

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

June 25, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Zoom webinar

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Wu, Commissioners Leitner, Tropin, Marciante, Ting

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Teh

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, , Eric Miller, Andrew Singelakis, Kristi Oosterveen, Department of Transportation, Jennifer Ewing, Community Development Department

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Robertson

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Wu who presided.

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Teh.

A. Temporary Suspension of Bylaws to Allow for Remote Participation by All Commissioners

Chair Wu noted the need for the Transportation Commission to temporarily suspend meeting in person in accord with the Governor's emergency order concerning the Open Public Meetings Act. She stated that the Commission will hold its meetings remotely for an unknown period of time. Article 5-B of the Commission's bylaws prohibit more than two Commissioners from participating remotely. Under direction from the City Clerk's office and the City Attorney's office, the temporary suspension of Article 5-B is needed to allow for all Commissioners to participate remotely until the Commission is no longer conducting remote meetings. Because the Commission's bylaws do not contain a procedure for suspending any of the bylaws, the Commission can use the Council's procedural rule allowing for such an action found in Section 13 of Resolution 8928. Accordingly, the Commission Chair is allowed to temporarily suspend procedural rules when a suspension is requested and where there are no objections. If an objection is voiced, a vote of two-thirds of the Commissioners present is needed in order to suspend the rule.

A motion to temporarily suspend the provisions of the Transportation Commission bylaw Article 5-B concerning remote participation to allow all Commissioners to participate remotely at each meeting until such time as the Transportation Commission is no longer holding virtual meetings was made by Commissioner Leitner. Absent any objections to the motion, Chair Wu declared the motion approved to temporarily suspend Article 5-B.

A motion to suspend the provisions of Transportation Commission bylaw Article 64 and D-11

to allow for public comment to be provided only in writing prior to the Transportation Commission meeting as noted in the published agenda, and to have the staff summarize written comments at each meeting until such time as the Transportation Commission is no longer holding its meetings remotely. Absent any objections to the motion, Chair Wu declared the motion approved and the suspension of Article 64 and D-11.

B. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Wu requested Principal Transportation Planner Kevin McDonald to preside over the election of Chair for the coming year.

Mr. McDonald noted that according to the Commission's bylaws, the Commission is to elect a Chair and Vice Chair at the first meeting in June annually. He said he facilitated a nomination process that began on June 11. For the position of Chair, Commissioner Leitner was nominated through that process.

No additional nominations for Chair were made. Mr. McDonald declared the nominations for the position of Chair to be closed and in accordance with the Commission's bylaws he declared Commissioner Leitner to have been elected as Chair.

Chair Leitner noted that no nominations had been received for Vice Chair. She brought to the floor the nomination of Commissioner Tropin.

Commissioner Wu nominated Commissioner Marciante.

Commissioner Tropin declined the nomination.

Commissioner Marciante accepted the nomination.

Given only one candidate nominated for the position of Vice Chair, Chair Leitner declared Commissioner Marciante to have been elected as Vice Chair.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Leitner noted the receipt of two written communications regarding the Transportation Improvement Program, stating the copies of those communications would be kept in the official Transportation Commission file.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, AND MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Councilmember Robertson commented that she and the other Councilmembers had had a very busy week. She said she had participated in two meetings focused on transportation issues and

one regarding a land use issue for King County. On June 22 the Council held its first budget workshop for the 2021-2022 budget. She reported a large downturn in city revenues, both actual and projected, due to Covid-19. The Council's outcome-based budgeting approach used since 2011 has six different vision outcomes: economic growth and competitiveness, improved mobility and connectivity, safe communities, responsive government, vibrant neighborhoods, innovative and vibrant and caring community, and healthy and sustainable environment. The Council has revised the list to include economic development, transportation and mobility, high-quality built and natural environment, Bellevue great place where you want to be, regional leadership and influence, achieving human potential, and high-performance government. She explained that the safety component is under high-performance government. The Council gave direction to the staff to change the outcomes and topical areas to fit into the seven strategic target areas. Accordingly the budget will look a little different but it will hopefully still fund the areas that have previously been funded.

