

BELLEVUE TRANSIT MASTER PLAN FORUM



Bellevue Transit Master Plan

CITY OF BELLEVUE

October 2012

Department of Transportation



THANK YOU!

The City of Bellevue would like to thank the following individuals who took the time to participate in the Transit Master Plan Forum:

Mayor Conrad Lee (Bellevue City Council)
Councilmember Kevin Wallace (Bellevue City Council)
Scott Lampe, Vice-chair (Transportation Commission)
Vic Bishop (Transportation Commission)
Tom Tanaka (Transportation Commission)
John Carlson, Chair (Planning Commission)
Diane Tebelius, Vice-Chair (Planning Commission)
Hal Ferris (Planning Commission)
Kevin Turner (Planning Commission)
Pat Sheffels (Planning Commission)
Jay Hamlin (Planning Commission)
Aaron Laing (Planning Commission)
Genevieve Tremblay, Vice Chair (Arts Commission)
Arina Fateeva (Arts Commission)
Kris Liljeblad (Arts Commission)
Lynne Robinson, Chair (Parks & Community Services Board)
Dallas Evans (Parks & Community Services Board)
Stuart Heath (Parks & Community Services Board)
Erin Powell (Parks & Community Services Board)
Mark Van Hollebeke (Parks & Community Services Board)
John Bruels, Chair (Human Services Commission)
Michael Yantis, Vice-Chair (Human Services Commission)
Stefanie Beighle (Human Services Commission)
James McEachran (Human Services Commission)
Olga Perelman (Human Services Commission)
Janet Stout (Human Services Commission)
Hannah Kimball (Citizen)
Richard Englund (Citizen)
Howard Katz (Citizen)
Stephen Hunt (Citizen)
Connie Adams (Citizen)
Serwin Lee (Seattle Transit Blog)

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TRANSIT MASTER PLAN FORUM

Figure 1 Staff member, Tresa Berg, records information as Forum participants work through the challenges of providing for Bellevue's transit needs.

BACKGROUND

On July 9, 2012 the Bellevue City Council initiated the Bellevue Transit Master Plan an update of the City's 2003 Transit Plan. To help guide the project, Council approved a set of project principles intended to provide direction over the course of the project (see Attachment A - Project Principles). Per Council direction, staff is broadening the Transit Master Plan engagement effort to allow for additional opportunities for informal discussions among representatives of the Transportation, Planning, Arts, and Human Services Commissions and the Parks and Community Services Board (see Figure 2 on next page).

This report details the results from a Transit Master Plan Forum held on September 18 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM (see Attachment B - Forum Agenda). Bellevue Mayor Conrad Lee and Councilmember Kevin Wallace joined 24 Board and Commission members and six residents in a priority setting discussion that will inform the City's transit service vision.

Many of the Forum participants arrived early enough to consider the contents of presentation boards (see Figure 3) showing the results from the community outreach process, service level coverage, daily ridership, demographic characteristics, residential and employment density, transit facilities, speed and reliability projects, and changes in transit ridership since the previous 2003 Transit Plan (see Attachment C - Forum Presentation Boards).

At 6 PM, Mayor Lee welcomed Forum participants and thanked them for their willingness to help clarify the future role of transit in



Bellevue Transit Master Plan

Join Us!

Please join Bellevue city staff and your colleagues on Bellevue's Boards and Commissions in shaping the city's transit service vision.

On July 9, 2012 the Bellevue City Council initiated the Bellevue Transit Master Plan (TMP) an update of the City's 2003 Transit Plan.

Per Council direction, Bellevue staff will facilitate an informal discussion on transit among members of the Transportation, Planning, and Human Services Commissions and the Parks and Community Services Board.

- WHAT:** Transit Master Plan Forum
WHEN: Tuesday, September 18 (from 6 to 8 PM)
WHERE: City Hall (Conference room 1E-108 and 1E-113)

We look forward to seeing you there!

For more information contact: Franz Loewenherz, Senior Transportation Planner,
floewenherz@bellevuewa.gov 425-452-4077

Visit our project website: <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/bellevue-transit-plan.htm>

Figure 2 Formal invitations were distributed to Bellevue Board and Commission members who were briefed in advance of the Transit Master Plan Forum at their regularly scheduled meetings.

Bellevue (see Figure 4). Mayor Lee introduced Franz Loewenherz, project manager, who walked participants through an overview of the Bellevue Transit Master Plan project purpose, scope, and timeline (see Attachment D - Forum Presentation). Mr. Loewenherz clarified that the Forum will help inform the City's actions as it responds to the rapidly changing environment within which public transportation operates.

From 6:20 PM to 8:00 PM, Forum participants engaged in a roundtable discussion about competing priorities (see Attachment E - Forum Discussion Topics). The discussion topics were used to consider transit's role in Bellevue and to solicit Board and Commission member opinions on service and resource allocation decisions (see Figure 5).

The Forum was arranged so that each table was supported by both a staff facilitator and scribe. Facilitators helped move the discussions along and ensured that each of the participants was provided an opportunity to weigh-in on the discussion questions. Scribes tracked participant comments. Staff emailed the draft notes to Forum participants who were offered the opportunity to review and suggest edits before being combined into this report (see Attachment F - Summary of Discussions).

The next section of the report summarizes the four main themes from the Transit Master Plan Forum.



Figure 3 Forum participants considering existing transit conditions.



Figure 4 Mayor Lee acknowledged that because of their affiliation with a City Board or Commission, Forum participants were uniquely positioned to help staff in developing a fully integrated and user-friendly network of transit services for Bellevue that supports the city's growth, economic vitality, and enhanced livability.



