

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Extended Study Session

April 23, 2012  
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room 1E-113  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Lee, Deputy Mayor Robertson, and Councilmembers Chelminiak, Davidson, Stokes, and Wallace

ABSENT: Councilmember Balducci

1. Executive Session

Deputy Mayor Robertson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m., and declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 10 minutes to discuss one item of potential litigation.

The meeting resumed at 6:14 p.m., with Mayor Lee presiding.

2. Oral Communications

- (a) Bill Hirt expressed concerns about Sound Transit studies indicating that light rail can be installed on the I-90 center bridge under the preferred R8A alternative because it will not be needed for highway purposes. He commented on the September 2004 Record of Decision for the I-90 Two-Way Transit and HOV Operations Project, published by the Federal Highway Administration, and provided copies of certain pages to the Council. Mr. Hirt believes that the R8A alternative, which includes light rail, will never provide the capacity that could be achieved using the center roadway for car traffic.
- (b) Sven Goldmanis, former Mercer Island City Councilmember, encouraged the involvement of the community in East Link light rail planning. He expressed concern that certain property owners cannot sell, lease, or refinance their property right now due to the uncertainty of the light rail alignment. He emphasized the importance of working with the community.
- (c) Pat Callahan, CEO of Urban Renaissance Group, spoke on behalf of Beacon Capital, which owns property along the I-90 corridor. He noted that the Eastgate/I-90 land use and

transportation report will be discussed later in the agenda. He expressed support for the transit-oriented development portion of the plan on the north side of I-90 next to Bellevue College. He believes this type of development would bring positive changes to the area.

- (d) Jack McCullough expressed support for the report and recommendations of the Eastgate/I-90 Citizen Advisory Committee's land use and transportation planning effort.
- (e) Scott Rodgers, President of the Carriage Place Condominiums Homeowners Association (112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE), expressed concern that property owners cannot sell, refinance, or lease their condos while the details of the East Link light rail project are still under discussion. Mr. Rodgers said that residents are asking for some clarity and certainty about the timing of the project and the property takings. He said residents will attend the East Link open house on Thursday and hope to learn more from Sound Transit at that time.
- (f) Loyd Jacobs, a Woodridge resident, expressed concern about the noise impacts of the Sound Transit East Link light rail project. He asked the Council to consider hiring a consultant to review the existing study of noise impacts in the Environmental Impact Statement.

Deputy Mayor Robertson suggested that Mr. Jacobs contact staff for a copy of the noise study previously completed for the City.

- (g) Betsy Blackstock introduced Ron Bennett, the new president of the Surrey Downs Community Club. Noting the East Link open house scheduled for Thursday, Ms. Blackstock said that early and ongoing involvement with the community is critical in designing the light rail alignment and stations.

### 3. Study Session

- (a) Council Business and New Initiatives

Councilmember Stokes reported that he attended a meeting of the East Link collaborative design team, as well as a meeting of certain Redmond and Bellevue City Councilmembers.

Councilmember Chelminiak commented on a letter indicating that the Downtown Post Office will be relocated to the Bel-Red corridor at the former Pella location (near the Lowes store). He suggested that the City respond during the comment period that this is not an acceptable location.

City Manager Steve Sarkozy said the City became aware of the situation recently, and the U.S. Postal Service indicates that it does not have alternatives.

Mr. Chelminiak reiterated that the proposed location is unacceptable. He suggested that the U.S. Postal Service make another attempt to find alternate locations, and that the City assist in those efforts.

Councilmember Stokes spoke in favor of communicating the City's concerns to the U.S. Postal Service.

Councilmember Wallace said the USPS letter indicated that the agency would be looking to the City of Bellevue to help them if they could not find another alternative. While he is unsure about the agency's intent in that regard, Mr. Wallace believes it is appropriate to provide feedback on the proposed location. He observed that there are always alternatives.

Deputy Mayor Robertson suggested sending a letter signed by the Mayor expressing the Council's concerns.

