

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

November 1, 2017
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Walter, Commissioners Barksdale Carlson, deVadoss, Laing, Morisseau

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Terry Cullen, Nicholas Matz, Department of Planning and Community Development; Kevin McDonald, Department of Transportation

COUNCIL LIAISON: Mayor Stokes

GUEST SPEAKERS: Vic Bishop, Chair, Transportation Commission

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER
(6:41 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:41 p.m. by Chair Walter who presided.

2. ROLL CALL
(6:41 p.m.)

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
(6:42 p.m.)

A motion to amend the agenda to have the public hearing for the first two Comprehensive Plan amendments, followed by the study session for them, and then have the public hearing for the last two Comprehensive Plan amendments, followed by the study session for them, and to approve the agenda as amended, was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Laing explained the reason for revising the motion was that his law firm has an interest in the outcome of both of the last two Comprehensive Plan amendments and that he would recuse himself following the study session on the first two amendments.

4. REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
(6:45 p.m.)

Mayor Stokes thanked the Commission for its work on downtown livability and suggested a pat on the back was due. The City Council has acted to approve the packet and is anxious to see how things play out. He allowed that there is plenty of sentiment toward not waiting another 25 years before looking at the issues again. There is a good feeling in the community that the Downtown

Livability Initiative is something that is very positive.

With regard to the Comprehensive Plan amendments, Mayor Stokes said the staff reports do an excellent job of setting out the issues and their recommendations. The important consideration is whether or not each proposal meets the criteria. He said the Council is looking forward to the Commission's recommendations for each amendment.

Mayor Stokes said he was looking forward to the Commission's annual retreat.

5. STAFF REPORTS
(6:49 p.m.)

Comprehensive Planning Manager Terry Cullen reminded the Commissioners about the annual retreat scheduled for November 8 at Robinswood House at 5:00 p.m. Part of the retreat will be focused on the Commission's 2018 work program, but there will also be a conversation about things happening at the local and regional level that will affect change at the ground level in Bellevue, including population and employment, and the results of citizen and business community surveys. There will also be a discussion of the Commission's guiding principles.

Mr. Cullen reminded the Commissioners that they needed to be using their city issued email addresses only to send and receive all Commission-related emails. He also reminded the Commissioners to be charging both their iPads and their keyboards.

6. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS
(6:56 p.m.)

7. PUBLIC HEARING & STUDY SESSION
(6:57 p.m.)

A. Eastgate Office Park Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Mr. Cullen reminded the Commissioners and the public that under the Commission's newly adopted bylaws, the applicant or the applicant's representatives are allowed a single presentation totaling no more than seven minutes; additional time can be allowed only by the Chair or a majority of Commissioners. He said all persons wishing to provide testimony are allowed three minutes each.

Senior Planner Nicholas Matz explained that the list of initiated applications is the tool used for considering amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Amending the Comprehensive Plan is under the Growth Management Act limited to a single annual process. The Commission must determine whether or not each proposed amendment meets the established decision criteria in LUC 20.30I.150. The recommendations of the Commission will be forwarded to the City Council in the form of a transmittal memo. The Council is scheduled to take up the amendments on November 27 and December 11.

Mr. Matz noted that the 21-acre Eastgate Office Park site was expanded from the original 14 acres through geographic scoping. The two properties are located in the Eastgate subarea and were part of the Eastgate land use and transportation project for which Land Use Code amendments have been adopted. The Commission concluded during threshold review that the proposal should move into the work program, and that final review was the appropriate venue for reviewing the designation of the site. The Commission also concluded that the proposal

addressed significantly changed conditions given that the Eastgate process established new zoning districts that allow for mixed use and transit-oriented development.

The recommendation of the staff was to approve the Eastgate Office Park application to change the designation of the site from Office to Office/Limited Business. Mr. Matz said staff concluded that all five of the decision criteria associated with final review have been met. With regard to significantly changed conditions, the Eastgate land use and transportation project changes to the pertinent Eastgate subarea map were not considered for the sites, and the historical, geographical and development characteristics the sites hold in common with nearby OLB-designated sites was overlooked. The staff believe the site can be developed consistently with surrounding development under the potential zoning of OLB or OLB-2.

Mr. Matz said the site is part of the old Cabot, Cabot and Forbes development. The site has common build-out characteristics to other sites in the immediate area, including low-density low-rise office, surface parking, access that is either controlled or prohibited on 156th Avenue SE, the way access is gained from I-90, and the relationship to surrounding residential neighborhoods to the east and north. The site was overlooked during the Eastgate land use and transportation project even though it has characteristics that are similar to the development that occurs in the Office/Limited Business (OLB) areas to the south. That was in part because when the commercial subdivisions were originally approved, the site was all part of a the single Cabot, Cabot and Forbes development.

The issue of capacity on the site is predicated on various factors, including access to 156th Avenue SE, transition area requirements for additional landscaping and setbacks from the single family to the north, and the relationship to nearby commercial areas. The Office designation allows office uses, while the OLB designation allows office uses as well as ancillary uses and uses that support office uses, including eating establishments and hotel/motel uses. The setbacks for OLB and OLB-2 are very similar, but OLB-2 allows a richer range of ancillary uses and a larger Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.0.

Mr. Matz pointed out that written comments from the public had been included in the staff report. He added that the environmental review notes the sighting of Great Horned owls near the site. Following the deferral of the Eastgate Office Park application in 2016, the original habitat assessment 2016 was updated, and the material was used in the environmental assessment and the Determination of Nonsignificance, which concluded that any identified environmental impacts can be mitigated by existing regulation and policy. The written public comments refer to owl sightings as well as transportation impacts.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Ian Morrison with McCullough Hill, 701 5th Avenue, Seattle, spoke representing the applicant. He noted appreciation and support for the recommendation of the staff.

Mr. James Evans with Kennedy Wilson, a real estate investment firm based in Los Angeles that has a West Coast focus and that owns about a million square feet in Bellevue and some 500 apartment units spoke. He said the vision of what is happening in Bellevue very much supports long-term value creation.

Mr. Harold Moniz, a senior planner with CollinsWoerman, 710 2nd Avenue, Suite 1400, Seattle, voiced his support for the staff recommendation and said the decision to expand the geographic

scope was correct. The sites together will provide additional density and land uses to accommodate growth with the least amount of impacts while supporting mixed use and existing retail centers. The properties have convenient access to major freeways, transit and arterials to minimize transportation impacts, and allowing for increased uses in proximity to other properties will reduce the need to drive. A major public benefit of additional density and redevelopment of the site could be the completion and enhancement of the north-south pedestrian connection along the western property line, which currently dead-ends in a refuse area and parking lot. There is no clear trailhead to the Robinswood Community Park. The existing Land Use Code, recently modified to include OLB-2 and the transition district overlay, provides the regulations needed to ensure a graceful transition and environmental protections to redevelop the site in a respectful way. The Land Use Code does not allow any new structures within 30 feet of the northern property line, and all trees within 15 feet must be preserved.

Mr. Morrison suggested the proposed change has been a long time coming. It has been eight years since the start of the Eastgate transit-oriented development plan. The city is to be applauded for implementing the vision. The site was overlooked in 2010 by no ill intent and the opportunity now exists to do the transit-oriented development, to provide the multimodal trails, including the north-south connection. He agreed that there are owls in the vicinity, but the conclusion of the biologists is that because the trees on the northern part of the site must be retained, redevelopment of the site will not have a negative impact on the owls. The Comprehensive Plan amendment is an important step but it is only one step of many. There will still need to be a rezone approved, and any future development plans will be subject to site-specific reviews, including SEPA.