Figure 5 Forum participants were asked to consider trade-off scenarios.

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Transit is an essential component of the City's mobility strategy and an increasingly important tool for addressing Bellevue's anticipated growth in travel.

Forum participants spoke of the many ways that transit benefits Bellevue; including: (i) Economic Benefits – Businesses, especially large employers, frequently locate in communities with strong public transit services; (ii) Environmental Benefits – Cities benefit from reduced traffic congestion and improved air quality when people take transit; (iii) Community Benefits – Since transit requires less land and energy than the private car to move the same number of people, it is often cheaper to meet mobility needs with transit rather than through other measures such as road widening or new parking facilities; and, (iv) Individual Benefits – Public transportation provides an affordable, and for many, necessary, alternative to driving. The following is a sampling of comments from Forum participants on how transit benefits Bellevue:

**Tom Tanaka,
Transportation
Commission**

“An important benefit of transit is that whenever a transit trip replaces a single auto trip it eases the congestion that hurts all businesses and all commuters. Bellevue could not reach its projected growth without transit. We can’t just build roads to meet our growth.”

**Vic Bishop,
Transportation
Commission**

“We need a transit system to serve Downtown Bellevue, otherwise it won’t grow.”



Figure 6 Forum participants including Arina Fateeva (Arts Commission), Aaron Laing (Planning Commission), James McEachran (Human Services Commission), Lynne Robinson (Parks & Community Services Board), and Vic Bishop (Transportation Commission). City of Bellevue support staff including Terry Smith, Sean Wellander, and Alex O’Reilly.

**Mark Van Hollebeke,
Parks & Community
Services**

“Transit draws businesses to Bellevue; for instance, the B-Line has created ease of movement from Microsoft’s Main Campus to Downtown. The B-Line is better than the Shuttle. It runs more often and is bigger.”

**Kris Liljeblad,
Arts Commission**

“The growth of transit use reflects the increased needs among people trying to reduce fuel consumption, reduce cost, and reduce environmental impact.”

**Hal Ferris,
Planning Commission**

“Transit creates more active communities. People walk more (health benefits)... A good transportation system is fundamental to viability, the city will stagnate, and residents who want that will choose not to live here.”

**John Bruels,
Human Services
Commission**

“For some people transit is the only source or option for transportation.”

More can be done to improve transit serve for people who depend on transit due to age or disability, in areas of lower density, and at non-peak hours (midday, evening, and weekend).

Forum participants believe that transit in Bellevue, as it currently operates, is well used by work commuters and those attending special events in Seattle. Transit was considered to be inconvenient for shopping trips, doctor’s appointments, and midday, evening, and weekend travel. The following is a sampling of comments from Forum participants on what types of transit improvements are needed in Bellevue:



Figure 7 Forum participants including Mayor Conrad Lee (City Council), Diane Tebelius (Planning Commission), John Carlson (Planning Commission), Mark Van Hollebeke (Parks & Community Services Board), and Michael Yantis (Human Services Commission). City of Bellevue support staff including Paul Krawczyk, Gwen Rousseau, and Tresa Berg.

**Pat Sheffels,
Planning Commission**

“Transit in Bellevue primarily benefits the working commuter, especially those who work in downtown Bellevue. Transit in Bellevue does not serve seniors well; and it does not work well for appointments, shopping and errands.... In 2030 there will be more elderly who won’t be able to walk 5 blocks from their home to a bus stop. Bellevue has changing demographics that need non-commute transit: young singles that don’t own cars; more minorities, more households without kids. These groups need short trip, more convenient, more predictable transit.... A shuttle could connect seniors and the disabled to Bellevue’s hospital zone.”

**Richard Englund,
Bellevue Network on
Aging**

“The Boomer generation is beginning to get past 60. Lots of them are looking to give up their car and take up transit, so we need to make it convenient for them to do so.”

**Hal Ferris,
Planning Commission**

“I take the bus wherever I need to go when I’m downtown. When I have an evening meeting, I drive because buses drop off after 7 PM.”

**Scott Lampe,
Transportation
Commission**

“The challenge is getting people from neighborhood areas to reliable transit.”

**Kris Liljeblad,
Arts Commission**

“I mostly use the bus for work trips and sporting events. I fully recognize that a lot of people depend on transit for other types of trips. Different times of day and different types of riders when contrasting with peak times. I get frustrated when I have to stand because there aren’t enough seats.... In terms of trading off peak services vs. midday, particularly regarding social equity ... fundamentally you have to maintain baseline services midday.”



Figure 8 Forum participants including Kevin Turner (Planning Commission), John Bruels (Human Services Commission), Dallas Evans (Parks & Community Services Board), Olga Perelman (Human Services Commission), Jay Hamlin (Planning Commission), and Genevieve Tremblay (Arts Commission). City of Bellevue support staff including Kevin McDonald, Scott MacDonald, and Judy Clark.

Current sources of funding won't cover everything that needs to be done; as such, the near-term focus needs to be on maximizing ridership.

When presented with trade-off scenarios (e.g., peak vs. off-peak; route directness vs. service area coverage), the majority of Forum participants advocate for helping the greatest number of people get to where they need to go by preserving/enhancing service where there is already high ridership. The following is a sampling of comments from Forum participants on the importance of maximizing ridership:



Figure 9 Forum participants including Stefanie Beighle (Human Services Commission), Stuart Heath (Parks & Community Services Board), Pat Sheffels (Planning Commission), and Tom Tanaka (Transportation Commission). City of Bellevue support staff including Paul Inghram, Janet Lewine, and, Mike Mattar.