Mayor Lee reported that he has received a number of emails from citizens who are concerned about the Bellevue School District's plan to eliminate the PRISM program. He asked Mr. Sarkozy to look into this issue.

Deputy Mayor Robertson suggested adding the topic to the agenda for the joint meeting with the Bellevue School District later this year.

(b) Update from BDA on Jazz Festival

Leslie Lloyd, Bellevue Downtown Association, reported on the Bellevue Jazz Festival scheduled for May 30 through June 3. She thanked the City for its ongoing funding and support. The festival's mission is to bring international musicians to Bellevue, highlight local and regional performers, and to provide educational and performing opportunities for young musicians. The festival features headliner shows at the Theatre at Meydenbauer Center and Bake's Place.

Ms. Lloyd noted that the festival's major sponsor significantly reduced its financial support four months in advance of this year's event. She highlighted some of the 45 shows planned in 12 Downtown venues for the 2012 Jazz Festival.

(c) Port of Seattle Century Agenda Presentation

City Manager Steve Sarkozy introduced Tom Albro, Port of Seattle Commissioner, to present the Port's Century Agenda.

Mr. Albro presented a video describing the Port of Seattle's strategic plan for stimulating economic development over the next 25 years. The plan adds 100,000 jobs through economic growth led by the Port for a total of 300,000 Port-related jobs, while reducing the environmental footprint. Mr. Albro noted the importance of the airport, cruise ships, and continued growth to support global markets. He distributed a pamphlet summarizing the Port's Century Agenda.

Mayor Lee thanked Mr. Albro for the presentation. Mayor Lee said it is good to see that the Port's vision is compatible with Bellevue's economic development goals. He looks forward to identifying opportunities to work together.

Mr. Albro confirmed that the Port is interested in working with cities and other entities. He noted that the new air service to Dubai is largely related to Microsoft business. However, it opens up opportunities for other business activity as well. Mr. Albro reiterated the Port's interest in working with local and regional partners.

Deputy Mayor Robertson thanked Mr. Albro for attending. She noted Bellevue's strong economic environment and the importance of having reliable and timely services at Seatac airport and the seaport. She questioned how the strategic plan addresses the anticipated increasing demand on these services.

Mr. Albro said the airport has sufficient capacity to handle approximately a doubling of current travel volumes. With regard to improved access to the airport, Ms. Albro said the Port supports light rail and other modes of travel that will improve reliability and convenience.

Ms. Robertson questioned how the Port's Century Agenda addresses economic development in Bellevue and on the Eastside. Mr. Albro noted that the Port's mission is to create an environment in which entrepreneurial drive can flourish. He observed that Bellevue has succeeded in this regard. The Port's role is improving awareness of how to get involved in international trade and improving access to the markets.

Mr. Albro said that, as a Port Commissioner, he is intrigued by how the region can improve its connections with economies like China that provide opportunities.

Deputy Mayor Robertson questioned whether Port staff would be receptive to working with Bellevue staff as the strategic plan is refined and finalized, in order to enhance the understanding of Bellevue's economic development priorities and goals.

Mr. Albro said the Port understands the importance of making this a regional planning effort and helping cities to be successful.

Ms. Robertson asked how the plan addresses mobility improvements. Mr. Albro acknowledged that mobility is a constant challenge due to tremendous demands on the system. The Port recognizes the importance of a system-wide perspective and that freight capacity always needs to be a consideration. The Port envisions the need to complete highway 509 and link it to I-5, which improves traffic flow at the airport, access to the cargo terminals, and travel between the cargo terminals and warehouses in the Kent Valley. Mr. Albro said the Port is looking for opportunities to site regional facilities and amenities that will benefit freight travel.

Councilmember Chelminiak said he appreciates that the cruise ship industry is bringing some hotel business to Bellevue. He noted that an additional benefit of direct air service to Dubai is that it is also the fastest way to get to India.

Mr. Chelminiak recalled discussions with the Port prior to September 11, 2001, about an airport parking and transfer facility in Bellevue. He suggested this could be an opportunity for direct

local investment by the Port. Mr. Chelminiak noted the importance of Port and transportation facilities in Seattle's SODO area to serve freight needs.