Commissioner Carlson asked what would change for all practical purposes should the proposed amendment be approved. Mr. Morrison said approval of the Council would effect a change to the map designation for the site. A rezone would need to be applied for and also approved. Mr. Evans said there is no immediate desire to redevelop the site. Given what has taken place in the community, there is the opportunity for future infill development with a focus on transit-oriented development.

Chair Walter welcomed the public to address the public hearing.

Mr. Rich Scrivner, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, planning manager for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), noted that the DNR owns the expansion area. He voiced support for the application, the diligence of the staff, and for the staff recommendation. He said the DNR site is already developed.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Matz clarified that the subject property is not the site of the designated transit-oriented development zone in Eastgate, which lies to the west. The OLB is a restricted zoning district primarily intended for office and supportive businesses, such as hotel/motel uses. The density by which office uses are measured is FAR; in OLB the FAR is limited to 0.5, and in OLB-2 the limit is 1.0. The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan in terms of providing a framework of stability around the long-term expectations regarding the redevelopment of the sites.

Commissioner Morisseau said it was not clear to her what the transportation impact would be of going to OLB-2. Mr. Matz said Comprehensive Plan amendment analyses consider everything

that could happen on a site to determine the greatest amount of development under the proposed designation. Starting with the maximum development that could occur on a site, factors such as impervious surface limits and setbacks are then taken into account, along with expectations of surface and/or under-building parking scenarios are considered to scale things back. In the case of the Eastgate Office Park, the assumption was made that it would redevelop with 95 percent office uses and five percent convenience and commercial uses. The conclusion reached was that there is a development potential of just over 900,000 square feet, which compares to the roughly 400,000 square feet of office that currently exists on the sites. The analysis includes looking at the maximum amount of development that could occur on the sites under the existing zoning. With those bookends, consideration is given to whether or not the mitigation of the impacts can be managed under the existing rules and regulations. While doubling the development on the sites sounds like a lot, 900,000 square feet on 21 acres is not.

Chair Walter referred to the site to the west where Sunset Village is located and asked if it was considered in the current application. Mr. Matz allowed that it was not. Geographic expansion looks at sites that are zoned the same in order to compare the benefits and constraints associated with redevelopment. The site in question is Community Business, which has an open-ended retail focus on businesses that serve the local community. The intent with OLB is for the retail uses to serve the offices associated with the redevelopment. The owners of the old Sunset Village site could come to the city with a Comprehensive Plan amendment seeking a change, but it would be far harder for them to make the argument that their site was overlooked in the Eastgate land use and transportation project given the fundamental focus of the project on offices and trying to understand how mixed uses could be brought in.

A motion to recommend approval of the Eastgate Office Park Comprehensive Plan amendment was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Complete Streets Comprehensive Plan Amendment

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Matz explained that the proposed amendment involves a series of text additions to existing policies of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. From the perspective of making the Comprehensive Plan function as a more consistent document, the Complete Streets process was focused on identifying gaps in the ability of the city to effectively manage its transportation network. Complete Streets, along with the already adopted Vision Zero, is a regulatory tool for the transportation department to use. The proposed amendment is one in a continuous series of steps aimed at maintaining the effectiveness of the transportation framework, and represents a tweak to an approach that has consistently demonstrated success over the years in broadening the way transportation networks are viewed.

A new four-paragraph Complete Streets narrative is proposed to be added that addresses in sequence safe and reliable mobility options and equitable access. The section will allow the city to share the underlying intent with other organizations and entities that provide funding and grants for projects in the city. Measuring safe and reliable options and equitable access is sometimes done in part related to funding received that in turn has strings attached calling for a demonstration of how the funds were used. The additional narrative will not get the city all the way to having safe and reliable mobility options and the provision of equitable access, but it will serve as a starting point for being able to measure it for funders and eventually for users.

Commissioner Carlson asked for an explanation of what equitable access is. Mr. Matz explained that equitable access refers to giving all of the different modes of travel equal access to the system. A person without a choice to use a car should have equitable access to other means of transit to get to their destination. Additionally, the different modes used to move people should provide access to their intended users. Commissioner Carlson asked if the language could be interpreted as meaning everywhere a car can go, a bike should be able to go. Mr. Matz said that would not be the case, rather the language is focused on how planning and implementation of transportation networks occurs to provide equitable access for all users of the systems. The federal government, which provides funds for projects, wants to understand how their dollars are used. When the city takes their money, or even when it uses its own funds, decisions are made about spending the money to move people; that needs to be done in a way that is the most equitable for everyone who uses the system.

Chair Walter said she was stuck on the language “equitable access for all travel modes.” She said she would interpret that to mean someone traveling as a pedestrian, by bicycle or by car can go in all the same places with equity. She asked if the Commission could simply choose to leave that language out. Mr. Matz said the Commission was free to revise the language at will. He reiterated that the phrase “equitable access” refers to access to the transportation network and the ability of people to move about the system in ways that work for them. He suggested that the perspectives of transportation staff and the Transportation Commission chair during the study session would be helpful.

Mr. Matz said the second paragraph of the narrative section also indicates that the Transportation Element supports a complete, connected and resilient multimodal transportation system. The statement is needed in asking people to think in different ways than they have in the past. The idea is not to say everyone gets an equal shot, but rather how to consider how best to use the transportation network to move people in and out of the community in scoping, planning, designing, building and maintaining projects in accord with all best practices.

The third paragraph of the narrative describes access for all modes of travel along convenient alternative routes in situations where it is not possible, practical or desirable to incorporate facilities for all modes on a particular street. The focus is not on taking the available right-of-way and saying every mode has to fit on it, rather it is on what works best for a particular street given how it is connected to the network.

The final paragraph of the narrative talks about maintaining and updating a transportation design manual that incorporates the best practices from specific professional organizations to implement the Complete Streets approach.

Mr. Matz said the Complete Streets approach moves away from siloing the various transportation networks and emphasizes consistency by not having one group thinking about cars, another thinking about bikes and another focusing only on transit, rather than by having all groups thinking about all of the modes equally relative to the transportation networks. The approach recognizes that things can change quickly in terms of technology, safety and reliability standards, and other new approaches that get integrated into the transportation networks. The amendment also demonstrates a public benefit by connecting with other measurable increases in community health, operations and performance of street corridors, and transportation funding from sources outside of city government.

Mr. Matz said the recommendation of the staff was to recommend approval of the Complete

Streets amendment. In the opinion of staff, the amendment meets the applicable decision criteria.

Chair Walter opened the floor to testimony from the public.

Mr. Vic Bishop noted that he was speaking as an individual and not as chair of the Transportation Commission. He provided the Commission with data he compiled from the Downtown Transportation Plan effort, which was done by the Transportation Commission in 2013 and 2014. He said the data provided perspective relative to the growth of trips that are planned in downtown Bellevue in the 20-year period between 2010, the base year of the Downtown Transportation Plan, and 2030, the horizon year. In 2010 there were a total of 385,000 person trips per day going in and out of the downtown. By 2030 that figure is projected to grow to 665,000, an increase of 280,000 trips, or 73 percent. Breaking down the total person trips per day by travel mode, he noted that by 2030 light rail will represent 2.4 percent of the total person trips; bus rapid transit will represent 0.6 percent; buses will account for 5.6 percent; bicycles will total 0.2 percent; walking will account for 11.4 percent; and people riding in automobiles will make up 79.8 percent of the total. Those figures assume aggressive actions to increase transit ridership. In 2010 the total number of transit boardings was 10,000 in and out of downtown Bellevue, and the assumption is made that by 2030 that will increase to 57,000, a fourfold increase. Even if the transit ridership projections prove to be correct, nearly 80 percent of all trips will still be by car. The Downtown Transportation Plan and the Complete Streets amendments both focus on how to allocate the previous space that is called public right-of-way to those who want to get in and around the city. Light rail will not solve the transportation problems. He provided the Commissioners with citywide data as well based on the Transit Master Plan.