**Stuart Heath,
Parks & Community
Services Board**

“Given the current budget constraints, the highest priority for the fixed route buses is giving a positive experience to peak riders.... Metro and Sound Transit may be able to accomplish more by focusing their services.”

**Tom Tanaka,
Transportation
Commission**

“I serve on the Board of HopeLink; I know transit is a big issue for those struggling in our community. Still, the success of transit is tied to the success of serving working commuters. Our future requires it; we can’t build enough additional freeway lanes and roads to meet peak demand. We need to serve transit commuters.”

**Howard Katz,
Bellevue Network on
Aging**

“I often see that buses are packed in the mornings and evenings, but appear to be empty in the middle of the day. So I see it as peak-oriented, with less service being needed during the day.”

**Stefanie Beighle,
Human Services
Commission**

“The park & rides are full, buses are packed, and the ride is slower than taking the car. I would rather not stand all the way to Seattle.”

**Vic Bishopp,
Transportation
Commission**

“Far and away the dominant market share of transit are the work trips.”

**Dallas Evans,
Parks & Community
Services Board**

“A weakness to our current system is that the “backbone is missing.” The dominant ideology is to try to appease everyone. We need a plan that serves high density land use and gets people to change their travel behaviors versus pleasing everyone. Look at Portland, Oregon’s transit system as an example of a good system. At the beginning there was low ridership but business and communities developed around the routes and now it is of the best transportations systems in the country.”

**Kris Liljeblad,
Arts Commission**

“Some neighborhoods will always be difficult to serve ... There is pressure on King County and Sound Transit to reduce unproductive service. To expect that service is going to grow in the short-term is unrealistic. For now we should maintain strong productivity on the transit service we have.”

**Pat Sheffels,
Planning Commission**

“It is hard to ignore the existing development that was built out before transit came along. We can work toward tying land use to transit in new or redeveloping areas like Bel-Red, but not for most of Bellevue.”

**Hal Ferris,
Planning Commission**

“There is a geographic coverage issue; that said, it’s not realistic to serve low-density single family areas with constant service. There are ways we can do things to incentivize people to take the bus (e.g., more P&R). We need to maintain the peak service.”

We need to make strategic investments to support future development and growth in ridership.

Encouraging long-term ridership growth involves building capacity to meet future demand for transit service by:

- (i) providing service where there is anticipated to be high ridership, typically where there is some mix of: higher residential or commercial density; major activity centers; measures that discourage driving, such as limited parking;
- (ii) building and supporting park and ride facilities that help people access the transit system;
- (iii) improving the way people make transit connections so they can reach more destinations in less time; and,
- (iv) investing in speed and reliability enhancements such as transit priority measures and bus rapid transit.

Forum participants spoke of the need to make the following types of strategic investments to grow ridership:

**Dallas Evans,
Parks & Community
Services Board**

“Transit needs to be made easier and faster so that people would make decisions to ride based off of the convenience.... I favor setting up high-ridership corridors for transit that serve high density areas. Businesses and residents can choose to be near these transit corridors, or not. To the point about an aging population, older people make a decision to stay in their homes or not.”

**Scott Lampe,
Transportation
Commission**

“If you look at the demand for Downtown Bellevue, there’s a much greater flow North-South, not East-West. We need Bus Rapid Transit on I-405.”

**Vic Bishop,
Transportation
Commission**

“The I-405 master plan is being ignored. It had a major transit component.”

**Pat Sheffels,
Planning Commission**

“Bus priority of some kind is needed on NE 8th and on 148th where the bus has “pocket” pull-outs at some stops. No one will let the bus back into traffic. It’s a big loss of time for busses.”



Figure 10 Forum participants including Janice Stout (Human Services Commission), Erin Powell (Parks & Community Services Board), Hal Ferris (Planning Commission), Scott Lampe (Transportation Commission), and Kris Liljeblad (Arts Commission). City of Bellevue support staff including Emily Leslie, Joseph Adriano, and Kurt Latt.

**Aaron Laing,
Planning
Commission**

“RapidRide is a success. Maybe look at doing one along Bellevue Way.”

**Howard Katz,
Bellevue Network
on Aging**

“In Paris and New York City, transit is how I did things. I didn’t know my way around, and in Paris couldn’t even speak the language, but I had my map so I could do it. If we had a bus system like that with a lot of easy transfers, I would use it.”



Figure 11 Forum participants including Howard Katz (Bellevue Network on Aging), Richard Englund (Bellevue Network on Aging), Hannah Kimball (Bellevue Network on Aging), Serwin Lee (Seattle Transit Blog), and Stephen Hunt (King County Metro). City of Bellevue support staff including Cathy VonWald, Andreas Piller, Bernard Van de Kamp, and Darek Jarzynski.

**Hal Ferris,
Planning Commission**

“Until 2030, we’ll just keep getting denser around East Link nodes.... Bel-Red is an example where the uses will be walkable. Density of services will available, also in Eastgate and Factoria.... People need access points that are safe and clean. Just as we work on transit/street plans, include dedicated right-of-way to promote reliability, dependability. If parking is free, people will use it. Don’t have parking minimums in high transit areas. In some cities, there’s a parking maximum. If you don’t build the parking, and if you have good transit, people will use it.”