Mr. Albro said the Port sees itself as a regional partner and understands the need to continue to meet new demands as conditions, including travel demands, change.

Councilmember Wallace commended the Port Commission's work in recent years to improve audit and public disclosure processes. With regard to the mobility issue, Mr. Wallace said he understands the importance of extending Highway 509 near the airport. He said the full implementation of the I-405 Master Plan is important for the Port and the region as well. Mr. Wallace suggested that the Port, Bellevue, suburban cities, and others work together during the next legislative session to achieve the funding needed to complete these critical highway capacity projects.

Mr. Wallace commented on news articles indicating that a percentage of the Port of Seattle's ship and freight traffic goes to Tacoma due to concerns about mobility. He is interested in learning more about the Port of Seattle's plans to maintain freight mobility at its waterfront and airport.

Mr. Albro agreed that overlapping transportation systems need to all work together, and all of them have funding and/or logistic challenges. For example, a change in sales tax allocations has produced a situation in which cities with vibrant warehousing activity do not generate sufficient dollars to fund the transportation system serving those freight corridors.

Mr. Albro spoke to the need to compete with ports in British Columbia and California. One of this region's strengths is that it is both an import and export region. He said that 51 percent of the exports through the Port of Seattle are agriculture exports. Mr. Albro said that maintaining a working waterfront is extremely valuable in supporting and expanding the regional economy.

Councilmember Davidson observed that bus rapid transit might provide a better method of getting to the airport than light rail, and he suggested that the Port explore this option for I-405.

Councilmember Stokes opined that multiple travel modes need to be preserved, and he understands the importance of the emphasis on freight mobility. He noted the plan's reference to tourism and business gateways, which is consistent with the City's work and focus as well. He wants to continue to make Bellevue a destination.

Mr. Albro said he believes that the Commissioners would be eager to have a joint meeting with the City Council to collaborate and work together. He noted that the Port is one of the founding partners of the Washington Tourism Alliance, which recognizes the value of marketing and promoting destinations.

Mayor Lee thanked Mr. Albro and said he would like to meet with the Commission Chair to discuss setting up a joint meeting with the City Council.

(d) Status Report on East Link Project, Collaborative Design Process, and Possible Cost Savings Ideas

Mr. Sarkozy introduced staff's update on the East Link light rail project collaborative design process, which involves representatives from the City Council and the Sound Transit Board as well as staff from both agencies. He noted the open house scheduled for Thursday to present the ongoing design work and potential cost-saving alternatives.

Dave Berg, Transportation Director, highlighted that tonight's presentation would address the project status, schedule, and cost-saving concepts under consideration for the portion of the East Link light rail project through Bellevue. He stated that this effort would not sacrifice mitigation measures to achieve cost savings. However, some of the design concepts under consideration could have impacts that are different than the current configuration. Those design options will require the same analysis and identification of mitigation consistent with federal, state, and City regulations.

Mr. Berg introduced Ron Lewis, the new East Link Executive Project Director.

Mr. Lewis noted that he has worked for Sound Transit for approximately 10 years. He introduced Don Billen, East Link Deputy Project Director, who will continue to work on the project.

Mr. Lewis said that preliminary engineering work has been completed and the project is moving into final design. The project has received Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Records of Decision, and the I-90 expansion joint track bridge design is advancing.

Mr. Lewis stated that finances are significantly constrained. The Finance Plan assumes the project will be delivered for \$15 million less than the current estimate. The primary goal of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the City and Sound Transit is to eliminate the City's \$60 million contingent contribution.

Mr. Lewis reviewed the project schedule and ongoing public outreach activities. He noted that the cost-savings work and value engineering are typical for Sound Transit in planning any major capital projects, and the City's involvement provides an added incentive for everyone to identify cost savings. Mr. Lewis said the project is scheduled to reach 60-percent design in 2013, which is the point at which the design has sufficiently evolved to conduct a more detailed cost estimate and to identify with some certainty the right-of-way and property acquisition interests.