Councilmember Robertson said the general fund forecast anticipates a gap of between \$12 million and \$16 million in 2021 and 2022. That certainly will impact the capital budget. The Council gave direction to staff to take \$3 million from each year from the capital budget and use it for general operations in order to smooth out the impacts for the general fund. Where typically there has been about \$25 million annually for capital projects, the estimate is for only \$31 million for the 2026-2027 time period, the portion that will be new to the upcoming budget cycle. The general fund reduction totals about eight percent. All departments have been asked to identify 8 percent reductions to their budgets. For its part, the Council will continue to look at spending all funds wisely to address everything it is mandated to do while also seeking to leverage funds to the degree possible. Projects that are in design or are shovel-ready will be moved forward with an eye on obtaining grants for them, and other things the city is ready to do that are linked to high-priority projects, particularly projects that will help to maintain level of service, will also be given focus in seeking to balance the capital investment programs.

Councilmember Robertson noted that the city has always had conservative fiscal policies in place, has been constrained in its spending, and has been careful to maintain rainy day funds. So while the economic news is not great, the city will be okay. Certainly having less money to spend will impact what the city will be able to do. The city will, of course, stand behind the promises made relative to the levy funds.

With regard to King County Metro, Councilmember Robertson explained that just like every government entity, they are suffering from the economic downturn triggered by Covid-19. They had originally planned to have a levy on the August ballot for additional transit funding, but that has been pulled back. Ridership during the pandemic has fallen off dramatically and instead of looking to spend money on more projects, the organization will actually be cutting some projects, including the K line between Bellevue and Kirkland which will be pushed out to an unknown date. Additional transit cuts across the board are under consideration. King County Metro has three guiding policy documents, including the service guidelines and the strategic plan. The service guidelines are supposed to be what addresses any cuts. They talk about route productivity, connecting jobs and regional centers among other things. Metro is still relying on those policies in part but has largely switched to using something called the mobility framework which is primarily based on social equity. The routes that will be kept based on the mobility framework tend to be the ones that offer all-day service in underserved communities, even though those are not the most productive routes. The K line was cut in favor of a South County line that addresses the equity framework guidelines.

Councilmember Robertson noted that earlier in the day she attended the Puget Sound Regional

Council Transportation Policy Board meeting where some King County projects were recommended. Two of the projects in the funding queue are for Bellevue. They are the Eastrail project and the Stage 4 multimodal corridor on 120th Avenue NE. Some of the other projects on the list will ultimately benefit Bellevue, including the King County Metro Safe Routes project and a Sound Transit project. Hopefully they will ultimately be funded.

Commissioner Wu asked to what degree Bellevue might be able to influence King County Metro in the implementation of one of their guidelines versus another. Councilmember Robertson said everyone has been struggling with that question. The Committee has a mix of representatives who may get more bus service because of the equity guidelines, and who may get less. There is a desire to see Metro continue to use the service guidelines as well as the equity guidelines. There is a clear need to continue to connect centers in light of the regional growth plan that calls for dense centers with strong transportation connections. She urged individuals to talk with their King County Councilmembers about the importance of serving Bellevue with good transit options, particularly in dense areas.

Commissioner Wu took a moment to thank Chair Leitner and Commissioner Marciante for their willingness to serve as Chair and Vice Chair.

Commissioner Tropin also congratulated the new Chair and Vice Chair and thanked Commissioner Wu for her service over the last year. He also thanked the Transportation department for the Healthy Streets initiative.

5. STAFF REPORTS

A. Director's Update

Department of Transportation Director Andrew Singelakis noted that the transportation department staff have been telecommuting since mid-March save for the street maintenance sectors and inspectors. It has been working well and the staff have been very productive. The department's telecommuting policies are being evaluated with an eye on post-Covid. Split shifts have been developed for the street and signals crews, and two additional satellite locations have been established to which the crews report, minimizing the need to go in and out of the building. Procedures have also been put in place to track social distancing and to sanitize facilities.

