

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

February 5, 2018
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Chelminiak, Deputy Mayor Robinson, and Councilmembers Lee, Nieuwenhuis, Stokes, and Zahn

ABSENT: Councilmember Robertson

1. Executive Session

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m., with Mayor Chelminiak presiding. There was no Executive Session.

2. Study Session

(a) Report on the Findings of the 2017-2018 Human Services Needs Update

City Manager Brad Miyake recalled that the Council last discussed this topic in April 2017. Since that time, the Human Services staff completed the 2017-2018 Human Services Needs Update, which is published every two years. The update guides the funding recommendations from the Human Services Commission as part of the City's budget process.

Patrick Foran, Director of the Parks and Community Services Department, introduced staff and Judith Mercer, Human Services Commission Chair, to highlight the findings of the Human Services Needs Update.

Ms. Mercer said the Commission oversaw the planning and development of the needs update and several Commissioners participated in a number of community conversations. She said that, as usual, the City received more requests than can be supported by current funding. This fall, the Commission will present its funding recommendations based on data and input from the community. The needs update reflects Bellevue's growth and its increasing diversity across cultures and needs. Ms. Mercer thanked the Council for its ongoing strong support of human services in Bellevue.

Alex O'Reilly, Human Services Manager, said Bellevue has maintained a biennial needs assessment report since the 1980s. The needs update guides the recommendations of the Human

Services Commission for the allocation of the 2019-2020 Human Services Fund, which totals approximately \$3.2 million annually. Ms. O'Reilly said housing continues to be a major issue, as are issues that affect the ability to retain housing including low-cost legal support for landlord/tenant issues, food support, access to affordable health care, and help in finding or maintaining employment. She noted that Hopelink and Solid Ground, through funding from the City, provide emergency, one-time funds to help people from falling into homelessness due to an unexpected event (e.g., car repair, medical bill). Bellevue funds scholarships for morning and after-school programs for children of low-income working parents, and Catholic Community Services provides volunteer transportation for older adults to allow them to access services and activities.

Ms. O'Reilly said that information for the needs update was gathered through phone and online surveys, community conversations, provider surveys, and consumer surveys. More than 700 people participated in the surveys, which provide valuable information to assist the Human Services Commission in developing its recommendations.

Ms. O'Reilly said the five themes reflected in the needs update are: 1) affordable housing, 2) homelessness, 3) racial and ethnic inclusion, 4) mental health issues and substance use disorder, and 5) transportation options to access services, schools, and jobs. In 2017, 11 percent of phone and online survey respondents rated the lack of affordable housing as the top problem in the community. Nearly one in three Bellevue renters are cost burdened, and one in six renters are severely cost burdened.

The number of homeless students in the Bellevue School District increased from 58 in 2006-2007 to 257 in 2016-2017. During the same period, the Eastside winter shelters served 429 men, 192 women, and families representing 137 adults and 182 children. Ms. O'Reilly said The Landing, the shelter for youth and young adults in Redmond operated by Friends of Youth, might need to expand along the I-90 corridor due to the increased needs of this population.

Ms. O'Reilly said that the number of phone and online survey respondents identifying racial or ethnic discrimination as a major or moderate community problem increased from 17 percent to 24 percent between the past two needs updates. Similarly, teachers, service providers, and first responders have recognized increased concerns within the community regarding immigration issues. With regard to mental health issues and substance use disorder, there has been an increase in suicide ideation among youth, including some younger children, and an increase in opioid and heroin use among both adults and youth.

The human services funding application process begins in mid-March and applications are due mid-April. The Human Services Commission's recommendations will be presented to the Council this fall. Ms. O'Reilly noted that the City typically receives approximately 100 funding applications.

Deputy Mayor Robinson, Council liaison to the Human Services Commission, thanked staff and the Commission for their work. She said the work of the needs update is critical to the effective allocation of funding. She noted that she serves on the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Oversight Board and the Eastside Human Services Forum as well. As a physical therapist

working with older adults and the sister of a lawyer who works with the housing justice project, Deputy Mayor Robinson said she sees how the funding makes a difference in people's lives.