Mr. Lewis acknowledged that there is considerable interest in property acquisitions. The 60-percent design phase is typically the time in which right-of-way certification is completed. Each parcel of property that will be required for either construction or operation of the project is identified at that point. Construction is expected to begin in 2015. Mr. Lewis briefly described the property acquisition process, noting that more information would be available during the open house on April 26.

Mr. Berg noted the Council's interest in properties along 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and asked staff to provide an update.

Bernard van de Kamp, Assistant Director of Transportation, said staff has been working to determine the best approach for addressing property acquisition issues raised in the MOU. Staff will present a formal work plan to Council within the next few weeks. Sound Transit is conducting an environmental review of some of the options along 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE (e.g., the flyover rail configuration). As the design and environmental work proceeds, staff will gain a better sense of what the City's public purpose might be for some of the remnant parcels.

Deputy Mayor Robertson said that the issue of property acquisitions is a source of anxiety and concern for current property owners. She said citizens have asked her whether Sound Transit ever acquires property and then leases it back until it is actually used for the agency's purpose.

Mr. Lewis said that has been done in past. He provided some examples, including one lease to enable a grocery store to continue to operate until construction begins for that portion of the project. Ms. Robertson encouraged Sound Transit to consider this option as it negotiates with individual property owners in Bellevue.

Mr. Lewis noted that Sound Transit's Director of Property Acquisitions and his assistant would be available at the April 26 open house. He explained that the law requires that Sound Transit follow uniform acquisition procedures, which provide a great deal of benefits for property owners. However, he acknowledged that some situations will need to be treated individually.

Councilmember Davidson questioned how property acquisitions were handled in Seattle. Mr. Lewis explained that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) identified properties impacted by all of the alignments. As the preferred alignment is selected and refined, the property owners affected by the specific alignment are notified.

Councilmember Wallace noted that the Sound Transit 2 ballot measure passed in 2008. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement was released shortly thereafter, which means that impacted properties were identified during that timeframe. He expressed concern that Bellevue property owners are slated to wait until 2014 at the earliest to resolve their property acquisitions.

Mr. Lewis confirmed that the 60-percent design milestone is typically where property acquisitions begin to occur.

Councilmember Wallace questioned whether it is reasonable to expect citizens to wait six years before knowing whether their property will be acquired. He observed that Bellevue's alignment through single-family neighborhoods is different from the alignment in Seattle which runs either underground or adjacent to commercial and multifamily development.

Mr. Wallace asked whether there is another single-family neighborhood within the light rail system with properties that are waiting to be condemned. He believes that Bellevue has a special

circumstance and that it would be appropriate for the Sound Transit Board to expedite property acquisitions.

Councilmember Stokes concurred with Councilmember Wallace's concerns and encouraged Sound Transit to initiate property acquisitions as soon as possible. Mr. Stokes said that property owners subject to takings are making a sacrifice for the common good and should be handled with due consideration.

Councilmember Chelminiak indicated his support for the Council's comments.

Mr. Berg described the collaborative design process organizational structure, which involves a Leadership Team (City Councilmembers, Sound Transit Board members, City Manager, Sound Transit CEO), Steering Committee (Department Directors), Collaboration Team (City Assistant Directors and Sound Transit Deputy Project Directors), and Technical Working Groups.

At 8:11 p.m., Mayor Lee declared a short recess.

The meeting reconvened at 8:21 p.m.

Mr. Berg described the MOU schedule through 2014. Environmental work regarding the alignment along 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue will continue through the end of 2012, and additional environmental review of cost-savings concepts could continue to mid-2013. Bellevue Code amendments will be addressed through the end of this year. The City and Sound Transit will work through 2013 to prepare a development agreement while the 60-percent design work is completed. Final design is scheduled to extend to 2016.