Commissioner Carlson asked what the mode percentages are currently. Mr. Bishop said it is was 86 percent by car in 2010, zero percent by both light rail and bus rapid transit, and about 11 percent by walking, which is about the same as what is projected for 2030.

Commissioner deVadoss suggested the data actually argues against the Complete Streets amendment and in favor of preserving right-of-way for cars. Mr. Bishop said that is why in the Downtown Transportation Plan certain streets, including NE 8th Street, Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue NE, are designated to give priority to travel by auto. Other streets, such as NE 6th Street, are designated as giving preference to pedestrians. Still other streets, including 108th Avenue NE, are designated to give priority to transit. There are also bicycle priority streets.

Commissioner deVadoss said the data that suggests priority should be given to autos appears to be in conflict with the notion of equitable access. Mr. Bishop suggested that the Planning Commission was reading more into the notion of equitable access than the Transportation Commission did. What the Transportation Commission did was call for looking at all modes and all systems holistically in planning and building facilities and in allocating space according to the mode split.

Commissioner Morisseau said the data said to her that because the city does not have an equitable system, it can take far longer for someone using the bus to travel from point A to point B than it would take for someone driving a car. In many cases, those persons are left with no choice but to drive a car, which drives up the number of autos on the streets. Approaching things from an equitable and holistic view, all modes of travel will allow people to get easily from point A to point B.

Commissioner deVadoss commented that San Francisco has tinkered with their traffic signals to

keep cars traveling at about the same speeds as bicyclists. The approach makes it far more difficult to travel by car. If the data presented by Mr. Bishop is correct, it argues in favor of doing things that will make it even more painful than it already is for the largest chunk of commuters. Mr. Bishop suggested the data argues in favor of having a vast system with a wide range of streets. The bulk of the congestion faced by cars occurs on the arterial streets, and the city should be very careful in considering how to allocate that space. There are other streets that can handle the other modes of travel.

Commissioner Carlson asked if bus service in Bellevue has fallen, remained the same or increased over the past ten years. Mr. Bishop said it has increased from about 10,000 hours in 2010 to more than 14,000 hours in 2015. The number of buses running in more places at more times has also increased, though not substantially.

Senior Planner Kevin McDonald with the Department of Transportation said the opportunity to gain grant resources to help fund infrastructure projects using the direction from the Complete Streets policy to back up the applications has to some degree already happened. Usually policy leads the development of regulations, implementation strategies and ordinances. In the case of Complete Streets, however, the City Council adopted the ordinance embedding Complete Streets into regulation and requested the Transportation Commission to fill in the gaps in the existing policies to embed Complete Streets. The result of the Council approving the ordinance was a \$500,000 award from the Washington State Department of Transportation to help in the funding of a major pedestrian project in downtown Bellevue. The lynchpin in qualifying for the award was the ordinance.

Commissioner deVadoss asked if there is data to cities comparable to Bellevue that have rolled out similar approaches. Mr. McDonald said there are many different implications and metrics used by other communities. Many of them were channeled in the Complete Streets work but were not necessarily adopted into the policies because of the desire to establish a context-sensitive approach. Most cities use components such as the rate or number of collisions on the argument that the numbers will fall as Complete Streets elements are incorporated. Transit ridership increases where Complete Streets networks provide not only access for buses along the streets and potentially signal priority at intersections but also access to the buses from the neighborhoods. The Complete Streets network helps give focus to the last mile/first mile connections so people can get to the bus, allowing everyone equitable access to jobs, recreation, schools and shopping. Increased use of bicycles can result from the implementation of Complete Streets networks by providing a safe and connected system. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is another argument used by cities in favor of Complete Streets. Complete Streets concept also embeds an evolution in technology going forward by expecting things will change. Improving overall access for people of all ages and abilities is an objective of the Complete Streets policy, but the policy also implements the multimodal level of service policies that were adopted in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update.

Commissioner deVadoss asked what the one metric is that will indicate whether or not Complete Streets is working. Mr. McDonald said there is no one metric. Breaking Complete Streets down into the component parts of process and product will get there. The scoping part of Complete Streets provides staff with the direction and expectation that in looking at projects the people who will use the projects are to be considered, including their age, their abilities, their demographics and their geographic distribution of where they are and where they want to go. All planning, designing, implementing, building and maintaining follows from that perspective. As technology improves and as the city improves its ability to operate the system, the efficiency of the system for all who use it will improve.

Commissioner Morisseau suggested that one measure of success would be capacity for a specific mode. She said Complete Streets is all about achieving a systems network that is efficient for everyone who uses it. Mr. McDonald agreed and said he also concurred with the observation of Mr. Bishop that some streets have priority mode share over other modes, and the facility types and operation of the facilities will be designed accordingly. As an overall transportation system, the focus should be on the efficiency of the system to move people regardless of mode.

Commissioner Barksdale called attention to policy TR-21 and questioned how well the system is working for underserved populations can be measured. He said during the study session he would suggest a language change.

Mr. Will Knedlick, address not given, said his testimony applied to both Complete Streets and the Downtown Transportation Plan. He said he gave his car away in 2009 and as such is very interested in the ambitions of the Complete Streets process. He said he is president-elect of the Washington State Good Roads and Transportation Association, which was founded in 1899 as an advocacy organization for multimodal transportation, although the mobility universe was largely powered in the late 1800s by human feet, literal horsepower, steam locomotives and bicycles. The first motor vehicle reached the state of Washington in July 1900. The Association was founded by and guided for many years by Sam Hill, a Northern Pacific Railroad executive, precisely because he realized that good roads are essential for multimodal transportation, something that was recognized by the earliest territorial assembly when it met in 1854 and approved a public/private partnership approach to multimodal transportation well before the first bike arrived in King County 25 years later in 1879, and before the first train arrived in Pierce County in 1893. The territorial act to encourage the building of toll bridges and plank or turnpike roads is worth attention since it managed in a single page of legislative text to state the need, establish a policy, provide the legal authority, create the fiscal mechanism and establish the explicit requirement for the payment of full and fair market value for the conversion of roadways. The law is still on the books of the state of Washington and has an impact on both Complete Streets and the Downtown Transportation Plan. Staff have made a good start in dealing with several bicycle conflict issues that have been around for a century. Unfortunately, the work product is not recommendation ready. Most critically, the current Complete Streets and Downtown Transportation Plan updates conflate the needs of bicycles and pedestrians, which is a severe defect that needs attention before making any recommendations. An initiative is being circulated for discussion that would require bicyclists to be licensed to use roads, to be 16 years of age, have liability insurance equal to that of motorists, and to travel no less than five miles per hour under the applicable speed limit. That would have a substantial impact on the 300 bike riders who daily travel into and out of the city. The legislation will likely drastically reduce bikes as a mode of transportation in the state. Staff is likely not aware of an initiative to implement the 18th Amendment to the Washington state constitution will require roadways that are converted for bicycle uses that have in fact been funded in part with state constitutional trust funds to reimburse the full and fair market value of all roadway taken away for bicycle or other uses that while permitted are not used exclusively for highway purposes. The initiative will have a substantial impact on the city because making roadway conversions will cost the city tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars. That will also have an impact on the level of bicycle use in the city.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Carlson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barksdale and the motion carried unanimously.

