

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Extended Study Session

February 25, 2019
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

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

ABSENT: None.

1. Executive Session

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m., with Mayor Chelminiak presiding. There was no Executive Session.

2. Approval of Agenda

→ Deputy Mayor Robinson moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

3. Oral Communications

Karen Morris expressed concerns regarding House Bills 1754 and 1591, which address homelessness. She said HB 1754 prevents cities and counties from limiting the number of shelters or requiring warrant checks. However, shelters must be at least 1,000 feet apart. She said HB 1591 addresses civil rights for individuals experiencing homelessness.

[Councilmember Lee arrived at 6:07 p.m.]

4. Study Session Items

(a) Council Business and New Initiatives

There was no discussion.

(b) East Link Project Update

City Manager Brad Miyake introduced staff's presentation regarding Sound Transit's East Link light rail project. He recalled that staff provided an update in late 2017 regarding the status of permitting, construction activities, and public outreach.

Ron Kessack, Assistant Transportation Director, noted that the presentation would cover construction progress, project mitigation, and community engagement.

Mike Bell, Acting Executive Project Director, Sound Transit, provided an overview of the East Link project, noting that construction is nearing 50 percent completion. The first project will be substantially completed in Redmond by the end of the year. Construction is underway for all six civil contracts, and the project is on schedule and within the budget.

Mr. Bell highlighted the project's progress related to the I-90 floating bridge, Mercer Island station, girder placement, protection around the Winters House in Bellevue, 112th Avenue SE temporary bypass road and road-over-rail construction, downtown tunnel, light rail station at 110th Avenue NE and NE 6th Street, I-405 span and link to NE 8th Street, Spring District/120th Avenue NE station, 130th Avenue NE station, and the Overlake Village and Redmond transit centers. Mr. Bell said that construction of the Operations and Maintenance Facility East (OMFE) in the BelRed area is approximately 28 percent complete.

Maher Welaye, East Link Engineering Manager, noted the ongoing, collaborative working relationship with Sound Transit. He said that East Link project mitigation has been a high priority for both Sound Transit and the City. He noted examples of mitigation including the temporary sound wall at the south tunnel portal at Main Street and 112th Avenue, permanent sound wall and landscaping along 112th Avenue SE, wetland enhancements, Bellevue Way SE traffic pattern revisions, and neighborhood traffic modifications to deter cut-through traffic.

Marie Jensen, East Link Outreach Coordinator, recalled the creation of the neighborhood traffic mitigation committee with representatives from the Surrey Downs, Enatai, Bellecrest, and Beaux Arts areas. She described neighborhood traffic mitigation measures at SE 16th Street and 108th Avenue SE and at SE 16th Street and Bellevue Way SE. She highlighted the joint Sound Transit and City communications outreach, which includes ongoing traffic and construction alerts.

The next public outreach event will be held on Tuesday, March 26, 7:30-9:30 AM, at the Global Innovation Exchange (GIX) in the BelRed area. She provided contact information for accessing project updates through the City and Sound Transit.

Councilmember Stokes said that construction of the project has not been intrusive. He commended the joint coordination between the City and Sound Transit. He said the light rail project will be an asset for Bellevue's multimodal transportation system.

Councilmember Robertson highlighted the collaboration with Sound Transit since 2007, noting that it is exciting to see how the project is coming together. She thanked City and Sound Transit staff, the neighborhood mitigation committee, and all of the residents and stakeholders who have

worked together. Responding to Ms. Robertson, Mr. Bell said that acoustic panels are placed along the alignment to mitigate the sound of the wheels on the rail. He said Sound Transit can provide the map of the panel locations if desired.

Responding to Councilmember Robertson, Mr. Welaye confirmed that the sound mitigation measures are reflected in Sound Transit's contracts. The City will conduct noise testing and monitoring upon project completion.

In further response to Ms. Robertson, Mr. Bell said Sound Transit will provide information on the number of trees that will be planted related to the project.

Responding to Ms. Robertson, Mr. Welaye said the project's environmental team is monitoring impacts to fish and wildlife at the Mercer Slough. In further response, Mr. Bell said Sound Transit is monitoring the condition of the Winters House to identify any construction impacts. The structure's interior is climate controlled, and Sound Transit has vibration and settlement monitoring devices on the house. He said the wall in front of the house is completed. Mr. Welaye said City staff is inspecting the house on an ongoing basis as well.