Mr. Berg reviewed the City's financial contributions identified in the MOU: 1) \$100,000 upfront contribution in the form of City-owned property, low/no cost contributions, real property and other contributions that serve multiple purposes, and 2) Contingent contribution of \$60,000, which is the focus of the current cost savings effort.

Responding to Councilmember Wallace, Mr. Berg said that prices for materials and labor have been favorable but could change at any time, depending on factors related to the economy that are beyond the City's or Sound Transit's control.

Mr. Lewis explained that, following completion of 60-percent design, any decrease in the estimated cost of the project within Bellevue will be used to reduce the City's contingent contribution. All contingent contribution costs will be applied to actual light rail tunnel construction costs, and the purpose of the collaborative design process is to eliminate the contingent contribution. Mr. Lewis said that cost savings is an ongoing objective through the duration of the project, and can also be achieved through efficiency in project delivery.

Mr. Lewis described the work to identify and analyze cost savings concepts related to light rail operations, station access/ridership, traffic, noise, visual impacts, and other environmental effects. Cost savings concepts developed by Sound Transit and Bellevue staff have been

categorized as follows: 1) Ideas advanced for further engineering review, 2) Ideas that may affect MOU project description, and 3) Ideas previously reviewed and not selected to move forward. These ideas have been submitted to the collaborative design process Leadership Team and will be presented to the Sound Transit Board on April 26.

Mr. Lewis presented the list of ideas advanced for further engineering review: 1) Tunnel design optimization, 2) Tunnel station design optimization, 3) Tunnel construction staging area, 4) Elevated guideway design, 5) Optimize 120<sup>th</sup> station design, 6) Reduce stormwater vaults through the use of low-impact development design, and 7) Expedite tunnel construction through additional road closures.

The second category of ideas is the primary focus of the public outreach process, as they might affect the MOU project description related to: 1) The Winters House, 2) 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue at SE 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 3) Downtown station design, 4) Downtown tunnel design, and 5) NE 16<sup>th</sup> Street cross-section.

Referring to the first category of cost-savings ideas, Councilmember Wallace asked staff to clarify at some point the savings to be achieved for the City, versus Wright Runstad, by optimizing the 120<sup>th</sup> station design.

Deputy Mayor Robertson clarified for the public that these cost-savings ideas have not been adopted and are still being studied and discussed. This analysis includes addressing noise, visual, and traffic impacts for properties along the alignment. Public outreach on the ideas will be conducted as well.

Mr. Lewis confirmed that the concepts are preliminary in nature. Staff will continue working to identify impacts and estimate cost savings for further discussion with the Council. Mr. Lewis said more advanced design work, including cost estimates and impacts, will be presented in May and June.

Mr. Lewis described two potential cost savings concepts related to the Winters House. One involves shifting Bellevue Way and light rail away from the house using an at-grade alignment instead of the currently planned retained cut.

Staff responded to questions of clarification.

Mr. Wallace recalled an earlier design concept that placed light rail along the west side of Bellevue Way, and suggested including it in Thursday's open house.

Mr. Lewis said staff is working on a number of additional visual simulations to be presented on Thursday and over the coming weeks.

Deputy Mayor Robertson said the Leadership Group has discussed its interest in animations, which she would like to see before a decision is made on the final alignment.

Mr. Lewis described a second concept for the Winters House, which involves moving it to another location to accommodate an at-grade light rail track along Bellevue Way adjacent to the existing roadway.

Councilmember Stokes noted that eliminating the retained cut along the Winters House represents the potential for substantial cost savings. The additional benefit is precluding potential damage to the Winters House and other complications that could arise with the construction of the retained cut. However, moving the Winters House involves additional costs that have not yet been quantified, and it removes the house from its historical context.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Mr. Lewis confirmed that Bellevue Way would shift slightly to the west in front of the Winters House under the first option. Mr. Lewis cautioned that the concept options are focused on this particular location, and more analysis is needed to see how any of them fit into the broader system.

Councilmember Stokes suggested that the workshop on Thursday clearly communicate to the public that the merits of each design concept will involve an analysis of how they affect the entire alignment.