Councilmember Lee commended the hard work of the Human Services Commission. He said the demand for services is high, and there is never enough funding. He appreciates the time the Commission spends to review and consider funding applications. He said the City spends a significant amount of money on the Capital Investment Program (CIP) and suggested perhaps a CIP related to human infrastructure. Mr. Lee noted the need for services for older adults, youth, and families. He requested more information regarding the needs related to immigrants. He said the percentage of students who have considered suicide is alarming, and he requested information on mental health programs.

Councilmember Stokes observed that even in this affluent and educated community, there are serious human services needs. He noted that other City resources will help provide related services and programs, including the permanent men's homeless shelter. Following up on Councilmember Lee's earlier comments, Mr. Stokes suggested that perhaps the Council would want to consider a human services levy. Mr. Stokes noted that the region will need to address the opioid crisis as well.

Councilmember Zahn said she likes the holistic view reflected in the needs update. She said it is important to get to the root causes and prevention of crises, including homelessness and mental illness. She appreciates references to veterans, who might have unique needs due to their experiences while deployed for military duty. She said it is important to evaluate the return on the City's investments in human services to ensure accountability. She said she would like a better understanding of transportation needs, including information on the gaps in transportation services.

Ms. O'Reilly said the Human Services Commission and the Bellevue Network on Aging will hold three sessions, beginning tomorrow, to discuss the needs of underrepresented groups in the community. Ms. Zahn said it would be helpful to work with other populations as well to determine specific transportation needs.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked staff and the Human Services Commission for their work and commitment. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. O'Reilly said the City conducts a survey of approximately 60 providers, both funded and not funded by the City, to identify trends and gaps in needs and services. Human Services staff also conducts community conversations and works with other City department staff, the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network, Bellevue College, and immigrant-focused organizations. Consumer surveys are printed in five languages and are distributed at the Mini City Hall and other locations to solicit additional input.

In further response to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. O'Reilly said the City is always looking for ways to expand public outreach to groups that staff might not know much about. In recent years, a panel of individuals provided information on the Muslim Community Resource Center for the Human Services Commission. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. O'Reilly said staff and the Commission have discussed how to enhance the focus on prevention and addressing problems early.

Mayor Chelminiak asked Human Services Commission Chair Mercer to provide a brief overview of the overall funding process. Ms. Mercer said the same funding application is used for the entire Eastside, and Bellevue is a leader in collecting and considering all of the applications first. The Commission reviews the applications and forwards them to staff with any questions or requests for information. City staff will use that information to create a draft recommendation list, which will be discussed in greater detail by the Commission. Ms. Mercer said the Commission also reviews information regarding past funding by Bellevue and other cities.

Mr. Chelminiak thanked Commissioners for their thorough process and commitment to the most effective use of human services dollars. He suggested it will be appropriate to consider action items in the Affordable Housing Strategy when reviewing the City's capital budget this year. He said there is a formula for funding human services, and the City provided supplemental funding during the recession. He acknowledged that there are human capital issues to focus on through the upcoming budget process.

Mr. Chelminiak expressed concern regarding the number of households spending 50 percent of their income on housing. He characterized the issue of affordable housing as attainable housing, or the ability to obtain and retain housing. He commended the City's outreach and engagement with the community and service providers in identifying and assessing human services needs.

(b) Update on Scope and Timing for Implementing Downtown Demonstration Bikeway Project along 108th Avenue NE

Mayor Chelminiak introduced staff's update on the Downtown Demonstration Bikeway Project, which was identified in the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and the 2015 Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative.

City Manager Miyake recalled that staff and the Transportation Commission most recently briefed the Council on this topic on March 13, 2017.

Transportation Director Dave Berg said public outreach on the Downtown demonstration bikeway project was coordinated with a recent event to introduce the potential for a bike share system in the Downtown this spring. He noted the City's commitment to multimodal transportation as reflected in the Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element and in the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, which identifies the 10-year goal to implement at least two north-south bicycle routes and two east-west routes through Bellevue. The plan also includes a five-year goal to implement at least one connected east-west and north-south bicycle route through Downtown Bellevue.

Mr. Berg acknowledged that the City is lagging in meeting those goals. In April 2016, the Transportation Commission approved, and the Council adopted, the Bicycle Rapid Implementation Program (BRIP) with action-oriented strategies to advance the vision of the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.