Traffic conditions have been monitored at various locations to generate average daily traffic volumes. The pre-Covid volume from February 23 to February 29 showed 27,000 average daily trips. That dropped to a low of 9100 between March 29 and April 4. Since then traffic has slowly increased and the latest count showed 16,000 average daily trips between June 4 and June 20.

Mr. Singelakis said transportation demand management clearly works. He said he has been in contact with the Bellevue Downtown Association to try and understanding business thinking in the post-Covid environment. There is much that is not yet known. It is assumed there will be more telecommuting, and that there will be impacts to transit at least in the short term.

Covid has resulted in significant impacts on the city's general fund. Transportation is a general fund department and accordingly has been instructed to make significant budget reductions. The opportunity has been taken to do some pilot programs in response to Covid. One program in the downtown converted on-street parking in front of restaurants to make places for take-out

pickup. The Healthy Streets pilot program has closed to through traffic neighborhood streets that have low traffic volumes and which connect to recreational or commercial areas. Local traffic and emergency vehicles are allowed to use those streets. The closed streets have parallel streets that allow people to get to the same locations. The reception to the program has been mostly positive. Transportation is also working with the Economic Development Office and the Bellevue Downtown Association to come up with a plan for outdoor dining opportunities to expand in the downtown.

Commissioner Wu asked for examples of streets that have been closed under the Healthy Streets program. Mr. Singelakis said one example was 165th/166th Avenues NE from Northup Way to SE 14th Street. Surveys were conducted and it was noted that only about 20 percent of those who responded do not like the idea.

Commissioner Ting asked what impact the Healthy Street closures will have on the parallel streets post-Covid in terms of usage and traffic patterns. Mr. Singelakis said the department is continuing to monitor the closures. He said typically the streets that were closed have such low traffic that significant impact to the parallel streets is not expected. It is possible the program may continue even post-Covid, particularly in the summer months. A website has been set up that describes the program.

Commissioner Ting asked if there were any way to get route-mapping companies such as Waze to refrain from routing traffic through the streets that have been closed to vehicular traffic, and to avoid routing cut-through traffic through neighborhoods. Mr. Singelakis said those companies have the information in hand about the closed streets so they should be not directing traffic to those streets. He stressed, however, that fundamentally there is no way to enforce against cut-through traffic. Significant cut-through traffic is not anticipated.

Implementation Planning Manager Eric Miller thanked Councilmember Robertson for mentioning the Puget Sound Regional Council grant process. Both of the projects in Bellevue that have been recommended for awards are design projects. He reported that the city had received an additional \$2 million that will help construct a section of the Mountains to Sound Greenway trail up to 142nd Place SE where the crossing of I-90 occurs connecting to the Eastgate park and ride.

With regard to the impact fee code, Mr. Miller said staff have been working on it over the last six months. Primarily, housekeeping items have been identified for updating in the code, Chapter 22.16. The Councilmembers have been briefed on the specifics and some stakeholder outreach has occurred with the Chamber of Commerce, the Bellevue Downtown Association and the development community. He acknowledged Molly Johnson, the Development Review Manager for the Transportation department, has been heavily involved in the process.

Mr. Miller said a couple of elements identified go beyond mere housekeeping. One is the list of exemptions of uses that do not have to pay a transportation impact fee, which includes uses such as affordable housing and public schools. Noticeably missing from the list is city facilities. The city is currently working to develop a new fire station at the north end of the downtown, and without an exemption for city facilities the fire department will be required to pay a fee, which would simply move money from one city pocket into another.

As things currently stand, all impact fees are due at the time a building permit is issued. However, for uses like affordable housing there is a process that must be followed to record the maintenance of all such units as affordable in perpetuity. The city has included in the

amendment a deferment of fees for those types of uses until that recording process is completed, something that can take from months to years after the initial building permit. The same would apply to tenant improvements. In large office buildings and sometimes multifamily towers, there is a ground-level retail space which under the current regime must pay a fee at the time of building permit issuance for the tower. Often it is not known what the individual uses will be in those tenant spaces, which has on occasion made it necessary for the city to process refunds or collect additional fees.