Councilmember Zahn thanked staff for the ongoing project, traffic, and construction updates for the public. Responding to Ms. Zahn, Ms. Jensen said a traffic volume study was conducted in October and monitoring will continue. In further response to Ms. Zahn, Mr. Bell said that parking by construction vehicles and employees has been well managed and has not caused problems.

Responding to Ms. Zahn, Mr. Welaye said staff will provide information regarding tree preservation and replacement. In further response to Ms. Zahn, Mr. Bell said it is unlikely that the South Bellevue Park and Ride can be opened while construction of the light rail station continues. The systems contractor will conduct its work, including systems testing, following the completion of construction until the light rail station opens. However, he said the project team continues to explore the concept. He noted that an early opening of the Park and Ride will depend on the ability to coordinate the activities of all agencies, including bus transit providers, and to ensure safety while construction of the light rail station continues.

Responding to Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Jensen said Sound Transit assigned an outreach coordinator for each of the project segments. The coordinator for the BelRed and Northup areas is maintaining a dialogue with the businesses and could provide additional information. Ms. Jensen said that Sound Transit and the City share information on an ongoing basis. Mr. Bell said that Sound Transit's outreach coordinators are available to the public via email and telephone.

Councilmember Lee complimented the coordination and communications between all of the parties. He observed that the project is making good progress, and he has not heard complaints from the public about the work.

Deputy Mayor Robinson thanked staff for the update. She recalled the City's extensive work with Sound Transit to minimize the project's impacts. She has heard positive comments regarding the sound wall at the tunnel and the traffic mitigation on Bellevue Way SE.

Ms. Robinson said she has heard concerns from the public regarding the destruction of duck nesting habitat at the Mercer Slough. She wants to ensure that the impact is resolved.

Responding to Mayor Chelminiak, Mr. Bell confirmed that the systems work will occur following construction. Mr. Chelminiak asked about comments from the public when it looks like the project is completed but the systems work is ongoing. Mr. Bell said that Sound Transit will have a minor presence in the public right-of-way during the systems work toward the end of the project.

In further response to Mr. Chelminiak, Mr. Bell said the OMFE is anticipated for completion by the fall of 2020. Vehicles will be moved to the facility over time as they are received.

Mayor Chelminiak thanked staff and residents for their work related to the East Link project.

(c) King County 2019 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan

Mayor Chelminiak noted that he works for Waste Management. However, he represents Bellevue's interests and priorities with regard to King County's solid waste operations.

Joyce Nichols, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, introduced Pat McLaughlin, Director of the King County Solid Waste Division. Ms. Nichols said the draft management plan has been transmitted by the King County Executive to the King County Council. She noted that Councilmember Stokes serves on the Regional Policy Committee, which reviews the plan to consider recommendations for the King County Council. She recalled that key topics for Bellevue related to the 2019 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan include future transfer station locations and how they might impact the Factoria station, the future of the Cedar Hills Landfill and the alternate disposal options under consideration by the County, and the policies in the plan that will guide the Solid Waste Division's work.

Mr. McLaughlin said the development of the solid waste plan resulted from significant collaboration between King County, partner cities, and advisory committees. The Solid Waste Division has interlocal agreements with 37 cities, with the exception of the cities of Milton and Seattle. He said the interlocal agreements establish service levels and arrange for the collection of waste within each city. However, King County is responsible for receiving, transferring, and managing the waste.

The six major elements of the solid waste management plan are: 1) maintaining the existing system, 2) forecasting and data collection, 3) managing sustainable materials, 4) processing and transferring waste, 5) managing the landfill, and 6) financing the plan. Mr. McLaughlin said the Cedar Hills regional landfill in Maple Valley is reaching its design capacity. The current contract with cities through 2040 indicates that King County will ensure there is an alternate disposal solution by the end of the contract period.

Mr. McLaughlin said King County is facing challenging decisions in the three policy areas: disposal, transfer services, and recycling. He said the Cedar Hills landfill has been in existence since 1965, and it continues to be the best choice for long-term disposal. He said the sections of the landfill are lined and capped. The County recently completed Area 8, which will extend the life of the landfill until 2025. Options beyond that point include: 1) adding a final landfill section; 2) exporting waste, and 3) incinerating waste. All three operations are technically feasible. However, the financial and environmental impacts and risks differ for the options. Mr. McLaughlin said the future addition of Area 9 could support waste generation through approximately 2040 with the lowest environmental impacts, costs, and risks.