Mr. Berg described a design option for the 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue alignment, which eliminates the connection at SE 4<sup>th</sup> Street and related bells and noise issues. It closes SE 4<sup>th</sup> Street and extends SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street into the Surrey Downs neighborhood. It provides a number of benefits but there are many considerations that need to be investigated further.

Deputy Mayor Robertson expressed concern regarding extending SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street into the neighborhood and the potential for cut-through traffic.

Councilmember Wallace recalled that the Council's resolution states that the City will look at the potential for public uses in the event, however unlikely, that Sound Transit ultimately continues to conclude that it is appropriate to take slivers of property and locate the train track close to homes. Mr. Berg confirmed this understanding.

Mr. Lewis described options for the Downtown Bellevue light rail station and existing Transit Center.

Responding to the Council, Mr. Lewis confirmed that light rail stations have elevators and, generally, escalators going up with stairs going down. All stations are ADA-compliant.

Councilmember Chelminiak suggested taking the 550 bus to Downtown Seattle and visiting the current transit tunnel stations to get an idea of what the light rail stations might look like.

Moving on, Mr. Lewis described a Downtown Bellevue stacked tunnel design option, which narrows the required right-of-way.

Responding to Councilmember Stokes, Mr. Lewis said 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE would have two or three lanes with this option.

Mr. Berg described an option to locate the light rail station on NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street at street level. This reduces the risks associated with an underground station, potentially expedites the completion of the Downtown Tunnel, and increases the visibility of the station. However, again, there are many considerations that need further study including the impact to City Hall, Meydenbauer Center, and 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Mr. Berg acknowledged that the train cannot make a right-angle turn. Mr. van de Kamp said staff will provide more accurate drawings of the design concepts for the open house on Thursday.

Responding to Deputy Mayor Robertson, Mr. Berg said staff will provide more accurate information on cost estimates and impacts in May.

John Stokes said it would be helpful to have vertical visuals of the Downtown Station and Transit Center options and to identify the station entrances.

Mr. Lewis commented that the discussion illustrates how early the project team is in evaluating the new cost saving concepts. The team will continue to release more information through June as designs and cost estimates are refined.

Councilmember Wallace observed that the purpose of identifying options is to reduce project costs. He questioned whether it will be meaningful for the public to review the options without knowing the estimated cost savings.

Mr. Lewis said staff's work gives a rough idea of the order of magnitude of the cost differences to determine that there is sufficient potential for cost savings. The project team wants to get the ideas out to the public now in order to have a conversation, to the extent possible, about the options and the public's criteria for evaluating them. He acknowledged the challenge of presenting information to the public when there are many details yet to be studied and evaluated.

Mr. Wallace said that progress since the adoption of the MOU in December has been slow. He questioned whether it is realistic to expect that the preferred cost saving concepts can be selected by June. Mr. Lewis acknowledged that the schedule is a challenge. He confirmed that June is the timeframe for identifying concepts to be carried forward to value engineering while final design continues to move forward.

Councilmember Stokes said he understands concerns about the cost estimates. He suggested identifying the three Downtown Bellevue Station options based on relative low, medium, and high cost differences.

Councilmember Chelminiak concurred that the analysis will be more meaningful when cost estimates are available. He noted the importance of maintaining a focus on overall system

performance, and not focusing on cutting costs to the point that more money is spent in the future to modify the initial project.

Mr. Lewis reiterated that much more work is needed to refine the design concepts and cost estimates.

Ms. Robertson concurred with Mr. Stokes' suggestion to provide, in the absence of better cost estimates, relative orders of magnitude for comparing options. She said that lowering overall project costs will enable more money to be available for impact mitigation

Mayor Lee expressed support for providing the relative magnitude of costs for comparison purposes at the open house on Thursday. Mr. Lee stated that the mitigation of impacts is the highest priority for the project, and he does not want to lessen mitigation based on cost.

Mr. Lewis confirmed that the collaborative design process team is using the MOU as its guide and checking in with the City Council and Sound Transit Board along the way to ensure that the MOU is carried out as intended. He said that Sound Transit wants to move forward as quickly as possible to refine the project and provide some certainty to the public.