**Sherwin Lee,
Seattle Transit Blog**

“The impact that transit priority measures have on cars tends to be minimal. Queue jump lanes and HOV lanes are some examples of transit priority measures, which is what is pictured in the Forum packet. One local example is on NE Pacific St in Montlake. People sometimes complain that car lanes are congested while the transit lane is mostly empty, but this is actually a sign that it is working. On a four-lane highway, an HOV lane accounts for only one-quarter of the total lane area, but it may account for 40 percent of the person trips because all the vehicles that use it are high-occupancy.”

**Mark Van Hollebeke,
Parks & Community
Services Board**

“Transfers are not desirable, but you can make them better by making bus routes more frequent. Maybe one transfer is ok, but 2 or 3 – no way.”

**Kris Liljeblad,
Arts Commission**

“In the long-term, service will feed Light Rail, with Bus Rapid Transit feeding. Station areas will need to accommodate those transfers between all the feeder buses. This will require curb space and some signal priority may be needed in station nodes.... Frequency is really critical for a quality of service.... Coordinated signals make sense in heavy transit corridors. It’s difficult to have quality service when it’s unpredictable as it gets stuck in congestion. Keep buses on schedule. Priority should be adaptive signal, then add transit priority, where there are routes that are difficult to keep on schedule.”



Figure 12 Forum participant Councilmember Kevin Wallace (City Council) and Franz Loewenherz (project manager).

ATTACHMENTS

- ATTACHMENT A - PROJECT PRINCIPLES A2**
- ATTACHMENT B - FORUM AGENDA..... A3**
- ATTACHMENT C - FORUM PRESENTATION BOARDS . A4**
- ATTACHMENT D - FORUM PRESENTATION A22**
- ATTACHMENT E - FORUM DISCUSSION TOPICS.... A42**
- ATTACHMENT F - SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION A55**



Project Principles

Approved July 9, 2012

The City Council envisions a fully integrated and user-friendly network of transit services for Bellevue that supports the city’s growth, economic vitality, and enhanced livability, and has developed the following set of project principles to direct development of the Transit Master Plan.

- 1. Support planned growth and development in Bellevue with a bold transit vision that encourages long-term ridership growth.**

The dynamic nature of Bellevue’s economic expansion requires a bold transit vision supported by practical, achievable strategies in the near term that set a solid foundation for longer term improvements through 2030. The Transit Master Plan should identify, evaluate, and prioritize transit investments that are responsive to a range of financial scenarios (cuts/status-quo/aspirational) and attune to different time horizons (near/mid/long term).
- 2. Engage community stakeholders in setting the priorities for transit delivery.**

A comprehensive public engagement strategy should result in meaningful input on transit services and facilities from a range of stakeholders including residents, businesses, major institutions, neighboring cities, transportation agencies, and others (e.g., community associations, Network on Aging, Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, Chamber of Commerce, Bellevue Downtown Association). Special attention will be required to enlist the participation of “under-represented” communities such as immigrants, low-income and non-native English speakers.
- 3. Determine where and how transit investments can deliver the greatest degree of mobility and access possible for all populations.**

The Transit Master Plan should look to the future and be compatible with Bellevue’s land use and transportation plans and the challenges and opportunities of changing demographics, land use characteristics, and travel patterns. Following consultations with the community, demand forecasting, and a review of industry best practices and emerging technologies, this initiative will identify the steps required to create a public transportation system that is easy to use by all people in Bellevue for trips within Bellevue and to regional destinations.
- 4. Incorporate other transit-related efforts (both bus and light rail) underway in Bellevue and within the region.**

The Transit Master Plan should incorporate local and regional transportation projects and plans that have been approved and/or implemented since the Bellevue Transit Plan was adopted in 2003. Transportation system changes include East Link, SR 520 expansion and tolling, and improvements to I-90 and I-405. Planning changes include the updated Bel-Red Subarea Plan, the Wilburton Subarea Plan and the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project. Through coordination with local and regional transportation plans, the Transit Master Plan should outline a strategy to leverage the investment in public transportation projects to the benefit of Bellevue residents and businesses.
- 5. Identify partnership opportunities to further extend transit service and infrastructure.**

While transit infrastructure is typically funded through large capital funding programs, other less traditional funding mechanisms can be utilized to pay for improvements vital to support transit communities and/or achieve higher transit ridership. The Transit Master Plan should undertake an analysis of partnership opportunities that the City might want to consider with other government organizations (e.g., Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, Metro, Sound Transit), human service agencies, and private corporations, to improve transit service delivery in Bellevue. This analysis will explore alternatives to traditional transit service delivery.
- 6. Develop measures of effectiveness to evaluate transit investments and to track plan progress.**

The Bellevue Comprehensive Plan presently includes the following metrics/benchmarks related to transit: (i) mode split targets within each of the City’s Mobility Management Areas [Table TR.1 – Area Mobility Targets]; (2) transit service frequency improvement targets between Downtown, Overlake, Crossroads, Eastgate, and Factoria [TR.8 – 10 Year Transit Vision]; and, (3) guidance found in 44 transit-supportive policies. The Transit Master Plan will revisit these metrics, and where necessary, propose modifications to better reflect present and future conditions.



Bellevue Transit Master Plan

AGENDA

TRANSIT MASTER PLAN FORUM

Tuesday, September 18 (from 6 to 8 PM)
City Hall Conference Rooms 1E-108 and 1E-113

Board and Commission members are encouraged to **arrive at 5:30 PM** so that you can enjoy the complimentary dinner, look at the boards on display, and get settled in at your tables. To stay on schedule, we need to **start promptly at 6 PM**.

