

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

January 26, 2017
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Zahn, Commissioners Bishop, Chirls, Lampe,
Woosley, Wu

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Larrivee

STAFF PRESENT: Kevin McDonald, Maher Welaye, Marie Jensen, John
Murphy, Paula Stevens, Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Woosley, who arrived at 6:42 p.m., and Commissioner Larrivee, who was excused.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT– None

4 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL,
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

6. DRAFT MINUTES REVIEW/APPROVAL – None

7. STUDY SESSION

A. East Link Updates

Transportation engineering manager Maher Welaye took a moment to thank Commissioner Lampe for his service on the East Link project, and for chairing the East Main station area planning CAC. Commissioner Lampe noted that he also currently serves on the citizen oversight panel for Sound Transit.

Mr. Welaye noted that the planning efforts for the East Link project began in 2006. Final design was reached in 2015, the same year work began on relocating utilities. Heavy

construction began in 2016 and will continue through 2022. Testing and pre-operations work is anticipated to get under way in 2022, a year ahead of the launching full East Link operations in 2023. By the summer of 2016, all of the contracts will be started. Sound Transit is poised to award the contract for the Bel-Red segment, and has given notice to proceed for the downtown area and limited notice to proceed for the South Bellevue segment.

With regard to construction noise, Mr. Welaye noted that the temporary sound walls have been constructed for the south portal between 112th Avenue SE and Main Street. The actual tunnel excavation work is set to begin on January 30 and the work will be under way 24 hours per day. The work during the first two months will be the noisiest, but once the work progresses underground there will be less noise. All hauling of materials will occur between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Noise packages have been offered to adjacent property owners, and monitoring equipment has been installed. A complaint protocol has been established that determines who will respond to calls. The staging area for the work will eventually be covered and made into a park. Sound Transit is studying the feasibility of installing the permanent noise wall as early as possible.

Mr. Welaye said the city will issue all right-of-way use permits for the construction work. The permits will outline what Sound Transit can and cannot do. The city will work with Sound Transit to identify and include in the contracts both milestones and penalties. The milestones will include such things as how long a project can impact Bellevue Way, and if the milestones are not met there will be penalties. The goal is to minimize the inevitable disruptions. The city will do its best to manage traffic on the arterials and in the neighborhoods, but if traffic gets diverted into the neighborhoods, the Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Committee will be called on to address it.

Chair Zahn
~~Commissioner Hilhorst~~ asked how the city determine with Sound Transit an acceptable level of traffic impacts and mitigation. Mr. Welaye said the city conducted a lot of outreach during the East Link design process. The public provided a lot of feedback and input. Traffic engineers have looked carefully at the traffic counts and have done some modeling. One example is Bellevue Way where congestion is already an issue and where the goal is to maintain the current capacity while accomplishing the work. Lanes will be closed during off-peak hours, but during peak hours two lanes will be maintained in the peak hour direction. A lot of community input went into making that decision.

Commissioner Woosley complimented the city for taking a leadership role in recognizing the challenges. Sound Transit's original proposal was simply not acceptable. The city worked with the neighborhoods and the Chamber of Commerce as well as with Sound Transit, the result of which is a shortened overall construction timeframe and the number of total closures that will be required. Mr. Welaye said even with the plan in place, the city will work closely with the contractors seeking ways to accomplish the work more efficiently.

Mr. Welaye said once things get going it will be important for the city to coordinate with other agencies, including Sound Transit, WSDOT, King County Metro, private development, and other city projects.

Commissioner Bishop said it was his understanding that Bellevue Way would have three lanes, with the center lane reversible to accommodate the morning and evening peak times. Mr. Welaye said that will be the case for a period of time during which the majority of the heavy construction will occur. For about a year, there will be two lanes open northbound and one southbound during the morning peak, and the opposite during the evening peak. During the

off-peak there may be only a single lane in each direction.