Bellevue city code currently requires a reimbursement of a percentage of the value of frontage improvements that are constructed or for the value of property that is dedicated by a developer above and beyond what the impact fee for that development would be. Bellevue is the only city in the state that has that provision, which is admittedly complicated. The recommendation is to cap the reimbursement at the amount of the fee due.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Wu, Mr. Miller said the proposed update to the code does not include any change to a multimodal impact fee structure. The focus is primarily on housekeeping issues. The Council reviewed the proposal on June 15 and is scheduled to come back for adoption on July 6.

B. Acknowledging Commissioner Vic Bishop's Service and Tenure

Mr. McDonald said Mr. Bishop was appointed to the Commission by Councilmember Lee in January 2012 when a vacancy occurred. Mr. Bishop was appointed to a full term in May 2012 and a second full term in May 2016. His second term expired rather unceremoniously at the end of May 2020 while the Commission was not able to meet. Mr. Bishop served as both Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission during his tenure.

At his first meeting, the agenda topics included the Downtown Transportation Plan and the Transportation Facilities Plan. At his last meeting in February 2020, the focus was on updating the Transportation Improvement Program, the bike share pilot program, and the preliminary scope of work for the Transportation Master Plan. During his tenure, Mr. Bishop participated in eight updates of the Transportation Improvement Program and three updates of the Transportation Facilities Plan. He also worked on the Downtown Transportation Plan, the Transit Master Plan, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative, Multimodal LOS, and provided input with regard to policy language in the Transportation Element for Complete Streets and Vision Zero.

On behalf of the staff, Mr. McDonald wished Mr. Bishop good health, good skiing and good luck with all future endeavors.

Mr. Bishop said it had been a real honor to serve as a member of the Commission for eight and a half years. He said the major focus during his first two years on the Commission was the Downtown Transportation Plan update, work that was completed in 2013. The Transit Master Plan was worked on by the Commission for 18 months. Both of those plans are fundamental to the city. He noted that during his time on the Commission he also served as a representative of the private sector on King County Metro's evaluation of its service guidelines. At the time Councilmember Chelminiak represented the city on that body and he said he represented the Eastside Transportation Partnership along with some others. The whole point of the exercise was to have a rigorous way of reducing service when necessary. He said he was disturbed by the fact that as Metro now looks to make service cuts the organization holds the view that the service guidelines should be treated as only one factor.

Continuing, Mr. Bishop said there is much coming at the Commission given the large number of permits that have been issued for the construction going on in the downtown. The next year and a half will see a significant increase in the level of employment in the downtown. Clearly there will be a need to give attention to how to handle the 70 percent of the trips that will come into the city by car.

Mr. Bishop announced that he signed up to a candidate for Position 1 of the 48th District of the state legislature. He said his platform is based primarily on transportation issues.

Commissioner Marciante thanked Mr. Bishop for his passion and commitment to the Commission and to transportation issues. She stated that while she and Mr. Bishop often disagreed, the process of debate was always engaging. She wished him all the best in his future endeavors.

Commissioner Wu said she always enjoyed working with Mr. Bishop and appreciated his insights relative to transportation.

Commissioner Ting said it was great having Mr. Bishop on the Commission and working with him. He said his vast wealth of information regarding transportation would be missed. The spirited debate yielded many different viewpoints and led to better outcomes.

Commissioner Tropin thanked Mr. Bishop for his years of service on the Commission and his contributions to the city. He said he had enjoyed working with Mr. Bishop.

Chair Leitner echoed the comments made by her fellow Commissioners and thanked Mr. Bishop for all he had done for the city and for the Commission. She said serving on the Commission is a difficult job. She thanked Mr. Bishop for always keeping the Commission on task and for his wealth of knowledge.

Mr. Bishop suggested the most important item currently on the Commission's plate is the Transportation Master Plan. He said he was encouraged that the Commission would be able to take the various elements and meld them into a comprehensive master plan that will work for all modes.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. 2021-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Chair Leitner reminded the Commissioners that two comment letters had been received from the public.

