

City of Bellevue
Wilburton Commercial Area
Citizen Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2017
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-112

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeremy Barksdale, Sarah Chong, Shari Einfalt, Jay Hamlin, Matt Jack, Chris Johnson, Debra Kumar, Maria Lau Hui, Andrew Pardoe Daniel Renn, Alison Washburn, Don Weintraub, Lei Wu

MEMBERS ABSENT: Glen Griswold, James McEachran

OTHERS PRESENT: Bradley Calvert - *Department of Planning and Community Development*, Kevin McDonald – *Transportation Department*, Ariel Davis – *Fehr & Peers*, Chris Brieland – *Fehr & Peers*, Jon McKenzie – *CH2M*

RECORDING SECRETARY: Audio Recording, transcribed by Bradley Calvert

1. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 6:02p.m. by Co-chair Wu.

Co-chair Wu asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *Ms. Kumar motioned to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pardoe. The agenda was unanimously approved.*

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Co-chair Wu asked if there were any comments regarding the meeting minutes from the June 1st, 2017 meeting. There were no comments.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *Ms. Kumar made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the June 6th, 2017 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jack. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.*

3. Communication with Boards, Commissions, Stakeholders, Public, and Meeting Updates

Co-chair Barksdale stated that the Planning Commission has made its recommendations for Downtown Livability initiative. He stated that they would be moving forward to City Council in the near future for Land Use Code changes. Mr. Jack stated that he thought Council was expected to review the Downtown Livability recommendations in late June. He stated that the Bellevue Downtown Association would continue to track the progress and provide input on behalf of their members.

Co-chair Barksdale stated that through the Committee surveys, members had stated they wanted to work in smaller groups with their fellow Committee members. He stated that his idea was to use tactical urbanism for the Committee to work together and potentially engage with the community. Co-chair Barksdale stated that tactical urbanism was a means for a community to take ownership and enact change and projects such as modifying the street through paint to encourage slower traffic was an example of tactical urbanism. He stated that another approach is for the government to engage the community and show the potential for change.

Co-chair Barksdale stated that an idea would be to close off the NE 6th Street bridge to give users an opportunity to experience what a crossing over Interstate 405 could feel like. He stated that the Committee could break into pairs and brainstorm ideas to engage the community. Co-chair Wu asked if these ideas were to be applied in general or during the process. Co-chair Barksdale stated it could be a part of the Committee process.

Mr. Pardoe stated that it was similar to what the City was engaged with for the Eastside Rail Corridor event in the fall of 2016. Co-chair Barksdale stated that the next steps were to pick partners offline from the meeting, and then provide updates on the partners and ideas for projects at the next meeting. Co-chair Wu stated that the committee members should identify their partners after the meeting.

4. Public Comment

Arlan Collins stated that he was with the architectural firm CollinsWoerman. He stated that they were currently working with KG Investments on their Wilburton properties. Mr. Collins stated he wanted to talk about a parkway on 116th Avenue NE. Mr. Collins stated that the idea of a parkway is driven by the idea of transforming the city owned property into a park. He stated that it sets up the opportunity to provide a gateway to the park. Mr. Collins stated that improvements to 116th Avenue NE would need to be scaled appropriately while providing access for pedestrians and to future development and businesses. Mr. Collins stated that he also wanted to talk about how the property functions from the perspective of east-west connections. He stated that the linkage to the Grand Connection is a major connection into the property. Mr. Collins stated that access to the south where Trader Joe's is located is also important. He stated that the major barrier to other access points on the site is the 40' grade change on the site leading up to the Eastside Rail Corridor. Mr. Collins stated that breaking up the site too much would complicate development opportunities.

Steve Kramer stated that he was with KG Investments. He stated that he wanted to discuss the considerations of the Eastside Rail Corridor crossings at NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street. Mr. Kramer stated that it appeared that the NE 8th crossing was in design, and that an overcrossing at NE 4th Street would create a negative impact with a crossing at NE 8th Street. He stated that if a NE 4th overcrossing were recommended the ramps between the two crossings would leave only 330' of at grade experience for the Eastside Rail Corridor. Mr. Kramer stated that an at grade crossing for NE 4th Street would leave 880' of the Eastside Rail Corridor at grade. Mr. Kramer stated that the NE 6th Street extension was also of importance. He stated that they were involved in the NE 4th Street extension. Mr. Kramer stated that he believed an extension of NE 6th Street to 116th Avenue NE would create positive traffic flow for the study area. He stated that extending NE 6th Street to 120th Avenue NE would be redundant to NE 4th Street, and that the additional connectivity would create addition problems with the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Ian Morrison stated that he was an attorney with McCullough Hill Leary and was in attendance on behalf of Eastridge Corporate Center. He stated that he was joined by Panfilo Morelli. Mr. Morrison stated that their site was a great pedestrian and transit oriented opportunity with its location near Main Street and just east of the Eastside Rail Corridor. He stated that they would like to reiterate that heights of 120' to 160' would make sense for their site in the context of walkability, transit, and the Eastside Rail Corridor. Mr. Morrison encouraged the Committee to consider those heights and to continue that conversation as the process moves forward.

Todd Woosley stated that he was one of the owners of Brierwood Center, just south of the Spring District. He referenced the new Sparc apartments in the Spring District, and the opportunity to survey the Wilburton Commercial Area and its future potential from the building's rooftop amenity area. Mr. Woosley stated that the transportation capacity would be considered as part of the SEPA analysis. He stated he wanted to encourage the city to include all reasonable potential transportation improvements. Mr. Woosley stated that several billion dollars had and will be spent on 520 and Interstate 405. He stated that in addition there was a high capacity transit easement on the Eastside Rail Corridor and that it made sense to have rubber tired high capacity transit considered for the corridor. Mr. Woosley stated that he was providing a letter with a total of 11 projects to the Committee members to consider. He stated that there were several other projects under consideration for funding and design including NE 2nd Street overpass, Main Street, and NE 6th Street. Mr. Woosley stated he wanted the City to consider the items on the list for the SEPA analysis.