Councilmember Stokes commended staff on their work.

Mr. Berg described an option to place the Downtown Bellevue station at street level on the City Hall and adjacent Metro sites.

Mr. Lewis described a proposed cost saving concept that uses a retained cut from Main Street to NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street instead of the 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE tunnel. He reviewed an alternative design for NE 16<sup>th</sup> Street as well.

Mr. Berg noted the following ideas previously reviewed and not selected for further analysis – proposed Bellevue Way HOV ramps to exit I-90, an at-grade center-running alignment on Bellevue Way and 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and an at-grade crossing at 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue and SE 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mr. Lewis reviewed the next steps. The open house at Bellevue City Hall is scheduled for April 26. Technical findings will be presented to the City Council and Sound Transit Board in late May, and another open house will be held in early June. The City Council and Sound Transit Board will work through June to identify the concepts for inclusion in value engineering and environmental review. Final decisions on cost savings concepts are not anticipated before 2013.

Councilmember Davidson questioned the potential for a deep bored tunnel in Bellevue, as has been used in parts of Seattle.

Mr. Berg said the current MOU process is focused on the preferred alignment and configuration selected by the Sound Transit Board.

Deputy Mayor Robertson and Councilmember Wallace asked staff to clarify for Sound Transit that transit-oriented development is not an option for the South Bellevue Station/Park and Ride or the Surrey Downs neighborhood. Mr. Lewis agreed to convey that message. However, he said that while Sound Transit is interested in TOD at a number of locations in Seattle, Bellevue controls its land use policies and will make its own decisions in that regard.

→ Deputy Mayor Robertson moved to extend the meeting to 10:30 p.m., and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

(e) Eastgate/I-90 CAC Final Report and Recommendations

City Manager Sarkozy opened discussion regarding the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) report.

Mike Bergstrom, Senior Land Use Planner, introduced Jay Hamlin, Co-Chair of the CAC and a Planning Commission Member. He noted that Francois Larrivee, Transportation Commission Member and CAC Co-Chair was not able to attend. Councilmember Stokes served as a CAC member, and Deputy Mayor Robertson participated as the Council's liaison to the CAC.

Mr. Hamlin recognized Mr. Bergstrom and Franz Loewenherz, Senior Transportation Planner, for their good work with the committee, and thanked all of the CAC members for their hard work and contributions.

Mr. Hamlin reviewed key characteristics of the Eastgate/I-90 corridor including strong employment center, market demand for additional office space, Bellevue College, industrial uses in the Richards Valley, Eastgate Plaza shopping center, and car dealerships that are performing well. However, the corridor has limited transportation connectivity.

Responding to Councilmember Davidson, Mr. Loewenherz said that specific plans regarding the mode of future high-capacity transit service to Issaquah are unknown.

Mr. Hamlin provided an overview of the preferred alternative for the Eastgate/I-90 area, noting that more details are provided in the final report. The alternative builds on the corridor's success as an employment and office center, establishes a mixed-use transit-oriented development center, increases the residential presence in proximity to transit, and promotes the enhancement of the visual presence of Bellevue College.

Mayor Lee questioned the plan's connectivity to the Factoria area.

Mr. Bergstrom said that Factoria is outside of the study area. However, it was acknowledged early on by the CAC that the Factoria area has a strong role in the entire I-90 corridor. Mr. Loewenherz noted that the transportation system connects the two areas.

Continuing with the presentation, Mr. Loewenherz reported that enhanced wayfinding signage has been added along I-90 as part of this project. Next steps underway are Lakemont interchange improvements, the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail preliminary design, and Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) amendments. Implementation of the land use plan will require a number of actions through 2012-2013 related to Comprehensive Plan Amendments, Land Use Code Amendments, urban design guidelines, and zoning map amendments.

Councilmember Davidson noted his ongoing concern about how Sound Transit plans to serve this corridor.