Commissioner Woosley asked what kind of oversight the city will have in making sure the contractors and everyone else complies with the established goals. Mr. Welaye said there will be ongoing coordination and monitoring, and adjustments will be made as needed along the way. For each segment, the city will have a lead inspector charged with working closely on a daily basis with the contractor and monitoring what is going on. Where something is not working, the information will be shared with other city transportation staff and adjustments will be identified.

Commissioner Woosley asked if the city has a plan in place for 112th Avenue SE. Mr. Welaye said there is. A temporary detour will be built by the contractor for a period of time in order to accommodate the road over rail element of the project. There will also be an extended period of time during when all northbound lanes will be closed and during which the two southbound lanes will be converted to one lane in each direction. Commissioner Woosley suggested the information needs to be openly shared with the community so people will know what to expect.

Ms. Jensen said there is language in the Memorandum of Understanding about the closure of the South Bellevue park and ride. It commits Sound Transit to doing some advanced notification. It has not yet been publicly stated when the park and ride will close because the contractor is still finalizing the construction schedule. The current message from Sound Transit is that the park and ride will close and that the construction schedule is coming soon. Some alternate commuter parking lots were opened by Sound Transit in November after going through a permit process with the city. Commuters have been advised to try their alternate routes ahead of the park and ride closure.

Commissioner Chirls noted that there are a number of bike clubs that use the South Bellevue park and ride to meet; they either ride from or to the facility. He asked if once the closure occurs if it will involve only vehicles or if bicycle traffic will still be allowed to use it. Ms. Jensen said the site will become a construction zone and will be fenced accordingly. All of the construction equipment will be staged at the site.

Chair Zahn suggested that giving notice of closure without an actual date could be deemed insufficient. Given that the site could be closed at any time, the net result could be commuters caught completely off guard. Ms. Jensen explained that Sound Transit is not done with their outreach. They had staff physically posted to the park and ride recently informing commuters, and they will continue to do that and to also push out other information. Sound Transit believes they have met the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding. Chair Zahn said she is one who will be directly impacted by the closure of the park and ride and will have to find an alternative transit ride. Having a nebulous closure date is like death by a thousand cuts. Ms. Jensen agreed with the need to have a date set, but said Sound Transit will not go public with even an estimated date until they have signed off on the contractor's timeline. Chair Zahn said at the very least Sound Transit should be asked to announce the date with a sufficient amount of time. Ms. Jensen said she was confident that Sound Transit would provide a decent amount of notice. She added that Sound Transit and the city are in sync with the notion of not closing the park and ride and then having the site sit vacant for a period of time.

Commissioner Chirls agreed with Chair Zahn that the city should determine and call for a minimum amount of notice time.

Commissioner Woosley allowed that Sound Transit will be replacing the existing surface parking with structured parking. He noted, however, that it will not take five years to construct it. The fact that Sound Transit intends to use the site for staging is why closure of the park and ride will last for five years. Some buses will still be run from the bus stop across the street, but without any parking.

Commissioner Woosley asked if there is any risk that WSDOT's additional construction on I-405 might overlap the South Bellevue park and ride project and further reduce access to and from the downtown. Mr. Welaye said the city has a very good relationship with WSDOT that includes ongoing project coordination. So far no overlap has been identified between WSDOT and Sound Transit projects. Of course, that could change depending on their funding for the additional lanes from Bellevue south. Commissioner Woosley pointed out that if WSDOT is able to squeeze another pair of lanes in, the Main Street overpass will have to come down.

Mr. Welaye informed the Commissioners that all design and mitigation permits have been issued. The city is working currently on the right-of-way use permits and the technical permits. Transportation staff meet on a bi-weekly basis with Sound Transit staff to review the permits and the conditions. Currently more than 200 permits have been issued or are under review as part of the East Link project.

Commissioner Bishop asked why so many permits are needed. Mr. Welaye said they run the gamut from building to mechanical, electrical right-of-way use and fire system permits. Every station is like a building, and for every building there are many permits required.