Bill Finkbeiner stated that believed that a NE 4th Street Eastside Rail Corridor overcrossing would take away from the experience of the corridor and create a roller coaster effect. He stated that the Eastside Rail Corridor was a great place for tactical urbanism, and stated that some of the businesses in the immediate area were excited about the corridor and that they may be worth considering when putting together future events. Mr. Finkbeiner stated that the northeast corner of the study area had been bifurcated north-south in regards to the allocation of height and density. He wanted to encourage the Committee to look at it from the perspective of east to west given the topography and access to the Spring District for pedestrians. Mr. Finkbeiner stated that 120th Avenue NE would be the most likely flow into the Spring District, justifying greater density in the immediate area. He also stated that the proximity to the light rail stations made sense for greater density and transit-oriented development. Mr. Finkbeiner stated that it also seemed that a lot of density was allocated to the hospital area and that it didn't seem they would be redeveloping in the near future, and that the density could be allocated somewhere else in the study area.

Mr. Renn asked Steve Kramer if an overcrossing would making sense for NE 4th Street since the road was several feet lower than the Eastside Rail Corridor. Co-chair Wu stated that the question should be taken offline so that the meeting could move forward.

5. Committee Discussion and Evaluation of Height and Density Concepts

Mr. Calvert provided a recap on the topics the Committee had covered over the course of prior meetings and that they were now beginning to make decisions as they related to height, density, and transportation. He stated nearly all of the Committee members had participated in walking tours, including the most recent trip. Mr. Calvert stated that the Committee would refine the density and height concepts that were developed in the prior meeting's work sessions. He stated they would also discuss multi-modal level of service for transportation as well as breakout work sessions on block permeability and the

composition of 116th Avenue NE as part of the meeting.

Mr. Calvert referenced a graphic that showed the results of the Committee exercises from the May meeting. He stated that some of the differences include a larger urban center and more nuance in how the areas stepped down as they moved away from the urban center. Mr. Calvert stated there were four key areas that were different had been highlighted for the Committee to reconcile into a single alternative. He stated that this wouldn't be the final version of the alternative, and that refinements would occur, but it would establish a foundation for the Committee to work from.

Mr. Calvert referenced the graphic for the no action alternative. He highlighted the area in the northwest corner that illustrated the increase in density and that it was part of the prior BelRed zoning. Mr. Calvert stated that it raises the question as to whether additional density should be provided or if the BelRed zoning was adequate with its proximity to the rail stations and Spring District.

Mr. Calvert stated the following images were placed in the context of the full downtown build out. He stated that the Spring District and the East Main build outs were also included. Mr. Renn asked what the height was the area north of East Main. Mr. Jack stated that the new Downtown Livability Initiative increased the height of the area to 400'. Mr. Calvert stated that they could conduct section cuts in the model for the Committee to visualize the changes in heights between Downtown and the Wilburton Commercial Area.

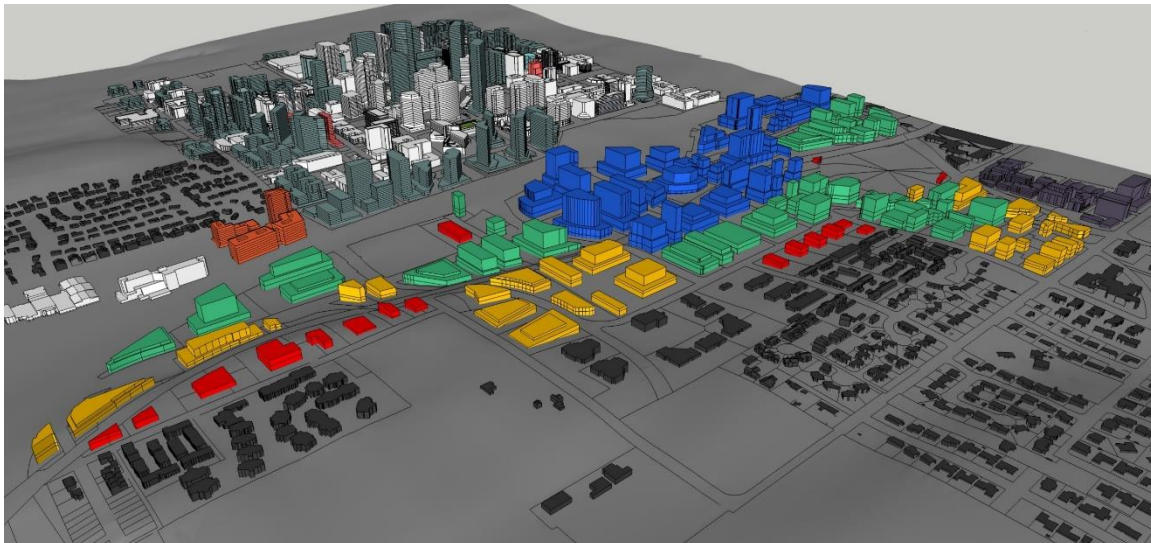


Figure 1 – Option One Result of May Worksession

Mr. Calvert referenced two graphics that depicted the urban center for the two options. He stated that in option one the center extended north to capture the medical district area, and the second option maintained the center south of NE 8th Street. He stated that in option one the center also spread across the Eastside Rail Corridor. Ms. Kumar asked about the change in grade, and Mr. Calvert responded that he would conduct section cuts to illustrate the change in grade.

Mr. Calvert stated that the urban center was the first section to consider. He asked if there was a preference for either of the options, and whether the preferred option should be modified. Mr. Calvert stated that there was also the option for even greater intensity, as stated in one of the groups' work session discussions.