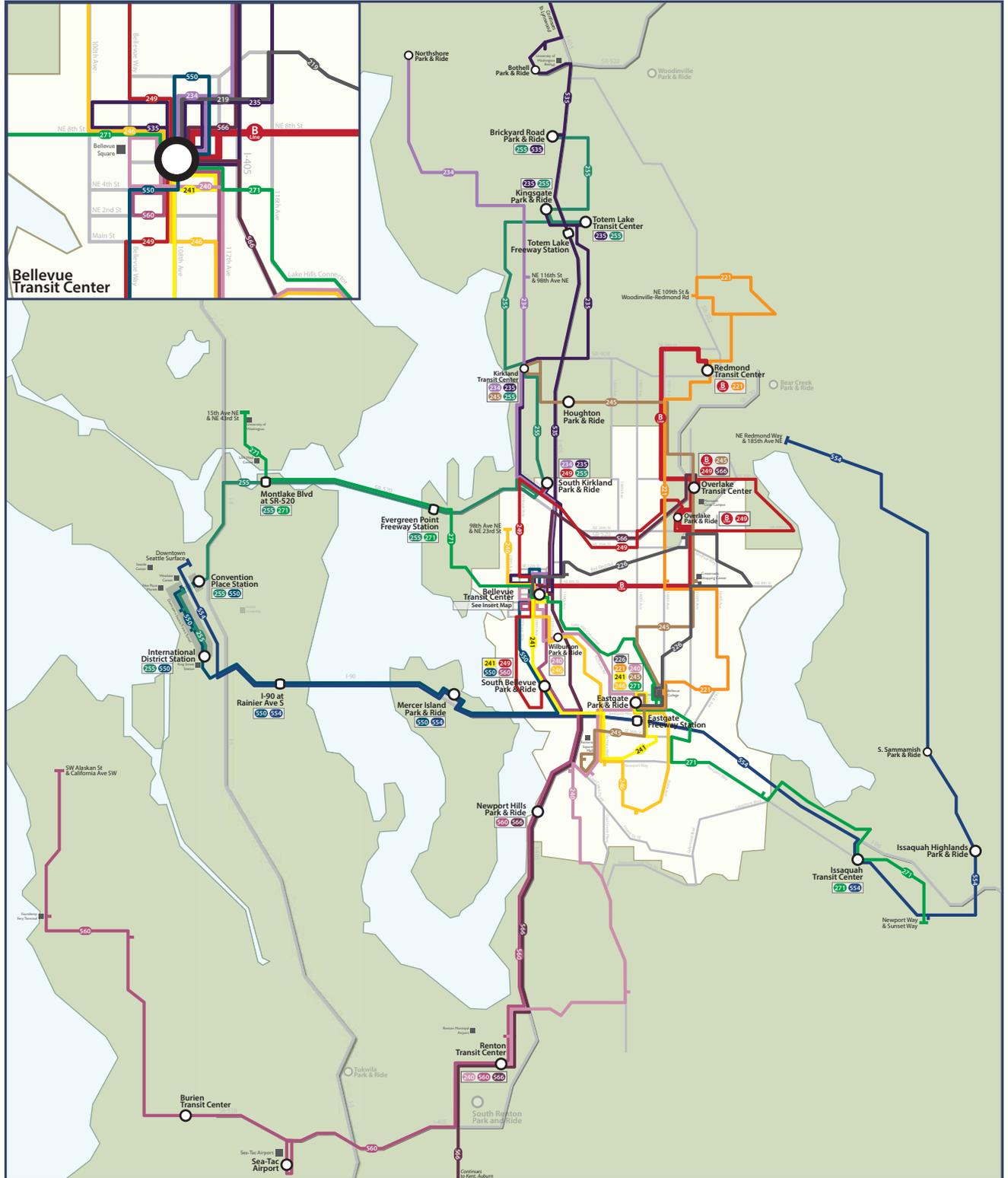
Welcome & Opening Remarks	6:00 - 6:20
Table Discussions	6:20 – 7:40
Reporting Out	7:40 – 8:00