The King County Executive and advisory committees have expressed support for maximizing the capacity of the landfill. However, future solutions and/or technologies will be necessary beyond 2040.

Mr. McLaughlin described the County's landfill operations to regulate the impacts to public health, the environment, and the nearby community. The Solid Waste Division has more than 600 gas wells and 70 water wells to monitor the quality of the air, groundwater, leachate, and storm water drainage. Gas is harvested through a public-private partnership to remove the impurities and create renewable clean energy for more than 19,000 homes annually. Mr. McLaughlin said the sale of the gas, and the related renewable energy credits, offset utility rates by \$8 million in 2018.

Moving to discuss the County's transfer services, Mr. McLaughlin said the NE station has been identified as the best option. It addresses regional inequities, maximizes the availability of service, is supported by most of the cities, reflects the most favorable greenhouse gas emissions, and is consistent with the longstanding regional plan. Mr. McLaughlin said the Bow Lake, Factoria, and Shoreline transfer stations have been rebuilt during the past 10 years, and the County is in design for the new Algona station. He said the Houghton facility in Kirkland has limited recycling and low operational efficiency.

Mr. McLaughlin said that while the NE Station is the most expensive option, it serves a growing area within the region and provides enhanced environmental controls and recycling services. The expense of the new NE Station is shared by the region. The King County Executive recommends that the Solid Waste Division begin collaborating with the NE cities to site and build a new transfer station.

In the area of recycling, Mr. McLaughlin said the cleanliness standards for recyclable materials will be more strict in the future, which presents a challenge for the region. He commended the region's high recycling rates but noted that recycling waste is contaminated by placing waste in the wrong bins and by failing to clean recyclables before disposal. He said it is important to clean and dry the recycling materials.

Mr. McLaughlin said the solid waste management plan identifies a way to increase the region's 54-percent recycling rate, which is twice the national average, to 70 percent. He said there is a menu of options for cities to consider in managing their recycling waste. Cities will retain the ultimate decision authority over their recycling programs.

Mr. McLaughlin highlighted the plan's adoption timeline. The King County Council is slated to begin reviewing the plan on March 6. Once approved, the 120-day city adoption process begins. Final approval by the State is anticipated in late 2019. Mr. McLaughlin requested Bellevue's endorsement of the plan.

Councilmember Stokes thanked staff for the presentation and praised King County and the cities for working together, despite the different interests and priorities of the jurisdictions. He expressed support for the NE transfer station and noted the City of Redmond's support of the overall 2019 Solid Waste Management Plan on the Regional Policy Committee.

Responding to Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, Mr. McLaughlin acknowledged that neighbors of the Cedar Hills landfill would like it to be closed. As a result, maximizing the life of the landfill is not an easy thing to do. However, King County believes it is the best option.

In further response to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Mr. McLaughlin said the export option provides opportunities for waste disposal in other landfills that have plenty of available capacity. However, the option is expensive, and there is a risk in the capacity of the rail system to transport waste out of the county. Mr. McLaughlin said King County studied the City of Seattle's and Snohomish County's experience with exporting waste and hired consultants with expertise in waste energy. The constraints of the rail system could result in the expansion of rail service and/or increased costs for exporting waste. Mr. McLaughlin said certain cities have expressed concern about the impacts of increased rail traffic on their local traffic.

With regard to the incineration option, Mr. McLaughlin said the public has concerns about burning garbage. However, he said there are modern, safe and environmentally responsible ways to incinerate waste. The cost of incinerating waste is high based on the construction of plants in Florida that began operating in 2015. Mr. McLaughlin said King County would need the largest waste energy plant in the world to accommodate the volume. He noted that the recommendation to maximize the capacity of the Cedar Hills landfill leaves all options, including new technologies and solutions, on the table for the long-term future.

In further response to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Mr. McLaughlin said that neighbors of the landfill have submitted complaints regarding odor, noise, traffic, and construction impacts. Mr. McLaughlin said King County works with the neighbors to address the concerns and complaints within the regulatory requirements for the landfill. He said County staff conduct daily tours of the adjacent neighborhoods to monitor odors.