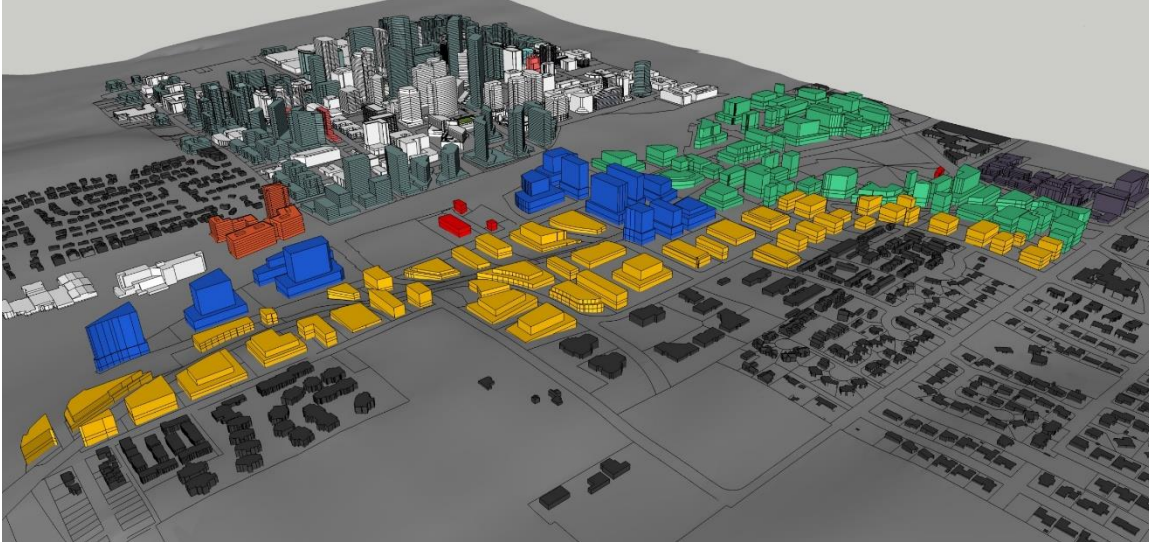


Figure 2 – Option Two Result of May Worksession

Co-chair Wu asked if they were only focused on the core at the moment. Mr. Calvert responded that that was correct, and they would be analyzing four total sections in the meeting. Mr. Pardoe stated that he was not interested in a single core, or a second Downtown. He stated that he didn't see that the study area should step down from the highway and then higher again. Mr. Pardoe stated that he would be happy to see more density in many of the areas including the southern area. He stated the area was already defined by quadrants in many ways, so he didn't see a need for a single core, but did see the need for density.

Mr. Hamlin stated that he agreed with Mr. Pardoe. He stated that density was good, but there was a concern if the buildings were too tall south of the transit center that the development wouldn't feel as personal. Mr. Hamlin stated that he didn't have an issue with the height, he was more concerned about the massing of the building that would be more like downtown. Ms. Washburn stated that it was important to not create a tunnel around the Eastside Rail Corridor, but that the density should be concentrated around NE 8th and 116th Avenue NE near the transit station. She stated that texture and character could impact the appearance of density to minimize the impact of a canyon around the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Ms. Kumar stated that she didn't want the Eastside Rail Corridor and 116th Avenue to be overwhelmed by towers, but felt that there was opportunity for taller buildings. She stated that with the topography changes it could provide a greater sense of continuity. Co-chair Wu stated that this referenced back to the vision statement with a mixed-use urban village. She stated that multiple light rail stations will serve the area and could justify multiple cores. Mr. Calvert stated that currently the massing does show large scale massing and blocks, but future topics would begin to shape and form those massings to reflect the Committee's vision, including tower spacing and floorplate sizes. Co-chair Barksdale stated that an element he enjoyed about the tactical urbanism event on the

Eastside Rail Corridor were the views to Downtown. He stated that the views from the Eastside Rail Corridor should be considered.

Ms. Einfalt stated that a property owner had shown the example of a central civic space in or near the study area. She stated that the Committee should consider the open space that could be within the urban center. Mr. Renn asked that if the heights of 120' – 160' would be the absolute maximum or would greater height be allowed for things like courtyards or restrooms. Mr. Calvert stated that future topics would allow for flexibility in the height and density, so the Committee was not locked into any specific heights. Mr. Renn stated that he liked the height of 160' with room for growth with the provision of incentives. He stated he had concern of allowing 250' in height and then adding on additional incentives that could raise the heights even greater.

Mr. Johnson stated that issues such as setbacks and form had not been discussed yet, and that there was room for towers with these issues still impending. He stated his view on this topic had changed following the Planning Commission's recommendations for Downtown with the increase of height closer to Interstate 405. Mr. Johnson stated that he felt inclined to stretch the building height further north-south in the Wilburton Commercial Area, provided a wall of towers would not be built along the west side of the study area.

Co-chair Wu stated that the Medical District could be treated the same as all other sections of the study area, or that it could be treated as a fixture that would not change. Mr. Hamlin stated that the taller area doesn't always have to be the center of the study area. He stated that growth near the interstate made sense, but wasn't in favor of stretching the center. Co-chair Wu stated that it appeared that areas with less density and public space could also be the center of the study area based on people activity and not building height and density.

Ms. Einfalt stated that discussions had occurred within the Overlake organization, and that while it would be great to increase the scale of the Medical District it was not something practical within the next 70 years or so. She stated that it would not be likely to redevelop and the density could be allocated elsewhere. Ms. Einfalt stated that the other issue is with more people in the Medical District corridor, it could create greater challenges for access to the hospitals. Mr. Pardoe stated that the area should have more of a heart than a core. He stated that he liked the idea of the area just east of I-405 having continuity with Downtown, but without growth in the Medical District and the wetland it could break up the continuity. Mr. Renn stated that he thought light rail was great, but felt only 10 to 15 percent of the population would use it. He stated that there were only two ways east west, one way south, and two ways north in and out of the study area. Mr. Renn stated that he felt they should be careful about the amount of density that is added. Ms. Einfalt agreed and stated that 116th Avenue NE and 124th Avenue NE acted as I-405 bypasses and shouldn't be ignored.