Mr. Welaye said the Memorandum of Understanding highlights several coordinated projects. For some of them, the city will take the lead on behalf of Sound Transit, while for others Sound Transit will deliver them on behalf of the city; still other projects are to be co-funded by the city and Sound Transit. The 120th Avenue NE project between NE 12th Street and NE 16th Street received notice to proceed and construction was started in August 2016. Jointly funded by the two jurisdictions, the city has the construction lead and also managed the design. The project is on track to be completed in early 2018.

The 124th Avenue NE project between Spring Boulevard and what will become Ichigo Way is fully designed. Work to secure the needed property rights is under way. Construction is expected to begin in mid-2017 and completed in late 2018.

Spring Boulevard Zone 1B started construction in August 2016 and runs between NE 12th Street and 120th Avenue NE. The Teledesic site was acquired as part of the Memorandum of Understanding and will be made available to Sound Transit for construction staging. The construction of Zone 1B is being carried out ahead of the light rail construction to avoid later having to build a bridge over the operational light rail system at a much higher cost.

Commissioner Bishop said it was his understanding that there was an option to have the Sound Transit contractor build the bridge. Mr. Welaye said there was but their cost estimate was significantly higher than what the city estimated the costs to be. The city put the contract out to bid and received very competitive responses.

Mr. Welaye said there have been some smaller projects carried out by the city on behalf of Sound Transit, such as work on Bellevue Way to realign and replace the water main. Sound Transit paid for the work.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bishop, Mr. Welaye said there are two structures involved in the Spring Boulevard Zone 1B project. One structure bridges the East Link line as it comes along the BNSF and curves east under 120th Avenue NE. There is also bridging over the former BNSF area, and there is fill between the two structures.

With regard to the operations and maintenance facility along 120th Avenue NE, Mr. Welaye said the city and Sound Transit have reviewed the final proposals for the design-build contract. The city will be involved in the selection process, which is slated to occur in the February/March timeframe. It is anticipated that Sound Transit will have approval to proceed by May. Mr. Welaye said the city has an interest in shrinking the footprint for the project to the degree possible to allow for the possibility of transit-oriented development in the future.

Associate Planner John Murphy said the overarching principle behind the concept of traffic maintenance is making sure the traffic will be able to move during construction similar to how it moves presently. He noted, however, that there still are concerns from the neighborhoods that construction will create bottlenecks and congestion that will make some streets impassible and that will cause traffic to seek alternate routes through the neighborhoods. The concern is outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the city and Sound Transit with an eye on addressing and minimizing the impacts to the neighborhoods during East Link construction. He said a committee has been formed with 11 residents of the Bellecrest, Enatai, Surrey Downs and Beaux Arts Village. The task for the committee is to develop a plan that will lessen the potential for increased traffic on neighborhood streets as a result of construction activity along Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue SE. The city-led process uses many of the same tools utilized by the traffic calming program, and is coordinated with Sound Transit which has an obligation to finance some of the mitigation elements.

The committee kicked off its work in April 2016 with a community meeting. The information garnered was used by the committee to development a plan. The committee worked to identify what tools could be used to lessen the potential for increased traffic while still providing access in and out of the neighborhoods. The plan developed by the plan centers on the concept of turn restrictions like the one currently in place at 108th Avenue NE and Main Street.

With regard to the South Bellevue area, the committee recognized that traffic currently uses 108th Avenue SE to bypass Bellevue Way, continuing down through Bellecrest to Enatai and coming out at the South Bellevue park and ride or even further south at 113th Avenue SE. The committee concluded the ability of traffic to make a right-turn back onto Bellevue Way and ultimately to the freeway, making 108th Avenue SE through Enatai unattractive to evening commuters. The idea was put before the community who indicated a desire to be able to get out of their neighborhoods at 112th Avenue SE and 113th Avenue SE between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. and go south. The Enatai neighborhood in particular did not like the proposed turn restrictions. The committee has been working with community members from all of the impacted neighborhoods to get them to think in terms of having a system of connected plans.