Councilmember Robertson said it is good to hear that the capacity of the Cedar Hills landfill will accommodate the region until 2040. She is pleased that construction debris has an 80-percent diversion rate according to the 2014 data reflected in the plan.

Responding to Ms. Robertson, Mr. McLaughlin said the solid waste management plan indicates that the Renton and Houghton transfer stations will close when replacement capacity is available. He said King County is designing a new south county facility adjacent to the existing Algona transfer station. That station and the Bow Lake station together will have the capacity to serve the Renton tonnage and transaction level.

Councilmember Robertson expressed concern that the lack of a transfer station in Renton would result in the increased usage of the Factoria station in Bellevue. She said she appreciated that King County did not maximize the new Factoria transfer station due to traffic and other impacts.

Responding to Ms. Robertson, Mr. McLaughlin said the NE station would have compaction services if the project moves forward. He said it is not possible to add compaction capacity at the existing Houghton station.

Responding to Ms. Robertson, Ms. Nichols said Bellevue staff has provided extensive input in the development of King County's plan. Ms. Nichols noted the future regional and international challenge of handling recycling materials. She said the City will continue to monitor King County's consideration of the 2019 Solid Waste Management Plan to ensure that Bellevue's interests are addressed.

In further response to Councilmember Robertson, Ms. Nichols said that, seven years before the closure of the Cedar Hills landfill, the County is obligated to work with the cities to consider options and to plan for the next disposal alternatives.

Councilmember Lee thanked staff for the description of the waste management plan alternatives. He acknowledged the risks and high costs associated with exporting garbage. He noted the implementation of waste-to-energy technology in other parts of the world. Mr. Lee expressed support for continuing to use the landfill while exploring future options.

Mr. McLaughlin said that every alternative will be more expensive than the landfill. He noted that 70 percent of the trucks that went to the landfill that day were filled entirely with recyclable materials that were placed in the garbage instead of in recycling containers.

Councilmember Zahn expressed support for maximizing the capacity of the landfill while studying longer term options. She concurred with the concerns about limited rail capacity. She said it was interesting to learn that landfill gas can be used as a renewable energy source. She noted that the plan reflects the aspirational goals of zero waste by 2030 and a 70-percent recycling rate. Mr. McLaughlin confirmed that policy changes will be needed to meet those goals.

Ms. Zahn suggested encouraging cities to study construction waste and to consider potential policies for working with contractors to enhance recycling. Responding to Ms. Zahn, Mr. McLaughlin confirmed the effectiveness of Seattle's construction debris management program. He said King County has emulated a number of similar practices, including the establishment of sites throughout the county for recycling construction and other waste. Mr. McLaughlin said staff will follow up with information on the locations of those facilities.

Mayor Chelminiak commended King County for extending the life of the Cedar Hills landfill. Responding to Mr. Chelminiak, Mr. McLaughlin said the methane gas from the landfill is producing clean renewable natural gas (RNG). Mr. Chelminiak said RNG is 90 percent cleaner

than diesel fuel and significantly cleaner than fossil fuels and natural gas. He said a number of vehicles use RNG.

Mayor Chelminiak encouraged people to visit the Cedar Hills landfill and the new transfer stations. He complimented the new Factoria transfer station.

Mr. McLaughlin noted Bellevue's leadership and influence in the region and encouraged the City Council's input to the King County Council.

(d) Regional Issues

Joyce Nichols, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, provided an update regarding the state legislative session. She said Senate Bill 5825, which would authorize tolling on I-405 from Bellevue to Renton, was heard in the Senate Transportation Committee. Mayor Chelminiak and Councilmember Robertson testified during the hearing. Ms. Nichols noted that the authorization to bond against toll revenue was not included in the House or Senate versions of the bill. However, both committee chairs are interested in adding that to the bill or addressing it in a separate bill.

Ms. Nichols referred to the two bills addressed by a speaker earlier during Oral Communications. She noted that HB 1591 would provide a number of rights to individuals experiencing homelessness, while taking away the City's authority to regulate certain aspects of that issue (e.g., vehicle parking). HB 1754 restricts the City's ability to regulate tent encampments and activities on property owned or controlled by religious organizations. She said staff is reviewing that bill to determine whether there are aspects worth retaining that would allow the City to maintain its authority over health and safety on properties controlled by all types of owners.