Franz Loewenherz, Principal Transportation Planner, said the BRIP report identifies 52 project ideas creating 57 miles of a protected and connected network of bicycle facilities. In 2017-2018, the BRIP initiative will leverage approximately \$1.7 million of funding from the neighborhood transportation levy approved by the voters in November. Mr. Loewenherz said the City implemented 2.6 miles of bike lanes in 2016 and 8.5 mile of bike lanes in 2017.

Mr. Loewenherz said four corridors were considered for the Downtown demonstration project: 1) 108th Avenue NE, 2) Main Street, 3) NE 2nd Street, and 4) 106th Avenue NE. Staff worked with the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA) to review and discuss the options, and the evaluation criteria supported 108th Avenue NE (Main Street to NE 12th Street) as the preferred bike corridor. Additional public outreach included mailers to 10,000 Downtown addresses, open houses, an online survey, and conversations with Downtown workers and residents. Mr. Loewenherz said 38 percent of respondents to the online survey chose 108th Avenue NE as the preferred corridor, while 23 percent indicated they did not support any of the options. He said a strong area of concern was the potential impact of bike lanes on motor vehicle traffic.

Mr. Loewenherz said 108th Avenue was identified as part of the priority bike network in the 2009 Ped-Bike Plan. The Downtown demonstration project is considered a high-comfort bike facility with a mix of buffered and protected bike lanes. He said there is strong support for bike facilities within the business community. The meeting packet includes letters of support from major employers, including two located on the 108th Avenue corridor.

Chris Long, Traffic Engineering Manager, described the configuration of the 108th Avenue NE demonstration bikeway project. He said the traffic analysis indicated that the project does not increase intersection delay per vehicle, and overall travel time on the corridor remains the same during the average evening peak traffic period.

Lei Wu, Transportation Commission, said the Commission approved the implementation of the demonstration bike project on January 11 by a vote of 5-2. The commissioners who opposed the project wanted a better understanding of the long-term implications of the project on all transportation modes, and expressed concern regarding the impact on curbside uses. Ms. Wu noted the Commission's interest in the performance measures to be used to evaluate the effectiveness and impacts of the project. Ms. Wu referred the Council to the Transportation Commission's transmittal letter provided in the meeting packet [Attachment D]. On March 8, the Transportation Commission will consider the implementation of the citywide bike share pilot program.

Mr. Loewenherz highlighted the Downtown demonstration project timeline. Staff anticipates that construction will be underway in April and the opening event will be held in May. Staff will provide an update to the Transportation Commission in September. He noted that staff will modify and refine the project on an ongoing basis to address operational and safety issues. The final evaluation and staff recommendation will be presented to the Transportation Commission in February 2019. Staff will provide an update to the City Council in March 2019 to determine the next steps for the demonstration bikeway.

Mayor Chelminiak thanked staff for the presentation. He noted letters in the meeting packet from several citizens and from Transportation Commissioners Bishop and Woosley raising questions and concerns regarding the project.

Councilmember Lee, Council liaison to the Transportation Commission, thanked the Commission and staff for their work and affirmed the Council's commitment to multimodal transportation options. Mr. Lee acknowledged the concerns raised by two commissioners regarding the project's impact on safety and congestion relief. He suggested that the bikeway demonstration will allow the City to evaluate the project, identify impacts, and refine operational issues. Councilmember Lee expressed support for the project, noting that it is also supported by a majority of the Transportation Commission. He expressed support for the bike share concept as well.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis expressed support for moving forward with the demonstration project on 108th Avenue NE, noting that it is anticipated to open during bike month in May. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Mr. Berg confirmed that the demonstration project will be monitored to address operational issues and impacts. Mr. Nieuwenhuis said he would like to understand the key metrics after they are developed by staff and the Transportation Commission. He said it is important for the public to understand that this is a demonstration project, and he hopes it will generate more bicycle traffic.