The feedback was taken back to the committee where the goals were revised in recognition of the fact that while there is concern about East Link construction increasing traffic on the neighborhood streets, it is not known how that will occur or what the impact will be. The committee has decided to take a wait and see approach while also applying more rigorous data monitoring around some of the major construction activities on Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue SE. The turn restrictions will not be imposed at 112th Avenue SE and 113th Avenue SE, but the committee is still proposing a turn restriction during the evening commute around 108th Avenue SE and Bellevue Way which is seen as a fulcrum between Bellecrest, Surrey

Downs, Enatai and Beaux Arts.

Commissioner Lampe noted that the closure of SE 4th Street will make it extraordinarily difficult to go south. Mr. Murphy said that is why the issue will be taken out to the wider community. SE 1st Street is already closed, and SE 4th Street will close, making it difficult to get out of the neighborhood.

Commissioner Woosley said the neighborhood would love to have a system that would allow residents to be able to turn but not non-residents, but of course that would be difficult to enforce on public streets. Exiting Enatai at Bellevue Way and 108th Avenue SE is already a big challenge, and if all of the traffic that currently goes out the other exists were to be forced north, the degradation in the level of service would be notable.

Chair Zahn pointed out that if everything gets clogged up in the area by Bellevue Way, it will continue to push more traffic onto 118th Avenue SE, which is already bad given it is the cut-through people take to avoid I-405. The entire infrastructure going south will get clogged. Mr. Murphy said that is a key point the mitigation committee has recognized, but they also recognize that how people will adjust remains an unknown.

Mr. Murphy said much concern has been voiced about spillover parking in a lot of neighborhoods, specifically around the park and ride given that the 550 will continue to run on Bellevue Way. Parking in a neighborhood could be an attractive alternative for some transit users. There is policy in the Comprehensive Plan to protect neighborhoods from spillover parking. A potential residential parking zone (RPZ) has been identified for Enatai and the legal framework has been put in place. When the park and ride closes the RPZ will be put to a vote of the neighborhood and if approved can be implemented immediately.

Ms. Jensen said much of her work relative to the tunnel construction is focused on going everywhere the Sound Transit outreach staff member goes. Talks are held with neighbors individually and in groups. With regard to the Memorandum of Understanding, there is a provision that the city create what is worded as a Bellevue is Open for Business campaign, and she said she coordinates that project as well. An external committee made up of representatives from the hospitality sector, Kemper Development Company, Meydenbauer Center and the Bellevue Downtown Association was formed to share consistent and timely information about East Link as well as other private and public development happening along the alignment.

Ms. Jensen said she is also responsible for content on the city's light rail website, and manages the East Link listserv which has some 1600 subscribers. *It's Your City* always includes a feature article on East Link, and information is also included in the monthly *Neighborhood News* newsletter. Sound Transit is not a big fan of the city posting things on social media, but some progress is being made. Sound Transit has a dedicated staff member for each segment of their outreach. They are conducting door-to-door visits at both homes and businesses, and they provide neighborhood and business briefings on request. Sound Transit outreach staff are in contact with key stakeholders, provide information via e-newsletters and project updates as well as other publications, and they distribute flyers to residences. They also keep their webpage up to date.

Chair Zahn asked if consideration has been given to organizing tours of construction sites for Bellevue residents. Ms. Jensen said she would suggest the idea to Sound Transit. She added that Sound Transit intends to install cameras at construction sites, though the exact locations have not yet been identified. They are about to release a video showing the method of

tunneling.

B. Complete Streets

Senior Planner Kevin McDonald reminded the Commissioners that in September 2016 Department of Transportation director Dave Berg asked the Commission to look into drafting a recommendation to the Council to create a complete streets ordinance. Having a complete streets ordinance would make Bellevue eligible to compete for a complete streets award, and would provide a policy framework for many of the programs and projects the city already does. With the Commission's recommendation to the Council, the ordinance was approved with direction to the Commission to look at the Comprehensive Plan to identify any policies in need of being amended to further embed the complete streets ethic in the Comprehensive Plan. Seven policies were identified and on January 12 the Commission reviewed the staff-recommended policy language. It was noted that the policy language contained in the packet materials reflected the changes previously asked for. A motion to approve the policy revisions would be followed by a Council-initiated Comprehensive Plan amendment.