Attachment C -

Forum Presentation Boards

All-Day Service Network

Bellevue Transit Master Plan



Routes Operating Throughout the Day



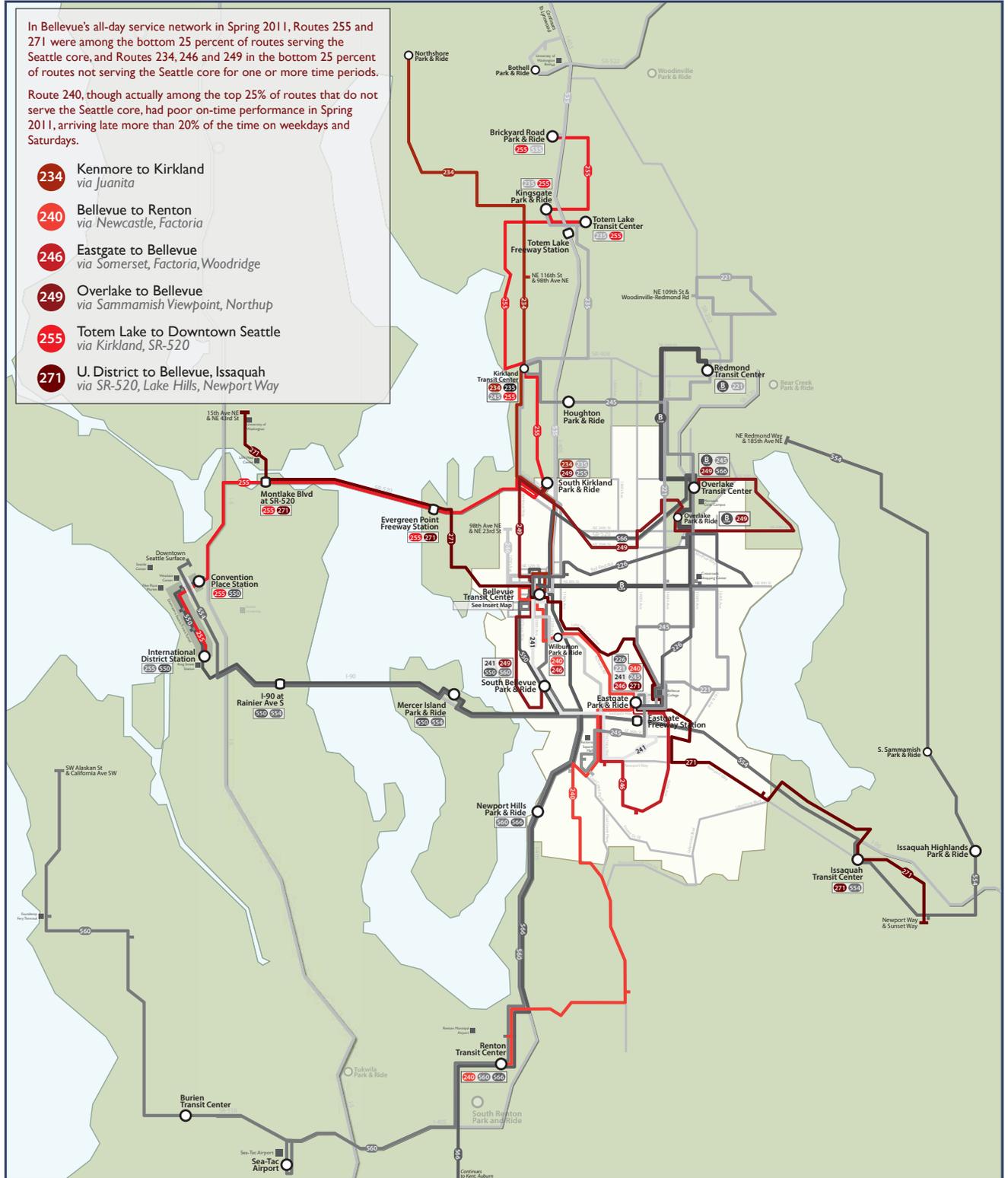
All-Day Service Network

Bellevue Transit Master Plan

In Bellevue's all-day service network in Spring 2011, Routes 255 and 271 were among the bottom 25 percent of routes serving the Seattle core, and Routes 234, 246 and 249 in the bottom 25 percent of routes not serving the Seattle core for one or more time periods.

Route 240, though actually among the top 25% of routes that do not serve the Seattle core, had poor on-time performance in Spring 2011, arriving late more than 20% of the time on weekdays and Saturdays.

- 234** Kenmore to Kirkland via Juanita
- 240** Bellevue to Renton via Newcastle, Factoria
- 246** Eastgate to Bellevue via Somerset, Factoria, Woodridge
- 249** Overlake to Bellevue via Sammamish Viewpoint, Northup
- 255** Totem Lake to Downtown Seattle via Kirkland, SR-520
- 271** U. District to Bellevue, Issaquah via SR-520, Lake Hills, Newport Way