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

Capital Facilities Planning and Programming Administrator Kristi Oosterveen said a public hearing on the Transportation Improvement Program is mandated.

Chair Leitner opened the floor to public testimony.

Mr. Vic Bishop, 2114 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, referred to the list of projects

proposed to be removed from the TIP project list. He said while for the most part it makes sense to remove the listed projects, the SR-520 I-405 to West Lake Sammamish Parkway project is essentially a master plan for the SR-520 corridor from the I-405 interchange into Redmond. He said progress toward upgrading SR-520 will not occur until there is an associated master plan. It would be in the city's interest to maintain pressure on the Washington State Department of Transportation to instigate a master plan, particularly with the doubling of Microsoft and the 148th Avenue corridor issues. The projections showing all the MMAs in the northeast part of city going red are all associated with the SR-520 corridor, access to it and its ability to carry the traffic. It would be a serious mistake to remove the interest of the city. The project should be left on the list, in part to keep it eligible for grant money. There is more traffic on SR-520 to the east of I-405 than there is to the west and a plan is needed to address that.

There were no other public comments.

Chair Leitner closed the public hearing.

7. STUDY SESSION

A. 2021-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update

Ms. Oosterveen said the actions before the Commission were to recommend approval of the TIP update and the accompanying transmittal memo to the City Council. She said the TIP is mandated to be updated annually. The TIP is not revenue constrained and is intended to outline projects the city would build if it had the resources available in the six-year timeframe. Projects selected from the Comprehensive Plan and the long-range facility and functional plans flow into the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP). From there they are vetted for funding in the Capital Investment Program (CIP) and project implementation. The TIP consists of projects in the long-range and functional plans along with projects in the 12-year financially constrained TFP and the seven-year CIP. There are also projects from other programs and initiatives as well as regional projects the city may want to participate in. The TIP, once approved, is forwarded to WSDOT and the Puget Sound Regional Council. The TIP improves the ability of the city to receive grants for projects.

Ms. Oosterveen explained that there are four sections in the TIP. In Section I there are projects from the adopted 2019-2025 CIP. Section II contains unfunded projects from the adopted 2019-2030 Transportation Facilities Plan. Section III has other unfunded local projects identified through the Comprehensive Transportation Project List or scoped through other analysis or pre-design studies, and Section IV has other regional or outside agency led projects in which the city may choose to participate financially.

The Commissioners were informed that the projects listed in Attachment 3 were those slated for removal from the current 2020-2025. Ms. Oosterveen noted that project R-202 would be substantially completed in 2020. TFP-247 is set to be removed because the city was able to receive grant funds and use some existing CIP program funds, allowing the project to be completed in 2020. Section III of the TIP includes eight new projects and the proposal is to remove one project, associated with the Eastgate Transportation Study. In Section IV there are three project descriptions revised and two projects set for removal.

Ms. Oosterveen said two letters were received in regard to the proposed TIP, both of which addressed the same projects, starting with G-103, TFP-244, the Eastrail corridor. Additional

bullets to describe associated project components were added to the project description as a result. Also mentioned were the levy projects for which the list of specific projects and candidate locations is very long.

Ms. Oosterveen said the recommendation to remove the SR-520 project from Section IV was predicated on the fact that the state currently has no plan to go forward with it. The dollars set aside were intended for when the state would ask the city to participate. Because the TIP is updated annually, if at any point the project needs to be added back into the plan, it can be.

The Commissioners were informed that the TIP and the Commission's recommendation is slated to go before the City Council on July 6.

Commissioner Wu asked why the state has not chosen to move forward with the SR-520 corridor projects. Ms. Oosterveen said she did not know why.

Commissioner Ting observed that the text for the SR-520 project calls for considering how the city would participate with state and regional partners. He asked if there are any regional partners the city might want to work with, aside from the state, on the SR-520 corridor. Ms. Oosterveen said staff was told there is currently no interest in moving forward with a study regarding SR-520. She said she was not aware of any indication of interest from any neighboring jurisdiction. State involvement will be necessary in order to move forward with the project. Commissioner Ting asked if the project is something the city might want to advocate for at the state and regional levels. Ms. Oosterveen said it certainly would be possible to raise the issue with the regional transportation policy advisor.