A motion to endorse the policy changes as reflected in the packet was made by Commissioner Chirls. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Woosley and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McDonald said the transmittal is tentatively scheduled to be before the Council on March 6.

C. Downtown Transportation Plan Policies

Mr. McDonald commented that the policy recommendations made by the Commission in January 2014 originated from the Commission's work on the Downtown Transportation Plan which was submitted to the Council in October 2013. At the October 2013 meeting, the Council directed implementation of the recommended plan. Implementation occurs in two ways: through projects and through amending the policies in the downtown subarea plan, which was last amended in 2004 based on a community outreach process that involved a CAC.

Commissioner Wu asked about what the Commission could comment on regarding the policies. Mr. McDonald said the policy spreadsheet in the packet included every policy in the downtown subarea plan along with an assessment about its status with respect to the work done by the Commission on the Downtown Transportation Plan. The policies for which the Commission made no recommendation for change were not included in the list. The policies deemed to still be valid but in need of a language modification were included along with all new policies recommended by the Commission. He suggested the Commission should limit its recommendations to non-substantive language changes to the policies because there has been no work done by the Commission in the intervening years to justify substantive changes.

Mr. McDonald shared with the Commissioners the presentation made to the Council in January 2014 that outlined the recommendations of the Commission. He stressed that the Council had been adamant about having the Downtown Transportation Plan advance the adopted land use vision for the downtown.

Commissioner Bishop pointed out that the plan was focused on creating a transportation system that would support the land use vision for a given year. He stressed that the plan was not intended to support a full buildout of the downtown, rather only the projected population

and employment for 2030.

Commissioner Woosley voiced concern that the plan does not address the ultimate transportation needs for the downtown. He said the city's land use and transportation policies should be synced, with sufficient capacity to accommodate the land uses. Mr. McDonald pointed out that in fact the Downtown Transportation Plan was intended to and does exactly that; it creates a transportation system that supports the projected 2030 growth, which is 70,300 jobs and 19,000 people living in the downtown. Commissioner Woosley said it remains unknown what the transportation demand will be at the full buildout of what is currently zoned, and what will change if the zoning for the downtown is changed.

Chair Zahn said that was not the issue in developing the policy recommendations. The work was based on the 2030 forecast only. Commissioner Woosley agreed but said there is another level that is much more important. The policies are intended to guide the city for the long term.

Commissioner Chirls suggested that to a large degree, much will depend on how quickly the downtown moves toward the projected growth numbers, and the degree to which the density is distributed throughout the downtown. The dissonance lies in the fact that the Planning Commission is currently working to make changes to the assumptions the transportation plan is based on. Mr. McDonald said the policies related to transportation that were recommended by the Commission are independent of any change the Planning Commission may recommend relative to zoning.

Commissioner Bishop noted that the Commission has not been kept in the loop with regard to the Downtown Livability Initiative and the work being done by the Planning Commission relative to downtown zoning. As a consequence of that work, a technical memo was produced relative to transportation needs that the Commission has not previously seen. The work under way may or may not be creating some inconsistencies relative to the policy recommendations.

Commissioner Lampe said it was his understanding that the Planning Commission is looking at making changes in the allowable building heights but not in the allowable floor/area ratios (FAR). If that is the case, the land use numbers would not be changed.

Commissioner Chirls pointed out that while initially the Planning Commission was focused on increasing height without increasing density, as things have progressed the Planning Commission has in fact increased the allowed FAR in certain areas of the downtown, particularly along I-405. That will have transportation implications, but the Transportation Commission has not been brought in to that discussion.

Mr. McDonald commented that the entire Comprehensive Plan is built on the 2030 land use projections, as are the proposed transportation policies.

