swimming beaches, and KidsQuest Museum. She said there are a number of community events, including the Strawberry Festival and celebrations of different cultures, to attract visitors as well. She supports moving forward with Phase 2 of the consultant's work.

Responding to Councilmember Wallace, Mr. Henderson said he will work with staff to provide the results of the Phase 1 work online.

Mayor Stokes said he is pleased with the progress of this work. He noted the positive comments about Bellevue and suggestions from visitors. He likes the concept of marketing Bellevue as a good place to stay for accessing both local and regional activities and attractions. He encouraged a continued focus and financial support to keep this effort moving forward.

Mayor Stokes noted the Council's support for moving to Phase 2 of the project.

Ms. Graven thanked the City for its financial investment in the research and work to date.

- (c) Discussion of the Transportation and Land Use approvals associated with the Verizon Wireless small cell project, and pending Council action for the execution of a Right-of-way (ROW) Use Agreement with Verizon Wireless.

City Manager Miyake recalled that the Council recently heard concerns from residents about cell towers in neighborhoods, and the Council asked staff to come back with additional information.

Mr. Miyake said tonight's agenda item is intended to provide context for a Right-of-Way Use Agreement anticipated to come before the Council on December 12.

Mark Poch, Assistant Director of Transportation, described the Verizon Wireless Small Cell Right-of-Way Use Agreement. He said the Verizon small cell deployment requires both the transportation ROW approval and land use approval through an Administrative Conditional Use Permit (ACUP). He said the ROW Use Agreement application includes three projects.

Mr. Poch said the land use process cannot be used to prevent small cell deployment. He described examples of small cell and macro cell equipment. Small cells are located on utility and light poles and work in groups to provide consistent service.

Mr. Poch said Verizon's three projects under the ROW use application are the Archerline in North Bellevue, Newtoria in the Somerset/Lakemont/Eastgate area, and Starbel in the Downtown. The first two projects will be installed on Puget Sound Energy utility poles in residential areas. The Downtown project will be installed on City-owned light poles.

Mr. Poch said the land use approvals are already in process for the Archerline and Newtoria projects. Residents raised concerns about the projects, and a September 26, 2016 memo to the Council provided regulatory background information.

Mr. Poch said the ROW Use Agreement application was submitted on August 3, and Council action on the agreement is anticipated for December 12. There is no public process for ROW Use Agreements. The ACU permit for the Archerline project was approved and is under appeal. The processing of the ACU permit for the Newtoria project is expected early next year. Mr. Poch said ROW permits typically regulate the use of the ROW, construction, and traffic control. However, the permits are also required for communication connections.

Carol Helland, Land Use Director, described the legal framework for ROW use agreements. She noted there has been interdepartmental collaboration to address a number of issues and to balance community interests. She said federal and state regulations compel the City to issue ROW use agreements. The Federal Telecommunications Act states that the City cannot prohibit the provision of personal wireless service without substantial evidence. Similarly, state law indicates that City land use regulations cannot result in the outright prohibition of small cell deployment.

Responding to Mayor Stokes, Ms. Helland said the term "substantial evidence" is used in the language of the Federal Telecommunications Act in relation to issues of disruption to the ROW or to safety issues.

Ms. Helland said Bellevue's Smart City goals involve projects that enhance information and communication technology for improved livability, sustainability, and resiliency. The Smart City strategy supports the digital economy, consumer broadband services, smart networks, and connectivity through expanded Wi-Fi service. She highlighted policies in the Comprehensive Plan Utilities Element that encourage widespread, affordable, high-speed internet access and

telecommunications services and that maintain Bellevue's competitive advantage and attraction as a highly connected community (Policies UT-50 and UT-51).

Ms. Helland said one driver of the need for expanded technology infrastructure is the increasing mobile data usage. The impacts of insufficient capacity are slow data speeds, increased video buffering times, disruptions to video calls, connection problems, and dropped or incomplete calls.

Ms. Helland said Utilities Element policies also address balancing the deployment of equipment with the protection of neighborhood character (UT-53), require the reasonable screening and/or architectural integration of facilities (UT-64), protect Bellevue's aesthetic quality and infrastructure investment from degradation caused by telecommunications infrastructure (UT-65), and require the placement and design of wireless facilities in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts on adjacent land uses (UT-79).

Ms. Helland said the Land Use Code creates a hierarchy and encourages providers to streamline and conceal wireless macro cell equipment. She acknowledged the Council's previous interest in staff's review of the Land Use Code to determine better incentives for concealment designs. She said staff will discuss the code amendment work plan early next year with the Council and will request Council direction on how the work should be prioritized.

Ms. Helland presented photos of existing and proposed equipment. Next steps are to execute the ROW Use Agreement with Verizon, use the agreement to dictate design for small cell deployments in the near term, and to update the Land Use Code in the long term to adopt concealment requirements for small cell technology and to streamline permitting.

Ms. Helland noted that representatives of Verizon were in the audience as well as the City's outside legal counsel involved in creating the ROW Use Agreement.