Commissioner Ting commented that SR-520 is very important in the overall transportation picture. Bellevue certainly does not operate in a vacuum and as such must connect at the state and regional levels. Having the project included in the TIP is one way to keep it top of mind, both for Bellevue and for all regional partners. Given that the TIP is not revenue constrained, there is no strong argument for removing it from the list. Ms. Oosterveen said she knew of no disadvantage that might flow from leaving the project on the list. The Commission is free to decide which projects should be on the list and which should not.

Commissioner Wu noted her support for keeping the project in the TIP for the reasons outlined by Commissioner Ting.

Chair Leitner commented that in a pre-Covid world, many were likely banking on having Sound Transit and light rail eliminating some of the SR-520 corridor congestion. She said Covid has changed all of that and the likelihood is that people will forego using transit in favor of riding alone in their cars. The city should keep projects like the SR-520 corridor project in mind should the behavior have long-lasting effects on the transportation system. She supported leaving the project on the TIP project list.

A motion to remove TIP project 103, SR-520 Eastside multimodal corridor projects, from the deleted projects list and to reinstate it in Section IV of the TIP, was made by Commissioner Marciante. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ting and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the transmittal memo for the TIP was made by Commissioner Marciante. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ting and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) Plan Update

Environmental Stewardship Program Manager Jennifer Ewing said the purpose of the update was to review the progress made with the Environmental Stewardship Initiative and to analyze additional steps the city may wish to take to achieve its environmental goals. The Council directed that all boards and commissions should be engaged in the process to seek input on possible strategies and actions.

Ms. Ewing reminded that Commissioners that in January she presented the recommended set of targets for 2050. Input from the boards and commissions, the public and from the City Council highlighted the need to consider some shorter-term goals, so a recommended set of targets for 2030 were developed for the five focus areas in the plan. She noted that for the most part the targets involved a linear trajectory from existing conditions, with the exception of the target for electric vehicles where growth is anticipated in the out years. The aspirational goal of 100 percent electric vehicles is the target for 2050.

The Environmental Stewardship Initiative was launched in 2007. The most recent iteration spanned the years 2013 to 2018. For the 2020 to 2025 plan, the focus is on establishing long-term and short-term goals and targets, and developing actions for the next five years. The plan includes actions for which there is not necessarily any funding, thus the plan is intended in part to identify and provide a foundation for funding needs for the budget process.

The development of actions for the plan involved reviewing an exhaustive list of potential actions ranging from what has been done to date to best practices from around the region and the country. It has been recognized that a lot of progress has been made in many of the plan areas, and the question is what else could be done. The multi-criteria analysis looked at the impact, cost and benefits of various potential actions. The main strategy areas for the mobility and land use actions were related to increasing mobility options, continuing transit-oriented development, and encouraging cleaner fuels and vehicles.

With regard to the draft actions under the heading of mobility and land use, Ms. Ewing suggested the actions toward increased mobility options are in the purview of the Transportation Commission. The actions include expanding the use of transportation impact fees to support multimodal projects; supporting the development of a mobility implementation plan; ambitious transportation strategies to achieve long-term goals; accelerating implementation of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan; and continued support for the city's commute trip reduction efforts. The transit-oriented development actions included looking at the impact of East Link on the demand for parking in the growth center areas; and leveraging the Frequent Transit Network service. The clean vehicles and fuels category actions included supporting electric vehicle readiness; electric vehicle infrastructure; and support for regional or statewide clean fuel standards.

Some work has been done in analyzing the impact of the various strategies. The majority of the strategies relative to reducing greenhouse gas emissions are focused around energy use in buildings and in transportation. The trends for each category are all positive. A similar analysis was done relative to the per capita vehicle miles traveled reduction goals looking at both 2030 and 2050. The East Link light rail line is expected to result in a reduction in the per capita vehicle miles traveled once it is operational even as population continues to grow. The analysis also looked at continuing to expand the ped/bike networks, bus rapid transit, telecommuting and carpooling. Under Covid the majority of those working are doing so from home, and the anticipation is that more people in the future will work at least part of their week from home. It

is recognized that in order to achieve the longer-term goals, some additional actions will be needed.