Mr. Calvert stated that these alternatives would be evaluated through the EIS in regards to the transportation system. He stated that if it was found to challenge the transportation system the Committee could go back and refine the alternative in response to the transportation challenges. Co-chair Barksdale stated that the Committee should make a decision. Mr. Calvert reminded the Committee that they would need to select one of these options, address the Medical District, and refine the composition of the urban center.

Mr. Renn stated that he felt it was safe to say that the Medical District would remain the same. He stated that if the Medical District was not included then options one and two

were relatively the same. Mr. Calvert responded that there were some differences. He stated that in option one there was greater density around the transit station across NE 8th Street and across the Eastside Rail Corridor. Mr. Renn stated that the center should be moved up around the transit station across NE 8th Street, but not into the Medical District.

Co-chair Barksdale proposed to vote on option one but not including increased density at the Medical District and option two as is. Ms. Kumar stated she wasn't fully clear on the difference of the two. Co-chair Wu stated that the first option extended the density around the transit station.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *The Committee voted as a majority for option one without including the Medical District as part of the increase in density.*

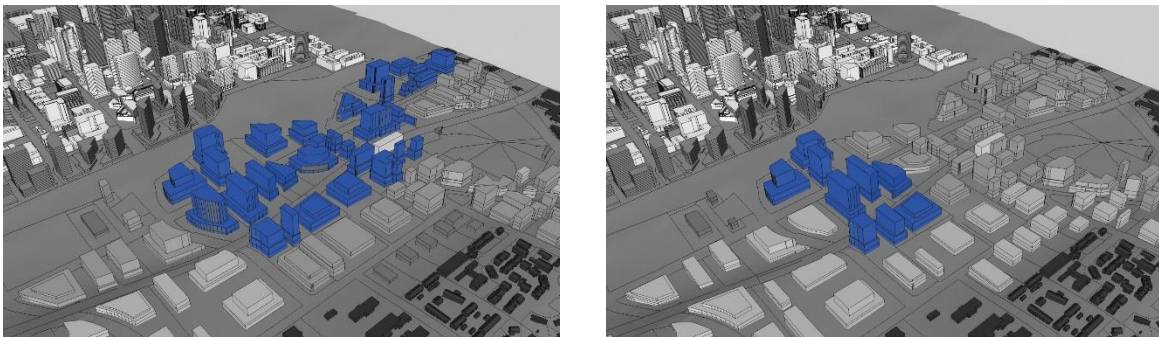


Figure 3 – Urban Center Options

Mr. Calvert stated that the second area included the transitional areas from the urban center. He stated that in option one the transition areas stepped down one level from the urban center height and in option two it stepped down by two levels based on the transect. Mr. Calvert stated that the first question was to which degree the Committee would like to step down from the urban center. He stated that the second question concerned the properties immediately east of 120th Avenue NE. Mr. Calvert stated that in option one it made a larger step down from the transition areas, and that in option two it was more consistent with the transition areas. He stated that there was a significant change in grade between the properties and the Wilburton Hill neighborhood. Mr. Renn asked what the elevation change was as he felt the parcels east of 120th Avenue NE could be taller and align with the properties at the top of the hill.

Mr. Calvert referenced a section cut that showed the differences of building height and their relationship to the change in topography. He stated that the 70' to 100' building height was more in line with the existing buildings at the top of the hill. Co-chair Wu stated that her main concern was impact on the Wilburton Hill Neighborhood and that she felt the 70' – 100' building heights did not negatively impact the neighborhood. She stated she was inclined to support the 70' – 100' in height. Mr. Calvert stated that the heights were shorter than what was allowed in the Spring District. Mr. Renn stated that he believed that 70' – 100' could be allowed east of 120th Avenue NE and 120' – 160' west of 120th Avenue NE. Ms. Kumar asked why there wasn't focus on the properties south of NE 4th and east of the Eastside Rail Corridor. Mr. Calvert responded that there was a consensus from the work sessions on those building heights so they were not an area that needed reconciliation at this time.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *The Committee voted as a consensus for option one with an increase of height to 70' – 100' for the properties east of 120th Avenue NE.*

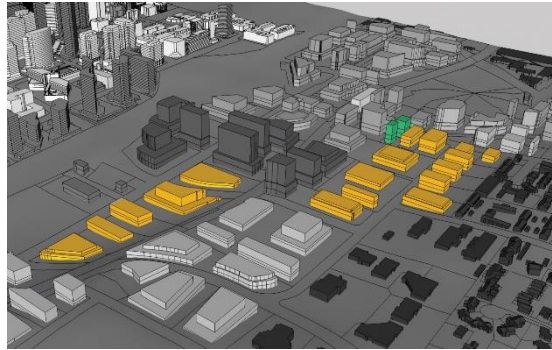
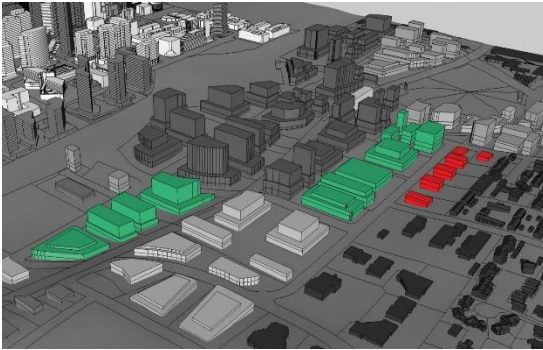


Figure 4 – Urban Center Transition Options

Mr. Calvert stated that the third area was the Spring District transition area in the northeast. He referenced the earlier public comment regarding the proximity to the increased density of the Spring District and the change in topography from west to east. He referenced the location of the light rail stations in the immediate area. Mr. Renn stated that it made more sense to have greater density and height to the west with reduced height and density to the east moving up the hill. Mr. Calvert asked if the entire area abutting the Spring District on the north side should be the 120' – 160' range. A majority of the Committee said yes. Co-chair Wu asked what the intensity would be to the south of the subject area. Mr. Calvert stated it was the area they just previously voted on and would be 70' – 100' in height. Mr. Pardoe asked to see a section cut of the change in topography. Mr. Calvert provided a section cut view of the area.