Turning to the study session, Chair Walter proposed revising the language of policy TR-20 to

read “Manage all phases and aspects of the multimodal transportation system using a corridor approach throughout Mobility Management Areas.”

Commissioner Barksdale pointed out that the original language of TR-20 was very similar to the language of the Transportation Element goal and he asked why. Mr. McDonald said the weight of a goal statement in the Comprehensive Plan is different from the weight of a policy in the Comprehensive Plan. The staff must rely on policy direction as opposed to goal statements. The Transportation Commission chose to replicate the goal language in policy to provide clear direction toward the implementation of the Complete Streets strategy. Commissioner Barksdale recommended retaining the original language of TR-20, and to modify the goal statement to be somewhat more abstract. He suggested that “...manage all phases and aspects...” while simpler language, is too ambiguous.

Commissioner Morisseau said one alternative would be to revise the policy to read “Manage all phases and aspects...” and to include in parentheses “scope, plan, design, implement, operate and maintain...”

Commissioner Carlson suggested the policy language could not be amended to the point of being acceptable. He proposed starting over completely for the entire Complete Streets endeavor. Commissioner deVadoss concurred.

Commissioner Barksdale said if the Commission recommends going in that direction, the Commission should come to consensus about what recommendations to send to the Transportation Commission. Mr. Matz clarified that the recommendation of the Commission will be forwarded to the City Council, not back to the Transportation Commission. The Commission could choose to recommend not adopting the Complete Streets amendment and to remand it back to the Transportation Commission.

Mr. Cullen said choosing that path would require justification based on the decision criteria in the code, specifically which of the criteria is not met by the proposed amendment. The Commission cannot simply recommend not approving the amendment based on the language not being clear.

Chair Walter said she was not comfortable recommending approval of policy language that is not clear. She asked if the study session on the topic could be delayed.

Commissioner deVadoss highlighted the statement of staff that the proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions given the fact that there are more people using Bellevue’s systems. He said he would like to see some data backing up that statement and some clarification of what the implications of the proposal are.

Commissioner Morisseau commented that the Transportation Commission and staff put in a tremendous amount of work on the proposed amendment, and the Planning Commission should appreciate that. Just saying the work cannot be amended to anyone’s satisfaction is insulting to the Transportation Commission. One option would be to have the Transportation Commission and Planning Commission work together to find language that would satisfy both commissions.

Commissioner Carlson agreed that much work has gone into the proposal, but the Commission is tasked with voting on the good intentions of their work rather on the work product itself. The policy language as drafted is completely confusing and incoherent.

Mr. Cullen said it is too late try getting the Transportation Commission and Planning Commission together to work on clarifying the language. If the Council chooses to remand the amendment, it will not be seen again for another year. He proposed having Mr. McDonald and Mr. Bishop adding detail to what is meant by the specific policies. He reminded the Commissioners that the Transportation Commission, which has expertise in transportation matters that the Planning Commission does not have, has fulfilled the charge from the City Council. One option would be for the Planning Commission to recommend approval of the amendment and to include in the transmittal memo the statement that some of the language is difficult for the average person to understand, and that a way should be found to explain it in simpler terms. He stressed that transportation concepts are complex and are often very difficult to put succinctly into understandable language. The fact that transportation is complex is why the city has a commission specifically geared to that subject matter.

Commissioner Carlson called attention to the sidebar entitled "What is a complete street" and suggested the work product would be improved if the Commission were to adopt that. Mr. Matz explained that there are in fact three pieces to the amendment: the narrative, the policies and the sidebar explanation box. All three are designed to work in concert to give access at various levels of understanding about what is to be accomplished. Commissioner Carlson said the better approach would be to adopt the explanation box and scrapping the rest.

Commissioner Morisseau pointed out that the Planning Commission is not the transportation experts. The Transportation Commission received the direction from the Council and fulfilled its task. It is arrogant to suggest the work of the Transportation Commission should be scrapped simply because the Planning Commission does not understand it. Commissioner Carlson said the document is not unclear to the Commission because the Commissioners do not get it, it is unclear because it is incoherent, and it is incoherent either because the Transportation Commission does not know what they are trying to say or because they are trying to say something without really saying it. Either way the work product could be substantially improved.

Mr. Cullen pointed out that the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan is different from other elements in the Comprehensive Plan in that it has a completely different audience. It is not written for the average person on the street. It is intended for funders at the local, regional, state and federal levels, each of which has various and demanding requirements for words, approaches and nuances. Those various funders do in fact review the policies and the policies must make sense to them.

Chair Walter took exception with that statement and suggested that Bellevue policies are for the benefit of Bellevue residents. Accordingly, they should be written for Bellevue residents as opposed to being tailored for external funding. She said the city was in an awkward position of having the cart before the horse. The Commission is left with no option but to move forward even though the Commission as a body does not agree that moving forward is the right thing to do.

Commissioner deVadoss said he was certain the Transportation Commission put a lot of time and effort into the work, and he allowed that he was nowhere close to being an expert in transportation matters. He stressed, however, that the product makes no sense. The data is different from the inferences made; the metrics cannot be understood; and the argument for changed conditions is that more people are using the transportation systems. What is needed is an understanding of what is currently the case and how things will change.

Mr. Matz clarified that the changed condition argument is not that more people are using the

transportation systems, rather it is that there will be more people and thus there is a need to think about things differently from the way they have been considered in the past. Part of the work of the Transportation Commission was to look at the way things have been done in the past and identify the issues that need to be addressed differently going forward. The approach to date has largely been to expand capacity for single-occupant vehicles. There is a two-part test to determining changed circumstances: 1) has something happened that was not anticipated; and 2) does something need to be done in order to continue making the different parts of the Comprehensive Plan work together. In the case of transportation policies, that includes everything from funding to Vision Zero. If any one of them is out of whack and cannot be made to come back together without effecting a change, then a significantly changed condition exists.

Commissioner deVadoss said in inferred from that statement that what has changed is there is an inconsistency within the Comprehensive Plan with respect to the various sections. He said that is fascinating and said he would expect the city would react to what has changed with respect to the citizens of Bellevue relative to their needs, challenges and opportunities rather than to a delta because of an inconsistency with respect to text. Mr. Matz respectively suggested that that oversimplified his point about consistency among the various elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner deVadoss said in that case he apologized.

Commissioner Carlson agreed with the previous statement made by Commissioner deVadoss that the data seemingly undermines rather than bolsters the case for Complete Streets. Any time one is asked to accept a new strategy or program, or in the current case a new framework, if no clear benchmarks are supplied by which to measure success, something is wrong. Indicators and benchmarks should be made clear up front.

A motion to extend the meeting by half an hour was made by Commissioner Morisseau. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barksdale.

Commissioner Barksdale asked if within a half hour the Commission would be able to address the remaining two Comprehensive Plan amendments. Chair Walter said if not she would seek an additional half hour extension.