Commissioner Woosley argued that while that may be true, there are significantly changed circumstances to take into account. The Planning Commission is currently working to increase density in some areas; ST3 has passed; the advent of autonomous vehicles is imminent; the Grand Connection is being planned; and existing office buildings are being set up to accommodate far more people per square foot than originally calculated. There still is no solid information regarding what the trip generation will be at full build out of the downtown and how that might affect the transportation infrastructure.

Chair Zahn stressed that the Council had not directed the Commission to take on a study of

those issues. The transportation policies are intended to address the 2030 projections for employment and residents, and to tweak the policies to accommodate for something other than those projections could result in policies that are inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Chirls commented that the policies are good policies. The real issue, however, is that the Commission is being asked to make decisions in isolation of transportation impacts.

Chair Zahn agreed that work is under way that might change the projections for the downtown. However, the work assigned to the Commission should not be held up while waiting for the work of the Planning Commission to be completed. Policies once adopted are not unchangeable, and the Council could at a future time direct the Commission to revisit the global assumptions and recommend additional policy revisions.

Commissioner Woosley called attention to policy S-DT-80 and pointed out that as drafted a pedestrian overpass crossing 112th Avenue NE cannot be constructed, which means the Grand Connection cannot be built. The language should be revised to allow for pedestrian bridges there.

Chair Zahn allowed that some specific language tweaks might be appropriate, but the work of the Commission should be in line with the direction given by the Council. The final recommendation of the Commission to the Council could be bundled with some caveats, such as the need to revisit policies once the work of the Planning Commission relative to the downtown is completed.

Mr. McDonald pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan is a living document. The Council can initiate changes to it as circumstances warrant. That could include directing policy language changes to allow for pedestrian bridges where they are not currently allowed.

Commissioner Wu asked if the Grand Connection is part of the transportation project list. Mr. McDonald said the concept of the Grand Connection has morphed substantially since it was first envisioned. The term "Grand Connection" is in fact embedded in the Comprehensive Plan, both in policy and in the comprehensive transportation project list that was adopted in 2015.

Commissioner Woosley stated that any member of the public wanting to oppose the Grand Connection could point to the Comprehensive Plan policies regarding pedestrian overpasses. It is true the Council can direct changes to Comprehensive Plan policies as needed, but the Comprehensive Plan policies must be consistent with the Land Use Code and the zoning.

Mr. McDonald shared with the Commissioners the 2030 land use forecast along with an image showing how the projected population and employment densities. He noted that most of the new development would occur in the downtown core, tapering off toward the perimeters. The Commissioners were also shown modeling output showing the number of person trips both for 2010 and 2030, and an outline of the mobility options to get to and from the downtown.

The individual chapters of the Downtown Transportation Plan focus on particular modes of travel. The chapter dealing with vehicle mobility talks about the road network, regional and neighborhood access, the capacity of the roadways, and the operation of traffic signals. The modeling for the downtown relative to vehicle level of service used average vehicle delay at the signalized intersections.

Commissioner Chirls said the problem in traffic models is that they do not take into account

construction impacts. Where the downtown is concerned, there are construction projects that will be going on out to 2030 and beyond and they will cause major impacts. As such the model is totally irrelevant. Mr. McDonald said if that is the case, there is no need to proceed because the policy and project work is all based on the transportation modeling. Because it cannot be accurately predicted when, where and for how long construction will occur, it is not feasible to factor into models construction impacts, or what mitigation factors will be implemented and how effective they will be. Commissioner Chirls argued that the construction plans that have been approved are a given, as is the current construction and how long it will last.

Assistant Transportation Director Paula Stevens said there are a number of ways to go about managing the impacts of construction on the roadways. She said right-of-way staff have been asked to provide the Commission with an update at a future meeting. The city's modeling work would quickly be called into question if an attempt were to be made to include in the model a guestimate of construction impacts over a 20- to 30-year period. There are a variety of processes in place to mitigate construction impacts.

Commissioner Wu said there is a disconnect between what the models say will happen and what is actually happening on the roadways. The modeling approach, while standard in every respect, is difficult to reconcile with reality.