Councilmember Robertson questioned whether the vaults would be underground. Mr. Poch said that, for underground deployment, a 2x3-foot vault is placed next to the pole to provide access for connecting the fiber cable. The vault is flush-mounted and there might be options regarding whether to place in a yard or in an adjacent sidewalk.

Ms. Robertson said she has been interested in updating the concealment technology language in the Land Use Code. She questioned whether the Code has provisions that would drive providers to places with lesser visual impacts (e.g., City Hall, water towers, etc.).

Ms. Helland said the hierarchy in the Land Use Code is better suited to macro cell equipment that serves a broader coverage area. The Code states a preference for locating macro cells in commercial districts before residential districts. Beyond commercial locations, the hierarchy for macro cells specifies deployments in the ROW or on non-residential structures in residential areas (e.g., churches, schools, water towers). The least desired locations are parks. Ms. Helland suggested that the City reevaluate the hierarchy for small cell technology.

Councilmember Robertson questioned why the City allows aerial backhaul lines for the wireless technology. Ms. Helland said the Comprehensive Plan addresses that issue and states that the backhaul is allowed in the aerial format as long as there is above-ground transmission or distribution equipment. In the event that the transmission or distribution equipment is undergrounded, backhaul lines must be undergrounded as well.

Councilmember Robinson asked staff to comment on the benefits for residents and businesses, as well as concerns from residents about visual impacts and potential electromagnetic exposure. Ms. Helland said the benefit to businesses and economic development is necessary connectivity. The benefits for the public are cell service capacity, data speeds, and avoiding dropped calls. She said some individuals conduct business from their homes and need an adequate level of service.

In terms of impacts, Ms. Helland said staff focuses on making the facilities as unobjectionable as possible to balance the need for service with the visual impacts. She said this is the start of the conversation, and amending the Land Use Code will involve the public in the consideration of minimizing impacts.

With regard to electromagnetic radiation, Ms. Helland said the Comprehensive Plan and the City's experience with the Energize Eastside project indicate that information on electromagnetic radiation is inconclusive. She said the federal and state governments preempt the City's authority to regulate based on radio frequency (RF). She said the City requires providers installing equipment to demonstrate that they are meeting the FCC requirements for RF levels.

Ms. Robinson questioned whether the installations affect competition between carriers in Bellevue. Ms. Helland said the City is trying to protect the residents' interests with regard to aesthetic issues. A primary concern with small cell technology is whether allowing the deployments will enable more colocations of equipment on the same poles. However, Ms. Helland said that other carriers will be able to deploy equipment on other poles, and utility poles are a resource available to them. She said Verizon has been the first provider to deploy small cells in Bellevue and has been working with the City for approximately nine months on the ROW Use Agreement. She suggested that updating the Land Use Code with regard to concealment techniques will provide a more predictable path for other carriers to pursue deployment.

Mayor Stokes said there is a strong demand for wireless services despite aesthetic concerns. Ms. Helland agreed, noting that Verizon has identified its service gaps to guide the placement of added equipment. Ms. Helland said one possible future provision is to ask carriers to meet with residents in advance of deployment to discuss neighborhood sensitivities.

Councilmember Slatter said it would be helpful to see data regarding service levels and data speeds in different areas of Bellevue. She appreciates the interest in addressing the issue through a Land Use Code Amendment while balancing the Smart City goals. Noting the state and federal authorities, Ms. Slatter questioned the potential for cities to influence those regulations.

Ms. Helland said the City Attorney has additional information regarding a joint effort to comment on the FCC rules. She said the City's outside legal counsel is involved in a consortium of cities addressing the potential for a broader approach to provide continuity across the region. Ms. Helland noted the high demand for data services, especially in the Downtown's concentrated population and employment center.

Councilmember Slatter questioned the technology advancement, now that it has gone from macro cells to small cell deployment. She hopes the equipment will continue to get smaller, and she suggested keeping this issue in mind when addressing the Land Use Code.

In further response to Ms. Slatter, Ms. Helland said the neighbors who met with City staff appreciated learning the process and sharing their concerns with staff. They found the visual simulations to be helpful in understanding the equipment impacts. Ms. Helland said the biggest issue with residents was the surprise of seeing multiple signs regarding the deployment. She said the City is modifying its approach to use smaller signs and to contain them to the utility poles versus residents' yards. Councilmember Slatter said she hoped the residents understand that their efforts helped to modify the signage process to provide a better experience for residents in the future.

Mayor Stokes noted there are residents as well who are not concerned about the equipment. He thanked staff for addressing the community's concerns and needs. He observed that Bellevue does not want citizens complaining about poor or inadequate service, and the City does a good job of working to mitigate project impacts.

Ms. Helland said the ROW Use Agreement will be presented in the December 12 Consent Calendar.

At 7:48 p.m., Mayor Stokes declared recess to the Regular Session.

Kyle Stannert, CMC
City Clerk

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