- ❖ **Action Item:** *The Committee voted as a consensus for the properties west of the hill to be 120' – 160' in height, and the area to the east at the top of the hill to be 70' – 100' in height.*

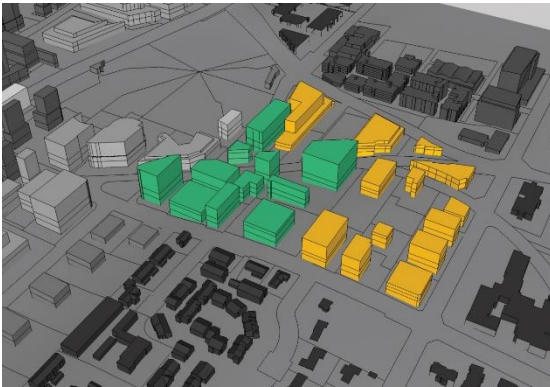


Figure 5 – Spring District Transition Options

Mr. Calvert stated that the fourth area was the southern portion of the study area. He stated that the area was in close proximity to the East Main light rail station, and there were extreme changes in topography. Mr. Calvert stated that the second option extended the East Main density across the interstate and the first option stepped down from the East Main density. Mr. Pardoe asked if they could view a section cut of the area. Mr. Calvert referenced the location of the future East Main development and the trail.

Co-chair Wu stated that she didn't like the height of option two but wanted to take advantage of density near the transit station. Mr. Calvert stated that in option one the density was still relatively similar to the Spring District and around its future station. Mr. Pardoe asked what the height of the red massings were. Mr. Calvert responded that the maximum would be approximately 55'. He referenced the proximity to the Wilburton Hill Park and existing development outside of the study area that served as a buffer to the park. Ms. Kumar asked if the height of option one would permit a residential high rise. Mr. Calvert responded that technically, based on building code, the 120' – 160' range qualifies as high rise but is not equivalent to downtown high rises. He explained the relationship of the building heights to the change in grade and the elevation of the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Mr. Pardoe asked Ms. Kumar if her statement regarding a high rise would be in relationship to the East Main light rail station. Ms. Kumar stated she wasn't necessarily thinking of the proximity to the station but to just add more density for potential high rises. Mr. Renn stated that it would be more appropriate for the high rises to be near the center of the study area. Ms. Kumar stated that the area could be dotted with high rises. Mr. Hamlin stated that it might be out of character. Ms. Washburn stated that she felt option one was a nice stair step to the neighborhood.

❖ **Action Item:** *The Committee voted as a consensus for option one.*

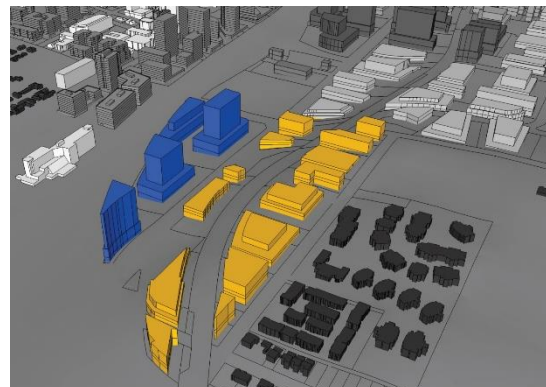
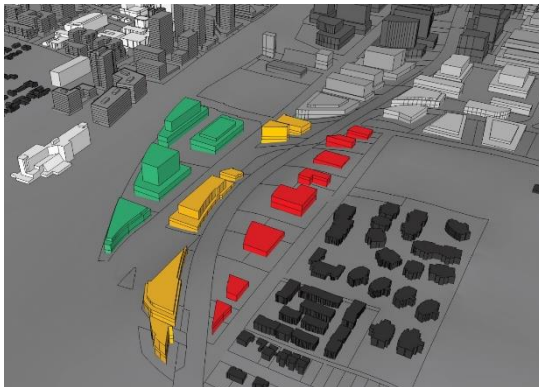


Figure 6 – South Transition Area Options

Mr. Calvert stated staff would refine the options and bring them back to the Committee. He stated that the property owners conducted the same exercise and the City was seeking Committee feedback for refinement. Mr. Calvert explained that three options would be needed for the Environmental Impact Statement process. Co-chair Barksdale asked if staff was seeking a decision from the Committee. Mr. Calvert stated staff was seeking feedback.

Mr. Renn stated that he felt it was too much density. Ms. Kumar asked what the purple massings represented. Mr. Calvert responded that it was 300' – 450' in height. Mr. Johnson stated that it looked as if that height existed on both sides of 116th Avenue NE and suggested that the tallest heights (300'-450') should only be on the west side of 116th Avenue NE. Mr. Pardoe stated that it felt like urban canyons and Mr. Hamlin stated that it was a repeat of Downtown which is not what the Committee wanted. Co-chair Barksdale stated that the Committee was specifically charged with not creating another Downtown.