Commissioner Ting referred to the likely and aggressive adoption rates for electric vehicle readiness. He noted that likely was listed at He noted that the “likely” scenario projected by the PSRC is 20% EV adoption by 2040, and that the King County “aggressive” adoption rates are 25% by 2031 and 100% by 2050, and asked if the numbers were based on business as usual, especially for the likely category. Ms. Ewing said the likely numbers were drawn from a Puget Sound Regional Council study and were based on business as usual. The aggressive approach would require some additional strategies. The Puget Sound Regional Council study was based on the four-county region, and the market for electric vehicles is likely higher in Bellevue. The probability of hitting the aggressive numbers will depend in part on having additional regional and state incentives for electric vehicles beyond what are already in place, as well as education and outreach efforts.

Asking a question asked by Commissioner Wu, Ms. Ewing said staff performed a relative cost analysis involving different strategies. The perspective taken was high, medium, low. What the costs or savings could be for the city or for residents and businesses were taken into consideration, but a full cost estimate was not taken for every single action.

Ms. Ewing said over the last few months staff were focused on the second phase of public outreach. In the first phase, the focus was the city’s environmental goals and garnering from the public what they saw as the vision for Bellevue. The second phase was more focused around seeking input from specific possible actions. An open house was held on March 3, the day before King County announced restrictions around Covid. Several additional in-person events were planned but they had to be rethought. The online survey was promoted as a means of engagement and it had more than 600 respondents. In April an in-person event was planned in partnership with Bellevue College, but that was switched to two online events that involved presentations and discussions on the topic of climate anxiety. Also conducted were some focus groups with business representatives, and a sustainability town hall with the Bellevue School District.

Ms. Ewing said the outreach summary presents what was heard from the survey regarding the different actions. She noted that people generally supported electric vehicle readiness, pilots and infrastructure around Autonomous Connected Electric and Shared Vehicles (ACES). Support was also evident for development of a mobility implementation plan; studying the impact of light rail on the parking demand; and expanding the Transportation Impact Fee program. There were concerns and questions raised about the parking supply in the city.

Ms. Ewing pointed out that the Covid crisis happened as the process of updating the plan was under way, just as the second phase of public outreach and engagement was launched. Since then staff have been giving thought to the impacts of Covid and economic recovery on the proposed actions. She said the focus is on actions that will help to reduce costs for residents and businesses, and strategies that will help to support job growth. The timing of certain actions will need to be considered in line with economic recovery, and some things first considered for addressing sooner rather than later may need to be pushed out a few years. In the short term there have been positive impacts by way of reductions in vehicle miles traveled and traffic, and reductions in global greenhouse gases emissions. A global pandemic does not, however, equal climate progress. The increase in the number of people working from home has demonstrated a desire to see a longer term shift in that sector.

The timeline for the Environmental Stewardship Initiative update has had to be revised. Given the green light to engage once again with the city's boards and commissions, the draft lists of strategies will be brought before those bodies over the next couple of months. A draft plan will be released later in the summer. The goal is to have the draft plan before the Council later in the fall and adopted by the Council in November.

Commissioner Wu noted that the presentation referred to development of a mobility implementation plan and pointed out that the Transportation Master Plan is what that plan is called, and it should be highlighted as such in all the presentations to the city's boards and commissions. The Council has approved the Commission's recommendations regarding the Transportation Master Plan, given it a clear policy standing. Ms. Ewing said she had been working with transportation staff on the right language. Mr. McDonald said the intent of the mobility implementation plan includes the integration of the various modes that the Commission recommended in a Transportation Master Plan. The budget proposal that has been prepared articulates the notion that the mobility implementation plan would represent an evolution and perhaps an revolution in how the city addresses mobility in terms of integrating existing plans and implementing them.