The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Morisseau suggested that the data can be interpreted differently by different people, and said in fact her view was that it argued in favor of exactly the opposite of what was argued by Commissioners deVadoss and Carlson. If the city has light rail, buses, bike lanes and safe pedestrian routes, the question to ask is why people favor using their cars instead. The way to answer that question is by looking at the system as a whole, which is what Complete Streets does. If the city wants to minimize the number of cars on the road, it will need to ask some very specific questions about the other modes of travel. If that is not done in the context of Complete Streets, the number of cars on the road will not be decreased. She said as a Bellevue resident she would like to see all the modes used to their full capacity.

Commissioner Carlson said the data was not his, rather it was from the Transportation Commission, that says there will always be a higher percentage of cars on the roads. Commissioner Morisseau said she was not referring to the data but rather how people choose to view the data.

Commissioner Morisseau said there are more criteria to be considered than just whether or not there have been changed circumstances. The Commission must conclude that at least one of the

criteria is not met in order to make the case that the amendment should not be adopted. As presented, the argument could be made that it is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner deVadoss said he did not see any clarity around the criteria of significantly changed conditions. He agreed that the cart is before the horse and said he understood that the city had already received funding for a project. With respect to the public benefit, he said he found it challenging to make a connection to the amendment, especially in that it lacks clear KPI metrics.

Mr. Cullen suggested that the call for metrics is more of a comment than an argument that the decision criteria are not met. He added that the argument made that the amendment is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan lacked specifics as to how.

Commissioner Morisseau said the staff report indicates the proposed amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan because it updates the Comprehensive Plan policy framework implementing the Downtown Transportation Plan. The fact that the Commissioners cannot understand what the amendment says, the Commissioners cannot tell whether or not that statement is true.

Commissioner deVadoss suggested the comments of Commissioner Carlson related to the clarity or the lack thereof with respect to public benefit, not that there was an ask for data, KPIs or benchmarks. He also said he could take offense at the statement that he did not understand the content of the amendment. He stressed that he simply cannot make the connections with respect to the arguments and the data. Commissioner Morisseau said her comment was in response to the comment made by Commissioner Carlson that the policies are incoherent.

Chair Walter called for a motion and vote on the amendment.

No motion was made.

Mr. Bishop, having been granted permission to address the Commission, said he is the current chair of the Transportation Commission but was not the chair at the time the Complete Streets amendment was adopted, though he noted that he was on the Commission at the time. He said in drafting the proposed amendment there was no intent on the part of the Transportation Commission to create new policy, rather to find the policies in the existing Comprehensive Plan that were in need of slight amendments in order to be consistent with the Complete Streets concept. For instance, policy TR-22 is an existing policy that has been in the Comprehensive Plan for a very long time. It was updated in 2015 as part of the overall Comprehensive Plan update. He allowed that the policy language uses difficult transportation words such as “mobility targets,” “transportation modes,” “mobility needs” and “Mobility Management Area,” each of which easily rolls off the tongues of the Transportation Commission members. Policy TR-22 was tweaked to come into alignment with the Complete Streets concept and to address multimodal level of service standards, but the specific intent of the policy was not changed in any way. That was the case with every policy, each of which has been in the Comprehensive Plan for a long time.

Commissioner deVadoss asked what exactly the amendment is intended to do if the essence of each policy already exists. Mr. Bishop said the intent is to wordsmith the policies in order to meet the requirements of the Complete Streets concept.

Commissioner deVadoss asked what significantly changed condition triggered the need for the

wordsmithing. Mr. McDonald said the significantly changed circumstance is the Council adoption of the Complete Streets ordinance, and the direction given by the Council to the Transportation Commission to find the policies in the Comprehensive Plan into which the Complete Streets concept could be integrated. The Transportation Commission took a minimalist approach toward integrating Complete Streets language into the existing policies. As recommended by the Transportation Commission, the policies are now consistent with the adopted regulation. In the event the policies are not changed, they will remain inconsistent with adopted regulation, which is the Traffic Standards Code 14.60.191.

Commissioner Carlson asked what will change in terms of transportation policy in the city by adopting Complete Streets. Mr. McDonald offered a concrete example in policy TR-20. He noted that the city has recently engaged the Northtowne community in a visioning process to look at the 100th Avenue NE corridor from NE 12th Street to NE 24th Street. The neighborhood has been involved in the scoping of the project to make sure it will meet their needs for walking, biking, transit use and driving. That public engagement process is utilizing the Complete Streets concept to foster a conversation about a corridor and to develop a strategy for changing the way the corridor operates. The approach is being used in anticipation of having the amendment adopted, which was recommended by the Transportation Commission a year ago.

Chair Walter asked how the Northtowne process is different based on the Complete Streets concept, and if some mode of transportation is being neglected without folding in the Complete Streets approach. Mr. McDonald said the Complete Streets policy will not drive the process or the outcome for a particular mode, rather it asks staff and the community to look at the universe of modes, apply them to a corridor, and consider the interests of the people who live around the corridor in developing a plan for how to design the corridor.

Mr. Bishop said the fact is that is the approach that has been used for a long time, but without policy direction to back it up. The amendment is needed in order to meet the requirements of the Complete Streets concept.

Chair Walter asked if the driving factor is the opportunity for funding that came up. Mr. McDonald asked the Commission to back away from the notion that money is driving the proposed amendment. Money was the stimulus for the Council to adopt the ordinance; there was some time sensitivity involved. The Council recognized that a Complete Streets network and the notion of embedding Complete Streets into the Comprehensive Plan was very important, and they directed the Transportation Commission to look at existing policies, identify gaps, and make recommendations to fill the gaps, all with the intent to embed in the things the city does the Complete Streets concept. The amendment is not about the money, but the money triggered the conversation subsequent to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update. Money does not drive the process of scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating and maintaining the system, rather it is the benefit of mobility, the safety, comfort and access of people who use the system. Complete Streets provides a framework in which all of that can be discussed with different audiences. Going forward, if a project goes forward without bike lanes, it will be because a deliberate decision was made not to include them through the community process that Complete Streets helps to support.

Commissioner deVadoss commented that because the city has already received the funding, and because there is a de facto policy in place, the amendment exercise is pointless apart from wordsmithing. He said for him the question goes back to what the significantly changed condition is. Commissioner Carlson added that any significantly changed condition must have occurred in just the last two years since the Comprehensive Plan was updated. Mr. McDonald

said the significantly changed condition is the language in the Traffic Standards Code, which was changed in just the last year, that creates an inconsistency between the existing policies, which do not mention Complete Streets, and the Traffic Standards Code, which calls for a discussion of Complete Streets.

Chair Walter asked what the specific Planning Commission role was in the whole exercise.

Commissioner Carlson asked what would change if Complete Streets is not adopted and things continue as they have been.

Mr. Cullen said the Council adopted the Complete Streets ordinance, which established a policy direction. Absent the plan language to back up the ordinance, the ordinance could possibly be legally challenged as future projects come forward. Mr. McDonald added that one requirement of the Growth Management Act is that jurisdictions must have policies that are consistent with regulations. Mr. Cullen reiterated that the primary changed condition is the fact that the Council adopted the Complete Streets ordinance in line with its prerogative to set direction for the city. Currently there is an ordinance on the books that does not have clear supporting plan language backing it, and that kind of uncertainty could open future projects to legal challenge.