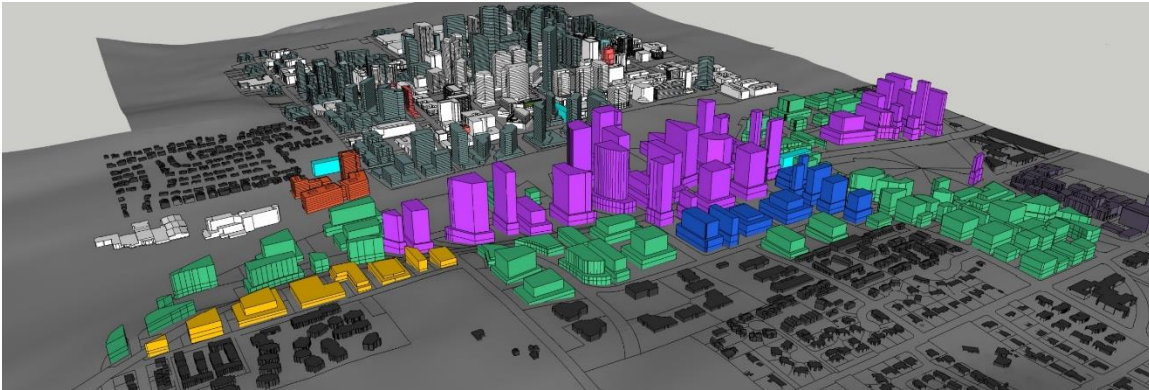


Figure 7 – Property Owners Alternative Concept

6. Transportation Discussion on Multi-modal Level of Service

Mr. Calvert stated that Kevin McDonald, Senior Transportation Planner with the City of Bellevue would discuss Multi-Modal Level of Service (MMLOS). Mr. McDonald stated that (MMLOS) was a recent milestone for the Bellevue Transportation Commission. He stated that the Commission had been working on MMLOS for the past year. Mr. McDonald stated that the transportation system was key to people accessing the land uses considered for the Wilburton Commercial Area and that all modes should be considered.

Mr. McDonald stated that MMLOS was important because the metrics of each mode of transportation would come into play. He stated that the City has evolved on transportation planning since the original Comprehensive Plan. Mr. McDonald stated that the wide arterials and limited pedestrian facilities were a product of the plan. He stated that the focus has since evolved to focus on people and the uses within neighborhoods, and that each neighborhood has different needs. Mr. McDonald stated that Council directed staff to develop level of service standards for each mode of transportation beginning with the Comprehensive Plan update in 2015.

Mr. McDonald stated that MMLOS will allow staff and developers to determine the right implementation strategies and outcomes for transportation needs based on specific locations and neighborhoods. He stated that he would discuss each mode and how they are evaluated for level of services. Mr. McDonald stated that vehicle level of service (LOS) is evaluated by LOS at intersections and LOS along corridors. He stated that LOS at intersections are on a letter grade system from A to F and is measured based on the volume of traffic moving through an intersection against the capacity of the intersection. He stated that low volume and high capacity would be a LOS A as an example. Mr. McDonald stated that the LOS varies based on land use, and that urban areas such as Downtown and BelRed were closer to LOS of D or E because it is understood that many transportation options exist in these areas such as pedestrians, cyclists, and transit.

Mr. McDonald stated that the standard in the Wilburton Commercial Area is equivalent to LOS D. He stated that the LOS for corridors measures travel time. Mr. McDonald stated that similar to intersection LOS, it was dependent on the land use of the area. He stated that, for example, in Downtown it is not expected that travelers move at 30 mph during peak travel hours. Mr. McDonald stated that the urban areas are the ones where travel speed expectations should be reduced.

Mr. McDonald stated he wanted to provide an example of how LOS would work on 116th Avenue NE. He stated that hypothetically if someone is traveling 11 mph on 116th Avenue NE it would be in line with reasonable expectations for northbound travel. Mr. McDonald stated that if it were slower in the southbound direction it would warrant greater analysis to see if the LOS and speed of travel could be improved. He stated improvements would have to be evaluated against other locations to establish priority to do the most good for the most people. Mr. McDonald stated that improvements would also have to be measured against the LOS for other transportation modes.

Mr. McDonald stated that pedestrians travel along corridors and across intersections similar to vehicular traffic. He stated that the Commission decided that the LOS for pedestrians would also be dependent on the corridor and surrounding land uses. Mr. McDonald stated that the width of the sidewalk and the landscape buffer would change dependent on that LOS. As an example he stated that in Downtown there would be the widest sidewalks, and the sidewalks become narrower in more suburban locations, responsive to surrounding land uses and density.

Mr. McDonald stated that intersections were a key part of the LOS for pedestrians. He stated that the size of the blocks impacted pedestrians and could require solutions such as mid-block crossings to minimize the travel distance for pedestrians.

Mr. McDonald stated that bicycles also had LOS for corridors and intersections. He stated that intersections can be the weakest link for cyclists creating less comfort. Mr. McDonald stated that the intersection needs to match the quality of the infrastructure along the corridor. He stated that the Commission created a tiered level of comfort for cyclists to determine level of traffic stress. Mr. McDonald stated that the Commission assisted in designing the bicycle infrastructure to match the level of comfort of a cyclist. He referenced a table as a means to match a type of bicycle facility to the conditions of the roadway environments. Mr. McDonald stated that the two most important factors that impact the cyclist level of comfort are traffic speed and volume and that the table is intended to match facility needs to the speed and volume of roads.

Mr. McDonald stated that at intersections the LOS needs to be retained across intersections to ensure comfort and safety. He referenced a table that looks at the components needed at an intersection to maintain LOS. Mr. McDonald stated that the Commission created a map that shows the corridors and assigned a level of stress so that new projects can match infrastructure appropriately. He also stated that this applied to the intersection of trails and arterials. Mr. McDonald stated that a range of signalization options can be provided to improve safety.

Mr. McDonald stated that for transit riders the City doesn't control the system but does control the environment it operates in. He stated that the Commission recommended the type of amenities needed for transit users to increase comfort. Mr. McDonald stated that LOS was a function of the type of transit stop, which is dependent on the expected number of passengers. He stated that the components integrated into those stops are dependent on that passenger intensity. Mr. McDonald stated that as example bus stops should have a shelter, seating, paving, and wayfinding should be provided as a minimum.

Mr. McDonald stated that transit speed was also important. He stated that speed was most important between the five main activity centers of Bellevue. Mr. McDonald stated that a frequent transit network should operate at approximately 14 mph between the activity centers. He stated that the actual speed of transit was measured against the expected 14

mph between the activity centers to determine LOS. Mr. McDonald stated that currently there are concerns as none of the corridors are achieving the optimal speed. He stated that MMLOS overall provides a framework for the City to make better investment decisions and to understand why those decisions are made and who the benefit.