Commissioner Ting commented that the reduction in vehicle miles traveled and the increase in the number of persons working from home during the Covid crisis is a good thing. Going forward, the hope is that people will have the desire to continue working from home, but at the same time from an economic standpoint the city will want to ensure the viability of regional status for the establishment of employment centers. He said he hoped the city would think creatively about how to continue improving and growing its retail and employment centers while at the same time increasing the amount of work done from home so as to avoid decreasing the amount of economic activity in the city. There should be out-of-the-box thinking about how to take advantage of the current work-from-home situation, which yields benefits, while also retaining the economic vitality of the employment centers. Ms. Ewing agreed. She said staff were working with the Bellevue Downtown Association on messaging for restarting the economy. How to simultaneously encourage working from home and bolstering the local economy will need to be part of the messaging mix.

Commissioner Marciante said it was her understanding that the wedge analyses was only done internally and not with stakeholders, and that the stakeholders were only asked to choose their preferences and prioritize solutions. Ms. Ewing concurred. Commissioner Marciante said her comment back in January was to make sure the public engagement process included activities aimed at getting people to understand the tradeoffs. It is not easy to choose sustainable actions where it is not understood what will need to be given up. A wedge analysis can be effective in that way. In that light it is interesting that the Transportation Master Plan rated so highly, which could be interpreted as meaning that people have an understanding of the complexity between climate and transportation, and the relationship between higher vehicle miles traveled, economic output and greenhouse gases emissions. She suggested the goals of the transportation system should be defined to be specific enough to include vehicle miles traveled reductions as a measurable goal and one of the top priorities for a successful Transportation Master Plan. Ms. Ewing said she also had been surprised to see the mobility implementation plan rank so highly. Comments were made by some residents as part of the survey about wanting to see fewer studies and more actions. Staff intend to dig in a little deeper relative to the top five actions to better understand why they were selected.

A motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes to 9:15 p.m. was made by Commissioner Wu. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Wu said she wanted to hear from other Commissioners and staff on the Commission's review of the budget proposal related to the Transportation Master Plan. Mr. Singelakis stated that the city boards and commissions do not review budget proposals. He noted, however, that staff had committed to working with the Commission on developing a scope of the work. He allowed that other departments have been confused about the relationship between a Transportation Master Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. The policies in a mobility implementation plan would need to be enacted through the Comprehensive Plan, and that is the primary reason behind the name change. The name has changed but the intent is still the same. He agreed that performance measures will need to be developed. Commissioner Wu questioned why the name should be changed. She said the content of the Transportation Master Plan in the Environmental Stewardship Initiative should follow faithfully the recommendation from the Commission. She asked that the mobility implementation plan should be called the Transportation Master Plan.

Chair Leitner asked if the ultimate intent, whether called the mobility implementation plan or the Transportation Master Plan, is to have the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan link to the transportation projects. Mr. Singelakis said that is the goal.

Commissioner Wu noted that several recommendations were made by the Wilburton CAC in regard to transit-oriented development. She said the study very much embodies the notion of transit-oriented development. She suggested that study should be reviewed as an action item as the process moves forward.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 13, 2020

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Marciante. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tropin and the motion carried unanimously.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. REVIEW OF COMMISSION CALENDAR

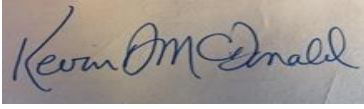
Mr. McDonald briefly reviewed the calendar of upcoming meetings and agenda items, noting that there are no items scheduled for a July 9 meeting, therefore it is likely to be cancelled..

Commissioner Wu suggested the Commission at its next meeting should review the status of work plan items that got dropped due to the Covid pandemic. Mr. McDonald pointed out that the Commission typically conducts a retreat in the fall, and noted that the work plan is generally one of the items discussed. He said he would work with the chair to identify a date and topics for the retreat.

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Wu. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marciante and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Leitner adjourned the meeting at 9:14 p.m.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin McDonald".

9/10/20

Secretary to the Transportation Commission

Date