

ATTACHMENT 1

6/2/2014 City Council Study Session on the Bellevue Transit Master Plan (TMP)

Summary of Council Question and Answer Session

City Council

CB Claudia Balducci, Mayor
KW Kevin Wallace, Deputy Mayor
JC John Chelminiak
CL Conrad Lee
JR Jennifer Robertson
LR Lynne Robinson
JS John Stokes

City Staff and Transportation Commission

BM Brad Miyake, City Manager
ES Ernie Simas, Chair, Transportation Commission
FL Franz Loewenherz, Senior Transportation Planner

Initiated By: Question/Comment:

- CB
- Expresses appreciation to FL and ES for their hard work on the TMP and expresses Council's appreciation of the Transportation Commission. Considers the TMP to be an incredible piece of work reflecting a lot of study and public outreach.
 - The TMP has a realistic framework. It does not assume that all the service we need is available. Instead, it recognizes service constraints and the cost of capital improvements.
- CL
- Acknowledges the Transportation Commission for doing a great job, Transportation Commissioner Bishop especially.
 - Acknowledges staff for their work and the presentation.
 - The timing is right for this plan. It is really important that we are working on such a good transit plan since Bellevue has been known as a car oriented city. The demographics have changed to the extent where transit really works and people are really using the transit here. Transit is a very important piece of the solution.
 - Transit will form a backbone of a network that will include bikes and pedestrians. The bike program for downtown will be important.
- LR
- Commends the thorough nature of the public outreach process, which was very well thought out and extensive with three Forums. There was a lot of thinking outside of the box.
- JR
- Thanks staff for the TMP. Acknowledges the length of time the staff and

commission has worked on this Plan.

- Are there still some issues with regard to the TMP that have been controversial that we may need to look at a little more closely?

ES

- Any time you talk about developing a growing center and how you mesh all the pieces, such as bicycles, pedestrians, and transit, people will always have slightly different visions of the future.
- There have been spirited discussions within the Transportation Commission about the prioritization of streets for transit. These discussions include the use of HOV lanes or BAT lanes. Our discussions center on how to create the best system and have included topics such as taking a lane away from general transit, moving traffic and protecting individual vehicles.
- Generally when we, as a Commission, came to the end of these discussions, we all looked at the numbers, and we could all agree on what the numbers were. However, we did not always reach consensus on what the numbers mean.
- There were certain possibilities that we rejected. In the end we came up with a consensus where we all can live with in the TMP. Is every element what every commissioner would like to have? No. But that's rarely the case.

LR

- Are there any major issues where you had a lot of public comment that is inconsistent with what is in the recommended plan?
- After the public hearing, I would like to see a report created either from staff or from the Transportation Commission on the major themes from the public testimony you will gather.
- Have you had much public testimony on the TMP itself or was it primarily on the front end?

ES

- The testimony took place more during the front end of the TMP.
- Also, the general testimony was not in opposition to the TMP, but was mostly about what people want to see included as a part of the TMP, such as bicycles. In an urban area with a lot of dangers, making paths bicycle friendly as well as vehicle friendly is important.

FL

- The only real discussion is regarding Lease Lots, which requires changes by the Planning Commission to change the way they are created.

LR

- The comment today was about a concern about having Lease Lots too close to Park-and-Ride lots.
- Please brief us on how the process would work for Lease Lots. (request for comments from FL)

FL

- I think you have characterized it correctly. There is general community consensus around where we are headed with this. Council received an email today with respect to the Lease Lot discussions.
- Council is not making a recommendation today about how Lease Lots will occur. Council determined at the April 14 discussion that this issue will need

to be taken up by the Planning Commission.