Mr. Loewenherz said that Sound Transit was involved in the project somewhat and is well aware of the City's work.

Councilmember Chelminiak stated that Sound Transit Phase 3 is not in the near future, and the first effort will be to extend light rail to Redmond.

Mr. Chelminiak said he was somewhat surprised to see how much traffic comes from the south end and then travels east on I-90. He observed that this travel pattern would be best served by bus rapid transit.

Responding to Councilmember Wallace, Mr. Bergstrom said the next step is to initiate the Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) process in order to send the project to the Planning Commission for review and discussion.

Mr. Wallace expressed support for the project and its community involvement. However, he acknowledged that the question of moving forward will need to be discussed within the broader context of the budget.

Deputy Mayor Robertson commended the CAC for their hard work and positive interactions. She thanked Mr. Bergstrom and Mr. Loewenherz for their support of the committee. Ms. Robertson stated her understanding of the next step, which is that there would be a Comprehensive Plan Amendment at the Planning Commission, followed by zoning map and Land Use Code amendments. She voiced support for accepting the CAC's report, while also acknowledging that recommended activities will need to be budgeted.

Councilmember Stokes concurred with Ms. Robertson's comments, noting that it was a great experience to serve on the CAC. He said the CAC was a hard-working group that came up with a great planning product.

→ Councilmember Stokes moved to accept the Final Report of the Eastgate/I-90 Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Land Use and Transportation Project, to forward the report and recommendations to the Planning and Transportation Commissions, to thank and formally disband the CAC, and to initiate the Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) process for implementation of the recommended plan. Deputy Mayor Robertson seconded the motion.

Councilmember Chelminiak expressed support for the plan. He questioned the anticipated timeline for implementation of the plan, especially as it relates to residential population growth. Mr. Chelminiak noted that the Bel-Red Plan achieves 2040 housing targets. He questioned whether housing targets for the Eastgate area should be targeted toward the 2050-2060 timeframe.

Mr. Bergstrom explained that there is only one vacant parcel of any significant size in the entire Eastgate/I-90 study area. He noted that the relative emphasis on residential or office development can be adjusted. However, that is also subject to market demand. Mr. Bergstrom said the CAC was looking at essentially a 20-year horizon, but there could be additional growth beyond that timeframe.

Mayor Lee thanked the CAC and City staff for their work.

Responding to Mr. Lee, Mr. Bergstrom observed that a down market is a good time to plan and to anticipate the development activity that will occur when market demand improves. Mr. Bergstrom said the plan acknowledges that there might be a need to consider phasing in the new zoning, however. In further response, Mr. Bergstrom said that, if the motion passes, the next step will be to work on the CPA, whether that happens in 2012 or 2013.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

(f) Regional Issues

Joyce Nichols, Interim Director of Intergovernmental Relations, referred the Council to page 3-43 of the meeting packet, which asks the Council to authorize the City Manager to execute an Interlocal Agreement with the King County Flood Control District and King County that will transfer the assets of the former South West Lake Sammamish Flood Control Zone District to the City of Bellevue. She explained that staff would like to place this item on the Council's May 7 Consent Calendar for action.

Ms. Nichols said this is a housekeeping item to formally dissolve the former South West Lake Sammamish Flood Control Zone District. All of the independent flood control districts within King County were dissolved when the King County Council created the King County Flood Control Zone District in 2007. The Interlocal Agreement formally transfers facilities, which are maintained by Bellevue Utilities, and remaining financial assets in the amount of \$140,000, to the City of Bellevue.

Deputy Mayor Robertson expressed support for placing this item on the next Consent Calendar for Council action. She requested not allocating the \$140,000 to any particular project without first discussing potential stormwater control projects with the Council.

Ms. Nichols said that, under Council-adopted policy, one-time money such as this is deposited into replacement and repair reserves.

Mayor Lee noted a Council consensus to move forward as recommended by staff.

At 10:30 p.m., Mayor Lee declared the meeting adjourned.

Myrna L. Basich, MMC  
City Clerk

kaw