Ms. Nichols said there are a number of proposed bills that would preempt the City's authority to maintain its police powers. She said staff will be requesting the Council's assistance in Olympia regarding that legislation.

Referring to proposed legislation related to affordable housing, Deputy Mayor Robinson asked whether the City could suggest amendments that would exempt cities that have an affordable housing plan. Ms. Nichols said staff is looking for those opportunities. However, many of the bills are not conducive to amending based on how they are drafted.

(e) Citizen Advocates for Referral and Education Services (CARES)

Fire Chief Jay Hagen introduced staff's update regarding the Citizen Advocates for Referral and Education Services (CARES) program.

Dave Beste, Battalion Chief and Commander of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) division, introduced Natasha Grossman, CARES Program Coordinator. Ms. Grossman introduced Rachel Dahl, a graduate student in social work and one of three professional social workers who is part of the CARES response team. The goal of the program is connecting residents with the right services at the right time.

Ms. Grossman said that 18 students from seven universities spend seven months to 24 months with the CARES program. They each have a bachelor's or master's degree, and two of the three CARES I professionals are former student advocates.

Ms. Dahl shared her experience with the CARES program. She noted that she is an entrepreneur and educator who sits on the board of a nonprofit organization and mentors youth. She served as a graduate student intern with the Fire Department's CARES team for nine months after completing her first year of graduate school. She thanked Ms. Grossman for her expertise, compassion, and leadership of the program.

Ms. Dahl noted her experience with the CARES I team, which works with first responders to address mental health, substance abuse, and other relevant issues. The larger CARES team includes individuals with a broad range of experience. Ms. Dahl said the CARES program highlights the power of a multi-disciplinary team with different perspectives and skill sets. She thanked the Council for its support of the program.

Berry Foster said she is a social worker with the CARES I team. During the snow events in early February, the team assisted with the delivery of prescription medications, made home visits to vulnerable clients, conducted welfare checks on homeless clients, and prepared to assist the Office of Emergency Management with transports to critical medical appointments.

Ms. Grossman said requests for services are received in two ways: 1) online referrals, which are handled by the students in the program, and 2) requests from Police and Fire personnel, which are handled by professional social workers. The CARES program refers individuals to the appropriate agency and/or organizations for ongoing assistance. Referrals increased from 195 in 2016 to 532 in 2018, and the number of mental health-related referrals has increased significantly. Ms. Grossman said that part of the increase in requests for assistance are likely related to the introduction of the CARES I component of the program in August 2017.

Mayor Chelminiak thanked staff for the update and the social workers for their participation in the program.

Responding to Deputy Mayor Robinson, Battalion Chief Beste confirmed that CARES is a pilot program and noted that it has been extended through the end of 2019. Assuming that the next EMS levy is approved by the voters, it will become a permanent program through King County levy funding.

Ms. Robinson said the program provides valuable outreach to individuals in need of assistance. Responding to Ms. Robinson, Mr. Beste said that most of the referrals are related to 911 calls for assistance. In further response, Ms. Grossman said the program has statistics on the age and gender of clients. Deputy Mayor Robinson said King County is currently conducting a needs assessment regarding geriatric residents. She said she asked county staff to contact the CARES program for information regarding its experience with older adults.

Councilmember Robertson noted that the EMS levy will be on the ballot in November. She recalled that the City created a new position for a homeless outreach worker, and questioned

whether that position will be coordinated with the CARES program. Mr. Beste confirmed that they will collaborate in their efforts.

Councilmember Robertson concurred with the Deputy Mayor's interest in data that reflects the demographics and the types of needs experienced by the CARES team.

Responding to Councilmember Zahn, Battalion Chief Beste said the CARES team stays in contact with current clients to monitor their needs. He said he would follow up with more information regarding the number of individuals who are contacted through the program and the types of issues.

Mayor Chelminiak expressed support for the program and noted that he is pleased it will be included in the EMS levy ballot measure.

5. Council Discussion of Upcoming Items: None.

6. Continued Oral Communications: None.

At 8:55 p.m., Mayor Chelminiak declared the meeting adjourned.

Kyle Stannert, CMC
City Clerk

/kaw