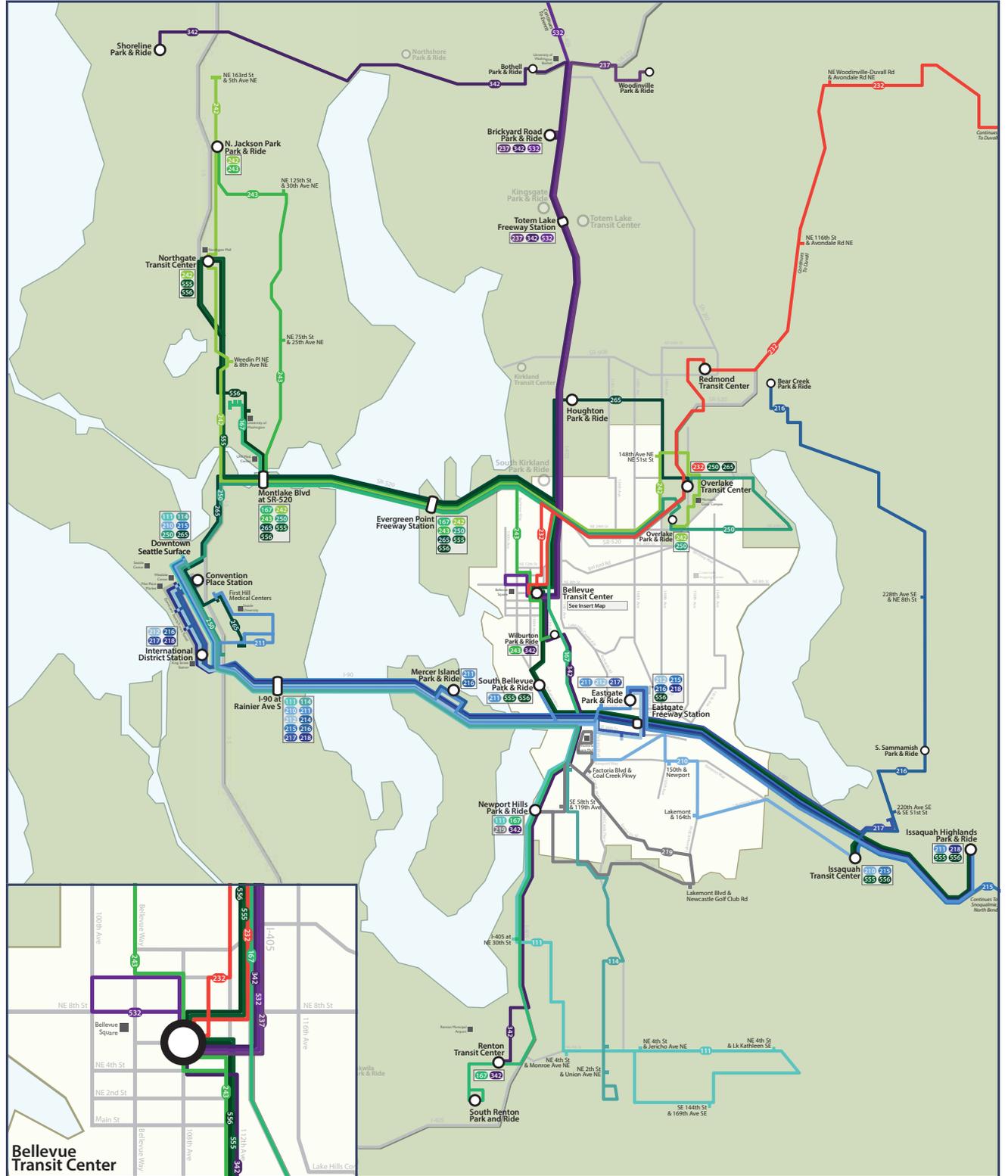


Low Performing All-Day Routes



Peak-Only Service Network

Bellevue Transit Master Plan

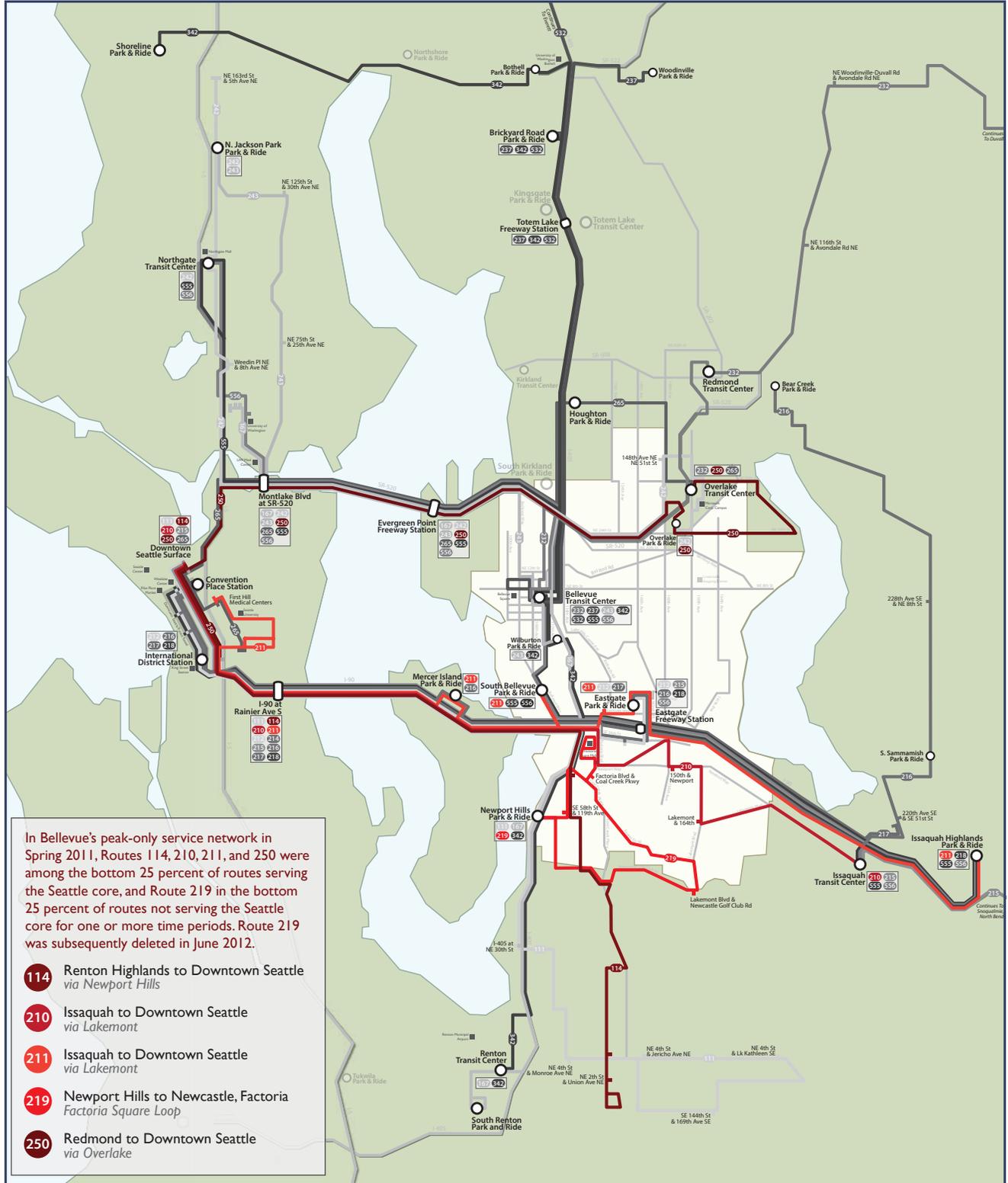


Routes Operating During Morning and Afternoon Commuting Periods



Peak-Only Service Network

Bellevue Transit Master Plan



Low Performing Peak-Only Routes

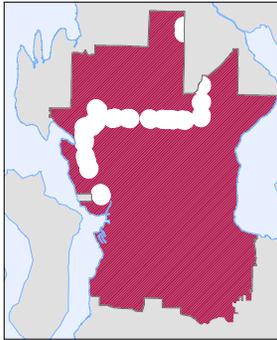


Weekend Service Level Coverage

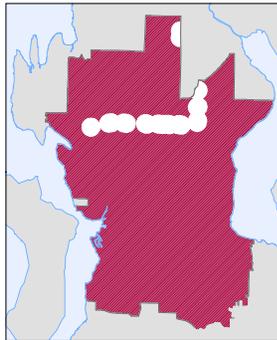
Bellevue Transit Master Plan

Areas lacking 15 minute or less Bus Service on Saturday (Fall 2011)

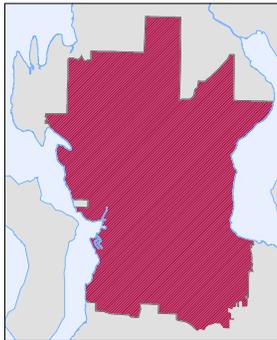
Base (09:00 - 15:00)



Evening (18:00 - 22:00)



Night (22:00 - 01:00)



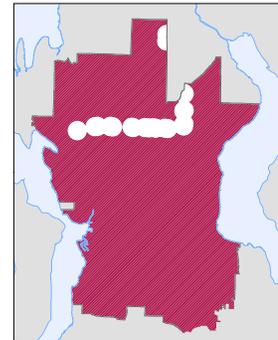
Percent of population served:
 Residents - 21%
 Older adults - 21%
 Minorities - 25%
 Speak language other than English - 37%
 People in poverty - 29%
 Affordable housing complexes - 29%
 Major employers - 59%
 Jobs - 38%

Percent of population served:
 Residents - 14%
 Older adults - 14%
 Minorities - 18%
 Speak language other than English - 25%
 People in poverty - 21%
 Affordable housing complexes - 18%
 Major employers - 50%
 Jobs - 26%

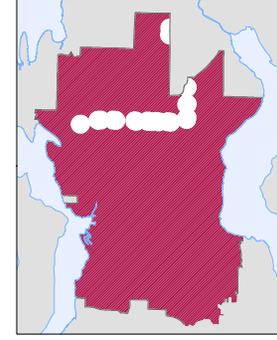
Percent of population served:
 Residents - 0%
 Older adults - 0%
 Minorities - 0%
 Speak language other than English - 0%
 People in poverty - 0%
 Affordable housing complexes - 0%
 Major employers - 0%