Councilmember Zahn said she is pleased to see the demonstration project moving forward, which will enable the City to collect data and to conduct an accurate assessment. She said it is important for the project to be consistent with the City's commitment to the Vision Zero program. She said the bikeway will be more successful if people are safe and feel safe using the facility. Ms. Zahn said she appreciated staff's extensive public engagement, and she looks forward to learning about the performance measures to be used. She expressed concern regarding the impact of the bikeway on curbside uses, including deliveries and shuttles. She encouraged community outreach to educate the public about the project.

Councilmember Stokes expressed appreciation for the extensive and thoughtful work of the Transportation Commission and staff. He said he often hears from individuals who are interested in biking throughout Bellevue, and he noted the importance of bike infrastructure to REI, which is moving its headquarters to Bellevue. He expressed support for moving forward with the demonstration project.

Deputy Mayor Robinson concurred with her colleague's comments. She recalled a group bike tour in Seattle approximately two years ago, with a police escort, to view roadway conditions for bicyclists. She looks forward to the implementation of the demonstration project and agrees that 108th Avenue is the appropriate corridor. However, she understands that the project will be evaluated and adjusted as needed.

Mayor Chelminiak expressed support for the project and noted the Council's ongoing interest in completing the bicycle network in Bellevue. He said the project is well-timed to coincide with the future development of the Eastside Rail Corridor. He agreed that 108th Avenue NE is the

appropriate corridor for Downtown cyclists. He encouraged community outreach to educate the public about the upcoming project.

Mayor Chelminiak thanked the Transportation Commission for its work. He suggested to the City Manager that the City develop a protocol for communicating dissenting opinions through Board and Commission reports. Councilmember Lee said he will ensure, as liaison to the Commission, that the Council's questions and comments are addressed.

(c) Emergency Management Staff Report

Curry Mayer, Emergency Manager, Fire Department, said the emergency management program includes community preparedness and engagement as well as planning and preparedness related to City facilities and operations. Community engagement activities and programs include the Citizen Corps Council, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), CERT Lite training, Map Your Neighborhood, Bellevue Communications Support, and community events and emergency preparedness presentations. The City provides presentations targeted at specific populations including retirement and assisted living facilities, individuals living and working in high-rise buildings, individuals with disabilities and cognitive issues, cultural groups (e.g., Muslim women and children), and neighborhood groups. CERT Lite training is scheduled in every neighborhood in Bellevue throughout 2018.

Ms. Mayer noted that training and preparedness events involve approximately 1,500 people annually. Presentations are provided by request, and recent community events included a preschool fire safety presentation and a session on fire safety and basic emergency preparedness at Bellevue College. Ms. Mayer presented an emergency preparedness guide, funded through a grant, that will be available for the public. She hopes to coordinate future printings of the guide with a private partner/sponsor.

Mayor Chelminiak noted that Councilmember Zahn raised this topic during the Council's recent annual retreat.

Councilmember Zahn said she feels that the community is in good hands. She noted that she completed the full CERT training approximately five years ago, and she is pleased to see the CERT Lite option for those interested in an abbreviated, one-day training session. Responding to Ms. Zahn, Ms. Mayer said approximately 155 individuals have completed the CERT program. The Citizen Corps Council is mapping those individuals to identify their neighborhoods to facilitate coordinated activities within and across neighborhoods and with the City. In further response, Ms. Mayer said the City does not currently provide child care for students in the CERT program. She said the City's emergency preparedness materials are translated into 14 languages. Governments and agencies throughout the region are working together to develop emergency preparedness standards for communicating with individuals who speak different languages.

Councilmember Stokes complimented the emergency preparedness printed materials and recalled a past meeting in his neighborhood with the Fire Department to discuss disaster planning. He noted the challenge of maintaining residents' interest in emergency planning. Ms. Mayer said the Fire Department periodically holds neighborhood events, including with children,

to keep individuals engaged. Responding to Mr. Stokes, Ms. Mayer suggested that, instead of storing large quantities of water, individuals can safely drink from a number of water sources using a LifeStraw.

Ms. Mayer summarized that the three major components of the emergency preparedness program are community engagement, activities related to City operations and facilities, and regional engagement and partnerships.

Mayor Chelminiak thanked staff for their work with the community.

3. Council Discussion of Upcoming Items: None.

At 7:51 p.m., Mayor Chelminiak declared recess to the Regular Session.

Kyle Stannert, CMC
City Clerk

/kaw