- ES
 - The discussion of Lease Lots came up with respect to mitigation for the construction of the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride improvements. We have tried to be proactive about how we can mitigate this impact.
- LR
 - The comment we received today was about having Lease Lots too close to Park-and-Ride lots. I felt this was a very thoughtful comment. I don't think it is anything we need to do with the TMP, but I think it is something we should consider as we move forward. (request FL to review the process on the Lease Lots)
- FL
 - City Council would need to direct the Planning Commission to take this topic up as part of their Land Use Code amendment process. Then the Planning Commission would go through an exploratory phase and evaluate what recommendations will need to be brought forth. These recommendations, if approved by Council, would then be integrated into the Land Use Code.
- LR
 - Confirms that there would be a chance to look through that issue with greater detail without slowing down adoption of this TMP.
 - Confirms that the other comment received by City Council will also not slow down the adoption of the TMP. The other comment is about taking the general purpose lanes in Downtown on Main Street, which I think is a lower priority item. That would have to go to the TIP, then the TFP. There will be a lot of chance to comment on that.
- JC
 - Expresses appreciation for really good work.
 - I don't have any questions because I have been following this very closely.
 - My comments are that I don't think this conversation would have occurred 15 years ago because we have been car dominant. This TMP shows that our city has changed and we are trying to figure out how to integrate cars, buses, pedestrians, and bicyclists into the transportation network.
 - I always believed that the abundant access concept is the type of concept that should be applied as much as we can throughout the region. My fear was that we would have "leadership in a vacuum", where we would put forth a plan and agencies would not be accepting of it. Metro is willing to work this concept through. This is a different concept from "peanut buttering" service when nobody gets good service. This allows people to have really good transit service where transit works.
 - About the Lease Lots, Bellevue is the only city that requires a Conditional Use Permit to allow a parking lot to be a parking lot. I would prefer to deal with these issues through Lease Lots as opposed to "Park and Hide", where riders park in a neighborhood and walk to a transit stop.
 - Regarding the 271, we need to continue to re-visit frequency of service issue.
 - Commends the TMP for being really good and ground breaking for the city.
- JS
 - Commends the TMP for being really good, and laughingly moves that we

adopt it tonight. This plan is a good effort, and staff and the Transportation Commission has clearly worked well together.

- I am concerned about some compromises, some pieces that have been left out. One compromise is the HOV lanes. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for us to provide excellence in transit. The abundant access is a fascinating concept that will hopefully lead to much better transit overall. If the State will act on a real transportation package where they can address the issue about getting off the freeway.
- Expresses concerns about the Lease Lot issue with respect to parking in various lots. Acknowledges that these concerns can be dealt with by moving that issue through the Planning Commission. Overall, if we adopt this, we will have made great steps.

KW

- Commends the TMP as being a great piece of work, overall. Obviously, a lot of work has been put into this. It will help the Council make policy recommendations and communicate the issues. Expresses appreciation to staff and the Transportation Commission for all the work that has gone into this plan.
- Expresses concern about projects that take road right of way for BAT lanes. Expresses most concern in the downtown, but is concerned overall. Questions the data that was used to make decisions in the downtown based on knowledge of the data used several years ago in the study of the impacts of a light rail at grade in downtown. At that time, we did not have the road ROW to grow according to our land use growth plans, and at the same time, take up a road right of way lane. Expresses concerns about germinating seeds in this plan through projects L5, L11, and L13. His perspective is that these projects came in at the last minute, which is unfortunate, because there was limited discussion about converting road lanes to bus use. The inclusion of these projects in the plan does not cause me to “No” vote the whole plan because these elements are in it, but these give me pause.
- On the positive side, we identified that the number three advocacy item is Park and Rides. We need more Park and Rides. It has not been highlighted that tech companies come to our area and their employees need a place to park so they can take the bus. I hope that Park and Ride lots will be funded by Sound Transit, Metro, the State, us or funded through private sector solutions. Cities like Redmond and Woodinville share this opinion.
- It is helpful to look at where the corridor needs are for regional connections with limited resources.
- Signalization issues are important. The potential for queue jumping merits further discussion. Signalization may need more examination.
- Roads should be allowed to serve more purposes.
- Olympia needs to fund 405. It is not flushing the traffic out like it should.
- We now have a Transportation Commission that is very familiar with bus information, and we should try to connect our Transportation Commissioners with the staff from King County as King County Metro considers service cuts.

CB

- The Transportation Commission is a good commission and was well

appointed.

- To provide counterbalance to the topic of how to manage the lanes of the road, we have learned from other jurisdictions on how to manage the throughput on the roads. The overall goal of the city should be getting the most people and vehicles through a constrained space in the quickest amount of time, which will likely mean changes to Bellevue streets. It's not a matter of prioritizing one mode of transportation over the other. The purpose is to get the best movement for everyone to benefit everyone.
- There is a tension in current transit planning, due to reduced resources, between being efficient and serving routes well, and the idea of transit as a lifeline. An example of efficient transit is Sound Transit, because express bus routes are efficient. Transit as a lifeline must provide a base level of service throughout the day. The plan has got to address this balance. There is a place where this could occur in the plan on page 50, Policy 4, where it begins to talk about this balance issue. This policy talks about what people want to do and what they need to do. This might be a good place to capture this balance, but there might be other places as well. I want to call out that we are doing that. This is not a "nice to have" this is a "got to have".
- The TMP is very good. I look forward to adopting this plan. We have gotten to a good place with this.