Commissioner deVadoss said it appeared to him the role of the Commission was simply to rubber stamp the document. Mr. McDonald said it is not unprecedented that the Council asks the Transportation Commission to develop a policy recommendation based on a Council initiative. The role the Planning Commission plays is steward of the Comprehensive Plan. The Transportation Commission develops policy based on its expertise and passes it on to the Planning Commission to ensure integration with the rest of the Comprehensive Plan so that the document as amended is internally consistent. The role of the Planning Commission does not extend to creating technical amendments to the Transportation Commission's policy recommendation, but instead to figure out the best way to weave it into the existing Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Carlson asked if after recommendation by the Commission to adopt Complete Streets and the ultimate adoption of Complete Streets by the Council will make it more likely or less likely that an existing driving lane could be converted to bicycle lanes. Mr. McDonald said adoption of Complete Streets would make that neither more or less likely. There is an existing policy in the Comprehensive Plan that provides direction to look at the capacity of the roadway and to provide the allocation of that space to provide mobility to move people along the corridor. It gives direction to look at the capacity of the system to move people, something that Complete Streets does not do. Complete Streets is not the vehicle anyone would use to reallocate roadway space.

Commissioner deVadoss suggested that answer did not directly address Commissioner Carlson's question. He said it would be necessary to have a view into what the KPI is or the KPIs are, otherwise there can be no definitive answer. He allowed that he was flogging the horse but returned to his argument that there is no significantly changed condition. The more direct and honest approach would simply be to say loose ends resulting from inconsistent language need to be tied up.

Commissioner Barksdale said he was of the opinion that adoption of the ordinance by the Council represents a changed condition, particularly given that the ordinance was adopted after the Comprehensive Plan was last updated. Given that the proposed amendment does not make significant changes to existing Comprehensive Plan policies, there is no conflict with the

Comprehensive Plan. Complete Streets will provide increased system connectivity for all modes, which is a public benefit. He proposed the Commission approve moving the issue forward for consideration with some modifications to the language.

Chair Walter clarified that during final review action by the Commission is to recommend for or against approval, not to move the issue on for additional study.

A motion to extend the meeting time by 30 minutes was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Barksdale said he was ready to make a motion but wanted to modify the language to include language regarding measurement so it can be shown to what extent the amendment will create a public benefit. Mr. McDonald called attention to the last bullet in the discussion box and noted that it specifically calls about performance measures and states that Complete Streets performance is measured against adopted level of service standards and mode-specific plans. The adopted standards are housed in the Traffic Standards Code. There are also mode-specific plans, including the Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan and the Transit Master Plan. Additionally, performance will be evaluated based on community input.

Commissioner Barksdale commented that policy TR-21 includes among other things making sure the transportation system infrastructure provides mobility options for underserved populations. Level of service does not allow that. He proposed adding a new policy around evaluation that would read "Evaluate each policy relative to the desired outcome using qualitative and quantitative approaches to measure the success of the Complete Streets network and make adjustments accordingly."

Commissioner Morisseau suggested a timeline should be included in the new policy language. Commissioner Barksdale agreed and said it should be done annually. Mr. McDonald pointed out that community surveys are conducted every two years in association with the process of developing the budget. Modal and accessibility questions could be embedded in the survey. Commissioner Barksdale allowed that that timeline would work for him but stressed that he wanted the review to cover each and every one of the Complete Streets policy statements. Mr. McDonald said that would be holding Complete Streets to an entirely different standard than the other 2000 policies in the Comprehensive Plan. He said he would carry the proposal to the Transportation Commission on November 9 and seek to develop a good policy statement around it.

Commissioner Morisseau agreed and stressed that the recommendation of the Commission to the Council should be for the policies to be revisited for clarification and simplification on a biannual basis. Mr. Matz said the Council would need to provide direction to the Commission to conduct a review over the course of implementing the Complete Streets policies. The recommendation of the Commission should be to advise the Council as to how the Commission wants to come back and check the issue that it raises and the ability to make adjustments on a regular basis.

Commissioner Morisseau said with that she would second the motion on the floor as amended.

Commissioners Barksdale and Morisseau voted in favor of the motion, while Commissioners Carlson and deVadoss voted against the motion. Chair Walter abstained from voting.

Mr. Cullen pointed out that according to the bylaws, each member present or participating shall

vote on all questions put to the Commission, except on matters on which he or she has been disqualified for a conflict of interest or under the appearance of fairness doctrine.

Commissioner Barksdale asked if any of the Commissioners were actually not ready to vote on the motion.

Commissioner Carlson said the motion represented a vast improvement. He said he voted against the motion because Complete Streets as a framework fails the issue of demonstrating a public benefit. At its most charitable, Complete Streets adds another layer of bureaucracy and should be rejected.

Commissioner deVadoss said his no vote was based on his conclusion that there are no significantly changed conditions. The data does not back up the goal of the amendment. He said he also hoped that the Commission would not again in the future be put in the position of wordsmithing and retrofitting de facto policies.

Chair Walter withdrew her abstention and voted in favor of the motion, but expressed reservations. She said it was her understanding that the Council intends to have the Complete Streets policies adopted. She said she was unclear on exactly what the Commission's role is in instances where something has been passed and put into effect, leaving the Commission no choice but to approve supporting policy language.

Chair Walter asked staff to include in the transmittal memo the comments of the Commissioners regarding the process.

BREAK

A motion to revise the agenda to move item 7D ahead of item 7C was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Old *Seattle Times* Building

Mr. Matz explained that the site-specific Comprehensive Plan amendment, which was initiated by the City Council at the request of the property owner, proposes a map change for .95 acre site from a split of Downtown-Mixed Use (DT-MU) and Professional Office (PO) to all DT-MU. The southern downtown boundary was revisited during the recent Comprehensive Plan update process and the Downtown and Southwest Bellevue subarea plans were revised to resolve instances of designations and the consistent zoning crossing through properties where there was no boundary associated with it. Properties split by zoning lines are rendered less able to redevelopment according to the Comprehensive Plan vision. The conflicts were resolved for the four Vander Hoek, Rogers and Par 5 properties. The Old *Seattle Times* building site was also considered but the city was unable to contact the property owner so the site was not included in the boundary line adjustments in 2015.

Mr. Matz said the recommendation of staff was to recommend approval of the proposed amendment on the grounds that all five decision criteria have been met. The amendment addresses the interests and changed needs of the city. Modern tools are now in place to successfully manage hard line transitions at the edge of the downtown as well as changing economic conditions, allowing for the realization of full development instead of split development. Essentially, the tools level the playing field for the properties so that they can take

advantage of the designations that exist on other properties.

The amendment also addresses significantly changed conditions. The split designation constrains the city's ability to implement the Comprehensive Plan with compatible redevelopment. The Comprehensive Plan has no means by which split designations are considered. Split designations must be addressed on a site-specific basis, which is why the subject property was not addressed during the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to extend the meeting by 30 minutes was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Ian Morrison with McCullough Hill, 701 5th Avenue, Seattle, agreed with the details in the staff report and with the recommendation of the staff. He allowed that during the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update the staff made every attempt to contact the property owner, who is overseas, but without success. The current proposal seeks to clean up the issue of the split zoning. He said there is more than 450 feet between the site and the nearest single family zoning district, which is an adequate buffer. He urged the Commission to recommend approval of the amendment.

There were no members of the public wishing to address the Commission during the public hearing.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

Turning to the study session, Chair Walter asked if staff anticipated any more changes to the downtown boundary that might infringe on the neighborhoods to the south. Mr. Matz said he did not.

A motion to recommend approval of the Old *Seattle Times* Building Comprehensive Plan amendment was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morisseau and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Downtown Transportation Plan

Mr. Matz said the amendment represents work that was done to take updates to the Downtown Transportation Plan and incorporate them into the Downtown subarea plan. He said actions have already happened at the ordinance level, and the amendment seeks to ensure being able to use the Comprehensive Plan in the manner in which it was intended. The Downtown Transportation Plan looks more broadly at how modes and corridors are used to move people in, out and around the downtown.