Mr. McDonald stated that for the Committee they should consider all modes and to try and understand the expectations for each potential location. He stated that the Commission is not quite finished with the work, and that the final chapter will identify, prioritize and plan for implementation of projects to improve MMLOS. Mr. McDonald referenced a graphic on Bellevue Way that demonstrated the complexity of transportation modes.

Mr. Johnson stated that the Committee should consider that if the LOS is to be changed by the Committee that they also need to take into account how the existing facility was engineered. He stated that they need to consider all modes. Mr. McDonald stated that 116th Avenue NE is a prime example and that improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists may come at the expense of vehicular travel. He stated that the Committee would need to ask the question whether it would be acceptable to reduce LOS for vehicular traffic in an urban environment to improve LOS for non-motorized travel or to try and maintain the LOS for automobiles.

7. Transportation Precedents, Existing Conditions and Key Issues

Mr. Calvert introduced the consultant team from Berk, Fehr & Peers, and CH2M as those responsible for the environmental and transportation work. He stated that they would discuss existing conditions, precedents, and key projects prior to breaking into work sessions. Mr. Calvert introduced Ariel Davis and Chris Brieland (Fehr & Peers) and Jon McKenzie (CH2M).

❖ **Action Item:** *Ms. Kumar motioned to extend the meeting by 30 minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hamlin. The motion was unanimously approved.*

Ms. Davis stated some of the key transportation issues in the Wilburton Commercial Area were the large blocks, topography, and the existing travel conditions such as LOS and travel time. She stated that some conditions, such as southbound travel on 116th Avenue NE was heavily dependent on the conditions of Interstate 405. Ms. Davis stated they would also evaluate the pedestrian network, in particular the block size and the current need for out of direction travel for pedestrians. She stated that there are some existing bicycle lanes but the current facilities are inadequate. Ms. Davis stated that bus routes exist on NE 8th Street and 116th Avenue NE, and that East Link light rail, Grand Connection, and the Eastside Rail Corridor would add additional opportunities for transit and non-motorized transportation options.

Ms. Davis stated that the precedents they received as part of their packets were a series of case studies to consider. She stated that there were four critical decisions regarding transportation. Ms. Davis stated that in prior meeting packets the Committee received background information on the critical transportation decisions. She stated that the information and scoring wasn't to solicit final decisions but to get initial ideas and considerations.

Ms. Davis stated that 116th Avenue NE is one of the critical decisions. She stated that prior packets demonstrated examples of potential configurations of the street. Mr. McKenzie stated that within the existing right of way each decision would come with a

trade-off. He stated that the concept of a multi-modal boulevard could be a strong catalyst for change in the area, similar to some of the public comments heard earlier. Ms. Davis stated that the initial scoring from the Committee encouraged change to 116th Avenue NE. She stated that the Committee would need to consider what kind of space they wanted to allocate for pedestrians and cyclists with the Eastside Rail Corridor running parallel to 116th Avenue NE.

Mr. Pardoe stated that if the Eastside Rail Corridor is successful it could be too slow to commute by bicycle. He stated that on 116th Avenue NE he could expect to move faster. He referenced the Burke-Gilman Trail as an example, stating that the volume of joggers and pedestrians was prohibitive of a commuter bicycle speed. Co-chair Wu stated that the entire area should have good pedestrian and cyclist activity and that the Eastside Rail Corridor cannot be expected to serve the area on its own. Ms. Einfalt questioned whether the impact on emergency services had been considered, particularly if the amount of capacity for vehicular traffic were reduced. Ms. Washburn stated that a change in infrastructure can change behavior. She stated that the Eastside Rail Corridor is an access point to get into Bellevue and that the surrounding area should have infrastructure that supports non-motorized movement within Bellevue.

Mr. Jack stated 116th Avenue NE would need to be transformed if the Committee desired more pedestrians and cyclists and that its current condition would act as a deterrent. Mr. Johnson stated that similar to Bellevue Way, 116th Avenue NE could predominately be used for vehicular traffic and transit and that internal connections could be used for cyclists and pedestrians. Mr. Pardoe stated that he cycled on Bellevue Way from Kirkland for six years to Interstate 90 because it was fastest. He stated that just like automobiles wanting to commute as fast as they could, he as a cyclist, wanted to commute as fast as he possibly could. Ms. Einfalt stated that the employment base of the hospital was not likely to bicycle to work, but would most likely take transit. Mr. Weintraub stated that the thought of bicycling anywhere in Bellevue was not attractive, and couldn't see bicycling to the area with his eight year old with the conditions of the existing infrastructure. He stated that he still wanted to access the amenities and that required safety and comfort.

Ms. Davis stated that the next item for feedback is the extension of NE 6th Street. She stated that the City had studied it previously and the original plan was for an elevated structure that could connect to 120th Avenue NE. Ms. Davis stated that the scores of the group indicated that the extension to 116th Avenue NE was the most popular and the extension to 120th Avenue NE second. Mr. McKenzie stated that the grades are the biggest challenges. He stated that if the structure extended to 120th Avenue NE a minimum clearance of 16 feet would be needed from 116th Avenue NE to the bottom of the NE 6th Street extension structure. Mr. McKenzie stated that the structure would be at least six feet in depth placing the total structure approximately 22 to 24 feet in the air above 116th Avenue NE. He stated that it would also create conflicts with the Eastside Rail Corridor. Ms. Davis stated that the consultant team did an initial investigation into how travel patterns would change. She stated an extension to 120th Avenue NE would attract a fair amount of traffic and that only a portion of the traffic would actually be going to and from the Wilburton Commercial Area. She stated the Committee would want to consider weighing the impacts of how much that extension would benefit the Wilburton Commercial Area versus how much it benefits regional travel.

Mr. Renn asked if the road would be for HOV only. Ms. Davis replied that access to Interstate 405 would be HOV only but general traffic could use the road to get across to Downtown. Mr. Brieland stated that it could be an option to restrict to HOV but current

examples show the use of general purpose traffic as well. He stated that it was similar to 128th in Kirkland at Totem Lake where anyone can use the road, but had to be HOV to access the interstate. Ms. Davis stated she wanted to hear the concerns and ideas from the Committee.