Commissioner Chirls said he favored adopting the changes made to the policies. The policies as proposed will not stop the Commission or the city from considering any new ideas at any time.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Wu, Mr. McDonald allowed that policy language can change the descriptions and priorities of projects, but the general direction for projects in the downtown is based on the Comprehensive Plan. In looking at roadway or transit projects, modeling data is used to help inform the decisions.

A motion to extend the meeting to 9:30 p.m. was made by Commissioner Woosley. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McDonald shared with the Commissioners the 2010 baseline data relative to average intersection delay. Superimposed on it was the list of projects expected to be online by 2030. He noted that some of the projects were outside of the downtown but were needed to support downtown ingress and egress. He noted that the 2030 model output clearly shows greater levels of congestion, and he stressed that whether or not any of the projects actually come to fruition should not change the language of the policies.

The recommendations forwarded to the Council included curbside uses and the need for more capacity for on-street parking, both permanent and off-peak. There are roadway lanes that are not needed 24/7 for moving vehicles, and there is a lot of pick-up/drop-off of goods and services that could happen in those lanes. A map was included showing the location of existing on-street parking and potential new on-street parking. Some new on-street parking has been created since the map was first published. Other things recommended by the Commission have also already been done, including the installation of electric vehicle charging stations, and the creation of taxi stands and loading zones.

The Downtown Transportation Plan recognizes where the Commission's boundaries end. Accordingly, some recommendations were handed off to the Planning Commission, including load zones and other Land Use Code amendments. Load zones are established as conditions of

development approval for new projects.

The transit chapter of the Downtown Transportation Plan addresses how many people have access to a bus stop, the speed and reliability of buses operating in the system, the capacity of both the buses and the transit center to accommodate people, and how to get people to and from the stations and stops comfortably. The Commissioners were shown a map of the 2010 land use intensity overlaid with the frequent transit routes, and 600-foot circles drawn around transit stops to indicate the number of people who are within a short walking distance of a transit stop in the downtown. For 2010, 86 percent of those living or working in the downtown had nearby access to frequent transit. By 2030, based on the slightly reconfigured transit routes and more density in the core, the number increases to 97 percent. The transit priority network was created to enhance speed and reliability, and potential intersection improvements to help move buses through were identified. The Transit Master Plan provides Bellevue with the tools needed to advocate with transit agencies for more service, which is fully in sync with the Downtown Transportation Plan.

Mr. McDonald said in developing the Downtown Transportation Plan the Commission found that much could be done to improve bicycling in the downtown. The Commission recommended a bicycle system map, which is largely consistent with the ped/bike transportation plan and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative. The need for bicycle parking was included in the recommendation, including short-term bike racks and access to and from transit stops. The Downtown Livability Initiative includes a recommendation to incentivize secure on-site bike parking for commuters.

Various design concepts were envisioned for the pedestrian corridor to better accommodate bicycles. In part that has been achieved through the recent work to widen and make more gentle the ramp to the west of the transit center. Street crossings are also being implemented, including the intersection improvements at 108th Avenue NE and NE 4th Street and a number of midblock crossings that have come about as conditions of development approval. Developers are becoming more cognizant about access through the superblocks as well. The Commission identified an approach to intersection treatments, which exceptional intersections those along the pedestrian corridor and in Old Bellevue, and with enhanced intersections at busy pedestrian locations in and around the core of the downtown.

The Commission also had recommendations with respect to sidewalk width and landscaping which were referred to the Downtown Livability Initiative and which have been adopted into code.

Commissioner Woosley said his concern is that some of the assumptions the downtown livability plan is based on are inaccurate. The assumptions in the modeling are debatable, and the organizations that provided comments all opposed the assumptions in the Transit Master Plan that drove the transit ridership numbers higher than what is reasonable. One of those assumptions is that all retail parking throughout the city will no longer be free by 2030. Mr. McDonald said that point is in fact not correct.