Mr. Matz said the conclusion of the staff was that the amendment is consistent with the four applicable decision criteria. Particularly, the proposal addresses the interests and changed needs of the city, and demonstrates a public benefit in the public health, safety and welfare of the community. An all-modes approach is embedded in the transportation corridors and networks using a balanced approach that will lead to measurable benefits for the downtown. At the end of the day, the proposal seeks to amend existing language in the Downtown subarea plan that

relates to a transportation plan functionality. An extensive review and engagement process was utilized in bringing the work forward for the Commission's review and validation. The proposal affirms and updates the downtown focus on the "Great Place" strategy; it updates numbers, figures and references to completed projects and adds new policies to emphasize local goods and services. In addition, it integrates the Complete Streets policies into various elements of the subarea plan, including Downtown Streets, Signature Streets and midblock crossings. The proposal removes some dated district-specific policies in various Downtown Neighborhoods districts; updates a section in the Downtown Parks, Recreation and Open Space policies; removes or amends dated policies in Neighborhood Traffic and Parking Management; and updates other elements, including Downtown Mobility, Downtown Land Use and Transportation Implementation, Downtown Roadway Access and Transit Mobility, for the purpose of transportation and circulation discussion. The amendment adds new and revised sections in multiple subsections of the subarea plan, including Downtown Roadways, Mid-Block Access Connections, Downtown Transportation Demand Management, Downtown Off-Street Parking Demand and Utilization; adds a new section on Downtown Curbside Uses: On-Street Parking, Taxi Stands, and Electric Vehicle Charging Stations; updates the Downtown Pedestrian facilities narrative and policy; and updates the Land Use Implementation section.

Commissioner deVadoss asked why the amendment was not made a part of the Complete Streets amendment. Mr. McDonald explained that the Complete Streets amendment applies citywide and the Downtown Transportation Plan is specific to the downtown. The amendment reflects the work done by the Transportation Commission on the Downtown Transportation Plan, which is far more descriptive and prescriptive than the Complete Streets policy.

Commissioner deVadoss suggested the issue was similar to the Complete Streets issue in respect to the role of the Planning Commission in going through a process that is essentially a de facto initiative.

Commissioner Barksdale asked how ordinance changes are allowed to occur prior to having supportive policies in place. Mr. McDonald explained that the Downtown Transportation Plan was not adopted as an ordinance, rather as a plan developed by the Transportation Commission and accepted by the Council, which then directed the Transportation Commission to recommend amendments to the Downtown subarea plan to implement the Downtown Transportation Plan. The policies in the Downtown subarea plan will provide the direction to staff and the anticipation to the community of what is expected relative to downtown transportation going forward. The Downtown Transportation Plan is far more important in terms of implementation than is Complete Streets in that currently there is no policy on downtown transportation other than the one that was adopted in 2004. A lot of circumstances have changed since then.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Vic Bishop, 2114 West Lake Sammamish Parkway, spoke as an individual and not as chair of the Transportation Commission. He voiced support for the policies in the proposal. He pointed out that while the Transportation Commission spent half of one meeting on Complete Streets, it spend three years on the Downtown Transportation Plan. The Downtown Transportation Plan is a big deal. He said the data he provided earlier was applicable to the Downtown Transportation Plan and commented that when the policies are implemented there will be strong consideration given to alternative modes of travel. The Transportation Commission adopted the policies initially in 2014 and refreshed them in 2017. The reason the package was not previously brought to the Planning Commission was due to the assumption that the Downtown Livability Initiative

would require Comprehensive Plan changes. With the way downtown livability played out, it was not necessary to change transportation plan policies. He reiterated that the data he shared with the Commission was from the Downtown Transportation Plan process.

Commissioner Morisseau asked if it was a fair assessment that by applying the policies, the percentages and ratios included in Mr. Bishop's data sheet would play out by 2030. Mr. Bishop said that that was the case.

Mr. McDonald said that was not exactly the case. He noted that there were two pieces of information presented by Mr. Bishop. He said it was accurate that the data reflected the information presented in the Downtown Transportation Plan. For 2010, the numbers are data, but for 2030 the numbers represent a forecast. The trajectory is in the direction outlined by Mr. Bishop's data, but forecasts are only as good as the inputs. Technology is changing rapidly, the nature of how people choose to get around is changing rapidly, and the forecast may not play out exactly as indicated. The city is constantly refreshing its forecasts using the most up-to-date data so that as policies are implemented it is done in the right way.

Mr. Bishop added that the Downtown Livability Initiative changed the location of where some of the development will occur, but the projections for population and employment by 2030 did not change. Under downtown livability, some of the development will occur closer to the freeway, and the transportation modeling done show that will actually make things a bit better in the out years, primarily because trips in the downtown will be shorter and fewer intersections will be impacted by virtue of being closer to the freeway. There is not, however, any discussion in the Downtown Transportation Plan that indicates how the transportation system will function at full build-out of the land uses in the Comprehensive Plan. The plan indicates the system will work with the development projected to occur through 2030.

Commissioner deVadoss asked Mr. Bishop what implications he was expecting the Commissioners to draw from his chart. Mr. Bishop said he wanted the Commission to avoid thinking that alternative modes of travel will solve the transportation problems in Bellevue. The growth in vehicle trips is projected to be dramatic. King County Metro operates one of the best bus transit systems in the country in terms of the percentage of trips, but even so, it cannot solve Bellevue's transportation issues. Commissioner deVadoss said if that is the case, questions remain around why and when the city should prioritize multimodal trips given that for the foreseeable future the auto will continue to be dominant. Mr. Bishop said that was the thrust of his message and why he was speaking as an individual and not as chair of the Transportation Commission.

Mr. McDonald reiterated that Mr. Bishop's data was derived from the modeling of daily trips. Where the crunch comes in is peak hour trips. All of the metrics and standards used by the city to develop and operate the roadway system are based on peak hour. During the peak hour, where modes can be shifted, big differences can be effected in the operation of the system. On a daily basis, there is not the pressure on the intersections in the system to accommodate the modes, but during the peak hours, especially during the evening peak when everyone is trying to leave the downtown at the same time, the name of the game is reducing the number of single-occupant vehicle trips. The bar chart reflecting person trips is accurate, but the focus is on reducing the number of vehicles on the road, not the total number of person trips.

Commissioner deVadoss asked how a focus on multimodal will drive down the number of vehicles while still being able to meet the clearly need in terms of person trips. Mr. McDonald said the numbers represent trips to, from and within the downtown. The land use pattern

recommended by the Planning Commission and approved by the Council facilitates more of the internal downtown trip taking and less coming and going by providing opportunities for housing and offices within the downtown, making it easier for people to walk to and from work or to and from errands. The definition of a trip taken by a human being includes simply crossing the street, regardless of the mode. A person going from their office to get coffee across the street registers two trips in the process. The multimodal strategy that seeks to accommodate trips within the downtown is very important when it comes to overall mobility and access to jobs and housing. Part of the Downtown Transportation Plan involves advocacy to the regional transportation providers, the Washington State Department of Transportation, Sound Transit and King County Metro, to enhance service to and from the downtown so people will have choices other than using their vehicles.