Co-chair Wu stated that she scored the extension to 120th Avenue NE rather high, but did so not knowing how tall the structure would have to be. She stated that if she knew that previously she would have selected no extension. Mr. Renn stated he would like to see it go to 116th Avenue NE only which would also allow a new stoplight at the intersection which would benefit pedestrians. Ms. Lau Hui stated she felt an extension to 116th Avenue NE would also help to moderate the speed of traffic on 116th Avenue NE. Mr. Pardoe stated that he understood one of the main benefits of extending to 116th Avenue NE was to allow easier access for busses from the east side of the city to the Bellevue Transit Center. He stated that he didn't see a reason for the road to extend beyond 116th Avenue NE. Mr. Pardoe stated that it would create another route for emergency services as well.

Ms. Davis stated that the last two concepts are those of at grade and above grade crossings for the Eastside Rail Corridor at NE 4th and NE 8th Streets. She stated that for NE 8th Street there were slightly higher scores for an at-grade crossing and the scores were similar for NE 4th Street. Ms. Davis stated they wanted to hear from the Committee on their thoughts on impacts to traffic, cost, and trail continuity. Mr. McKenzie stated that for a user to get up to a crossing over NE 8th Street a total of 450' of length at a minimum for a ramp would be needed. He stated that if overcrossings at occurred at both streets it would create a roller coaster effect. Mr. Renn stated that NE 4th Street was already several feet beneath the trail. Mr. Brieland stated that the street was below the rail bed of the trail but that the trail would likely be regraded in some capacity.

Ms. Washburn asked if there was an option to provide an at-grade and overcrossing at NE 8th Street. She stated that with an overcrossing someone would have to go pretty far past the transit center and then have to come back to the station. Ms. Washburn stated that someone coming from the south may need the option to come off the trail and go to the station if it is their destination. She stated this is also being considered as the neighborhood core and it may be desired to have people interface with the trail. Mr. Renn stated that he agreed. He stated that even today there are pedestrians crossing without a light and that he felt that would continue to happen in the future if there isn't a light. Mr. Renn stated that there should be both options.

Ms. Kumar stated that it would take some time to build an overcrossing. She stated that if the trail will already be in use then what will users do in the meantime. Ms. Kumar stated that she has been out there and seen people cross in the middle of NE 8th Street and she believed they would continue to do so, including people with children in arms. Mr. Hamlin stated that he really believed strongly that the crossing should be at grade at both roads. He stated this would activate the trail with future developments. Mr. Hamlin stated that he believed overcrossings and ramps would destroy the character of the area which included activated the pedestrian realm. He stated that he believed the crossing would wipe out an opportunity to activate NE 8th Street. Mr. Hamlin stated that he walks the area all the time and that he sees people crossing today, regularly. He stated that it would simply not work for users to have to backtrack to the transit station and that people will continue to cross. Mr. Hamlin stated that he believed the same to be true at NE 4th Street. He stated that with REI near the trail it was an opportunity to activate the space and that a bridge destroys that opportunity. Ms. Kumar stated that at one point traffic already had to stop at the NE 8th Street crossing because trains had traveled through there. Mr. Renn

stated that a pedestrian crossing signal could be timed with other traffic lights to reduce impact. Mr. Renn stated that he agreed with Mr. Hamlin and that there had to be an at grade crossing at NE 8th Street.

Mr. Pardoe stated that he agreed with Mr. Hamlin. He stated that the crossings can be made beneficial for all users. Mr. Pardoe stated that traffic volumes on NE 8th used to be higher than they are today, and a train used to stop traffic. Additionally, he stated that NE 4th Street didn't even exist at that time. He stated that he didn't believe the argument that traffic cannot stop for an at-grade crossing because they did for many years. Co-chair Wu stated that this would be an urban area for trail users and that they all wouldn't just be flying by the area. She stated that at NE 4th Street traffic didn't speed through the area as many are going in and out of the surrounding retail uses. Co-chair Wu stated that she didn't see many conflicts between trail users and traffic, rather it would be a compromise. She stated that the interface of land use and trail would be a defining element to the success of the study area as a mixed use urban village. Mr. Jack stated that he agreed with Mr. Hamlin and Co-chair Wu following his walk of the study area. He stated that he saw how important the at-grade crossings would be to activating the space and that if as a trail user this would be the unique experience. Mr. Jack stated this was the area for users to slow down in an urban village and interact with cafes and bars and that it wasn't an area to speed through. Mr. Jack stated that the at-grade crossings would need to be made safe but he did believe that the activation point was very important. Co-chair Barksdale stated that he agreed with the need for at-grade crossings.

Ms. Davis stated that the Committee would separate into two groups. One for the re-visioning of 116th Avenue NE and the other for block permeability.

The Committee broke out into the work sessions at 8:10 p.m.

The Committee reconvened at 8:23 p.m.

Co-chair Wu explained the concept for block permeability. She stated that the connections should have businesses oriented towards them. Co-chair Wu stated that they would like to see smaller blocks closer to 300' with a meaningful quantity of alleys to create an urban atmosphere. She stated that the Grand Connection should also serve as a festival area. Mr. Weintraub stated that they also believed there should be alleys with addresses that face onto the Eastside Rail Corridor. Mr. Jack stated that the blocks should be smaller and create spaces that can be programmed with character and texture.

Co-chair Barksdale explained the concept for 116th Avenue NE. He stated that pedestrians and cyclists would share space in a 12' multi-use path. Co-chair Barksdale stated that the internal lanes should be narrower, 10' and the outside lanes 11' to accommodate busses. He stated that there should also be a median with trees, but turn lanes should be provided to allow access to development along 116th Avenue NE. Co-chair Wu asked the width of the shared bicycle and pedestrian path. Mr. Pardoe responded that it would be 12' wide. Co-chair Wu stated that she felt it wasn't wide enough.

8. Adjourn

Co-chair Barksdale adjourned the meeting at 8:32 p.m.