Commissioner Woosley agreed that most of the proposed policies would support whatever actions go forward, with the specific exception of pedestrian overpasses. He said he did not agree philosophically with everything in the policies, but the time to comment on philosophy has apparently passed. With regard to the assumptions that go into modeling in the future, he suggested the Commission should make decisions based on the fact that many of the transportation improvements that are the basis for the whole downtown plan are not likely to

occur.

Commissioner Woosley said he could support approving the proposed policy language, with a modification to the policy regarding pedestrian overpasses to allow Council approval of additional locations with an appropriate process.

Commissioner Wu indicated she had a number of comments to make about the policies before they are approved.

Chair Zahn acknowledged that another meeting would be needed to finalize the policies. She asked the Commissioners to share specifics with staff offline and come prepared to discuss them at a future meeting. She also suggested that the transmittal to the Council should include recommendations about updating the assumptions and some of the modeling. Mr. McDonald said that would be appropriate, adding that any additional work would need to be approved and initiated by the Council.

Commissioner Bishop suggested the Commission would benefit from having a briefing on the downtown initiative before taking action on the policies. He said he also would like the Commission to be briefed on the intersection analysis and the network assumptions. There are six city and regional projects that the Commission thought in 2011 and 2012 would be in place in 2030, but it is now known that some of them will not be.

Commissioner Chirls said part of the problem is that the Commission's recommendation included not only policy language but specific projects needed to validate the 2030 assumptions. It would be helpful to differentiate between the general policies and the specific projects. Chair Zahn agreed that they are separate issues. She stressed, however, that tweaking the policies and sending it on to the Council will not mean there is no more work to do. The Commission will need to strongly recommend the next steps.

Chair Zahn pointed out that the policies, once they are before the Planning Commission, may not look exactly as recommended by the Transportation Commission. Commissioner Woosley asked if the Transportation Commission could ask to see the policies after the Planning Commission has finished with them. He noted that the policies are related to transportation and said he has always been curious as to why the Planning Commission should have final say over transportation policies.

Chair Zahn reiterated her call for the Commissioners to submit to staff any questions they might have ahead of bringing the matter back before the full Commission. She said in the meantime she would seek advice from the Council liaison regarding the next steps.

Commissioner Chirls commented that during his tenure on the Commission and as a resident of Bellevue he had not seen any policy language that has precluded the Council, any commission or any citizen, from making recommendations about any specific project the Council or the Commission has in mind. Regardless of the policy language, the Commission is not precluded from making a recommendation in regard to any project.

A motion to extend the meeting by five minutes was made by Commissioner Wu. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bishop and the motion carried unanimously.

8. OLD BUSINESS – None

9. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Zahn asked staff to schedule updates for the Commission regarding the TIFIA loan and the kind of projects it may cover; construction mitigation management; the plans of WSDOT relative to I-405 through downtown Bellevue.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT – None

11. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Wu said the Wilburton CAC was set to meet again on February 2.

Chair Zahn said she heard the Renton school district found that after changing the school start times the number of accidents and issues has increased. She said it would be good to have more actual data.

Chair Zahn commented that there is a cable suspended ped/bike bridge in the Netherlands that is shaped like a donut. She said it represents innovation at its best.

Commissioner Woosley said Totem Lake is looking at a design for the Eastside Rail Corridor that will involve a spiral ramp up to a bridge over 124th Street.

Commissioner Woosley reported that he attended the Bellevue Way south open house. The staff did an excellent job and there was a good turnout. Commissioner Lampe added that a survey has been posted online about the HOV lane.

12. STAFF REPORTS – None

13. COMMISSION CALENDAR

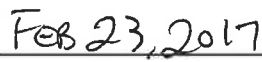
Mr. McDonald reviewed with the Commission the calendar of upcoming agenda items.

14. ADJOURN

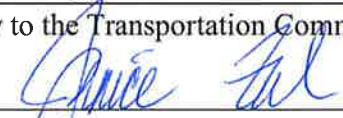
Chair Zahn adjourned the meeting at 9:38 p.m.



Secretary to the Transportation Commission



Date



Chairperson of the Transportation Commission



Date