Commissioner deVadoss said he remained confused by the data and how it is being interpreted. He suggested the city should strive to meet the projected demands of the citizens in a way that will make them want to live and work in Bellevue. Mr. McDonald responded by saying the Downtown Transportation Plan has embedded within it many roadway network assumptions. Those roadway projects were adopted as part of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update into what is called the Comprehensive Transportation Project List. Those projects are part of the network assumptions the model uses to generate the trip distribution patterns.

Commissioner Morisseau pointed out that the data shows in 2010 the mode split by car was 86 percent, but by 2030 the data shows a decrease to 79 percent. Mr. Bishop agreed and said those figures represent percentages of the total trips. While there is a projected reduction in the vehicle mode share, there is an overall dramatic increase in the total trips.

Chair Walter said that will mean more cars in the same amount of space. She voiced concern over having a discussion of transportation issues that includes through block connections, which have always sounded like a taking of private property for a public function. The city puts itself at risk of challenge by asking private property to give up land for throughways that are to be open 24/7, which is problematic from an insurance standpoint as well as from a safety standpoint, and it has implications for the police.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner deVadoss and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Walter said she would like any policy related to providing for through block pedestrian connections, specifically S-DT-144 and S-DT-162, to be eliminated from being part of transportation policy. She said through block connections are open space but not transportation.

With regard to the issue of paying for parking, Chair Walter stated that Bellevue was built on free parking. To solve transportation problems by making people pay to park is the wrong approach. The Commission previously voted down policy TR-11 that dealt with the same issue. The exception is on-street paid parking. She said she would like to see eliminated all references to paid parking or asking buildings to incent people not to drive cars by charging for parking. Specifically, she said she would like to see the word "pricing" deleted from the second line on page 28 of Attachment A. The amount a building wants to charge for parking should be between the building owner and the tenants. Charging for parking will put pressure on the surrounding neighborhoods.

Commissioner Barksdale suggested that there should be a policy included that calls for an evaluation of the Downtown Transportation Plan. Mr. Matz said it would be up to the

Commission to add that to the motion. Mr. McDonald said such a policy could be added, but an evaluation is conducted anyway every ten years when the plan is updated. He said where the Downtown Transportation Plan differs from the past plan documents and policies is in regard to the qualitative realm. It is a companion to the Downtown Livability Initiative that marries the transportation system components with the building components to make quality of life and the safety of people in the downtown a higher priority. There are a very large number of real metrics behind the scenes; the qualitative part is what is new.

With regard to the issue of parking and pricing, Mr. McDonald said the Downtown Transportation Plan addresses the issues relative to on-street parking and off-street parking. Currently there are some 350 on-street parking spaces, all of which are free but time limited. There is policy that suggests at the appropriate time a system of paying for on-street parking should be explored. Such a system would in fact increase the overall parking supply by increasing turnover through limiting the amount of time vehicles are allowed to spend in a parking spot. The practice is important in terms of curbside management more than for trip reduction. Off-street parking is the parking provided in buildings for the benefit of employees, residents, shoppers and visitors. The city has no control over the management of off-street parking. However, the city requires the provision of a certain number of parking spaces in buildings, and through the Commute Trip Reduction program pricing is included as a tool for building managers to manage their parking spaces, the goal of which is to reduce the number of peak hour single-occupant vehicle trips. That longstanding policy is not one the Transportation Commission changed in the development of the Downtown Transportation Plan. It is embedded in the citywide commute trip reduction strategy that was recently adopted, and it applies only to employees, not to retail or residential. He advised against taking it out of the Downtown Transportation Plan policies.

Mr. Matz explained that the action of the Commission some years ago relative to policy TR-11 was opposed to an attempt to broaden the application of the commute trip reduction pricing tool building managers can use for employee parking. The policy focus in the Downtown Transportation Plan references a specific tool of the Commute Trip Reduction Act building managers can use. The decision-making authority continues to rest with building managers, and the policy direction does not dictate that everyone must charge for parking.

Chair Walter said in her view the policy direction was a stick rather than a carrot, which is not the Bellevue way. Mr. Matz said the city operates under the Commute Trip Reduction Act and charges city employees for parking at City Hall. It is the city's choice to do that. He said those who choose to drive their cars to City Hall pay a monthly fee of \$108. He said he personally chooses to not drive his car in order to save money. The city does not force its employees to leave their cars at home. The purpose behind charging for parking is to reduce the number of single-occupant trips. The fee is not punitive and in fact serves as an incentive. In fact, the city purchases bus passes for all of its employees who choose not to drive alone. Chair Walter disagreed with the notion that charging for parking is not punitive. To pay for what previously was free is not an incentive, it is a cost. Mr. Matz reminded her that the policies in question apply only in the downtown, not citywide.

With regard to policies S-DT-144 and S-DT-162, Chair Walter said if the two policies remain unchanged in the document she would not be able to vote in favor. Mr. Matz reminded her that the policies are existing policies and the proposal is to amend them. The requirements for midblock crossings also exist in the Land Use Code and serve as an incentive for the transportation system in the downtown, and they give developers a tool to gain benefit for their projects.

Commissioner deVadoss suggested that given the late hour and the fact that a minimum number of Commissioners was present to maintain a quorum, and given the fact that the topics under discussion are of interest to all Commissioners, he suggested tabling the discussion to the next Commission meeting. Mr. Cullen said unfortunately time would not allow for that since the Council's hearing date has been set for November 27. Mr. Matz added the timeline is very narrow to facilitate having the Commission's recommendation reviewed by other departments and have the transmittal documented drafted and approved.

Chair Walter reiterated her concern about having two significant topics brought before the Commission with a charge to simply pass them on. Mr. Matz reminded her that the Commission could recommend the document and include in the transmittal an outline of the issues the Commission would like to see addressed, such as midblock crossings and parking pricing. The ability of the Commission to address what it wants to see addressed would not thus be compromised.

Chair Walter pointed out that the document represents three years' worth of work, that only four Commissioners were present, and that two of the Commissioners not present are noted advocates for certain positions relative to transportation. If the transmittal can advocate relative to S-DT-144 and S-DT-162 to clarify that no taking is involved and that the intention of the Commission is not to charge for parking or incent certain things to the detriment of other things, she would be okay with moving it forward. Mr. Matz said the transmittal can be qualified to assure not just the recommendation but also the intent of the Commission.

A motion to recommend approval of the Downtown Transportation Plan, and to draft the transmittal memo to provide specific direction relative to clarifying the issues outlined by the Chair, was made by Commissioner Morisseau. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barksdale and the motion carried 3-1, with Commissioner deVadoss voting against.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Barksdale argued against having four public hearings on a single agenda. Mr. Cullen agreed but said to a large degree the schedule was dictated by the Council's initiation of a late-cycle amendment in September. That triggered the need to move the public hearing from October to November, which created a time crunch. Additional study sessions before the Commission were contemplated, but it was difficult in getting a quorum. One meeting in September and rescheduled to October had to be canceled for lack of a quorum.

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. October 4, 2017
- B. October 11, 2017

A motion to move approval of the minutes to a future meeting was made by Commissioner Morisseau. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barksdale and the motion carried unanimously.

11. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

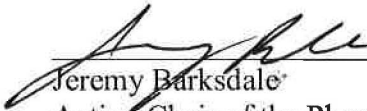
13. ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Barksdale. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morisseau and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Walter adjourned the meeting at 10:53 p.m.


Terry Cullen
Staff to the Planning Commission

1/25/18
Date


Jeremy Barksdale
Acting Chair of the Planning Commission

1/24/18
Date