 Jobs - 0%

Areas lacking 15 minute or less Bus Service on Sunday (Fall 2011)

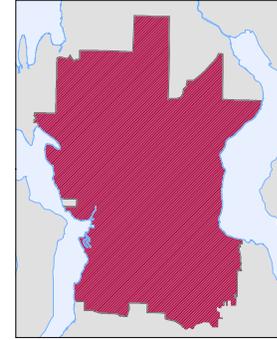
Base (09:00 - 15:00)



Evening (18:00 - 22:00)



Night (22:00 - 01:00)



Percent of population served:
 Residents - 14%
 Older adults - 14%
 Minorities - 18%
 Speak language other than English - 25%
 People in poverty - 21%
 Affordable housing complexes - 18%
 Major employers - 50%
 Jobs - 26%

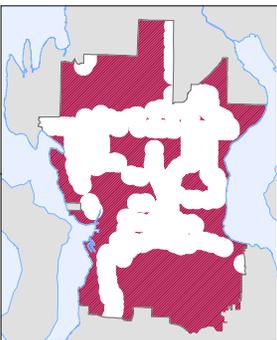
Percent of population served:
 Residents - 12%
 Older adults - 12%
 Minorities - 17%
 Speak language other than English - 23%
 People in poverty - 21%
 Affordable housing complexes - 18%
 Major employers - 50%
 Jobs - 26%

Percent of population served:
 Residents - 0%
 Older adults - 0%
 Minorities - 0%
 Speak language other than English - 0%
 People in poverty - 0%
 Affordable housing complexes - 0%
 Major employers - 0%
 Jobs - 0%

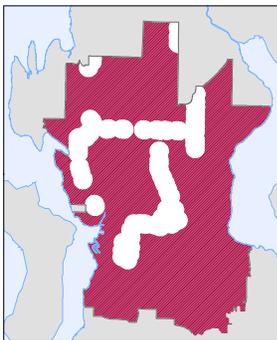
Areas served by a bus stop within 1/4 mile and 15:30 minute service or less provided on Saturday
 Areas not served by Metro or under served on Saturday (i.e. bus stop not within 1/4 mile or 15:30 minutes of less service not provided)
 Other jurisdictions

Areas lacking 30 minute or less Bus Service on Saturday (Fall 2011)

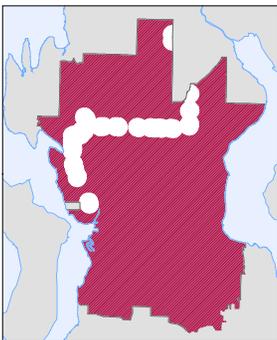
Base (09:00 - 15:00)



Evening (18:00 - 22:00)



Night (22:00 - 01:00)



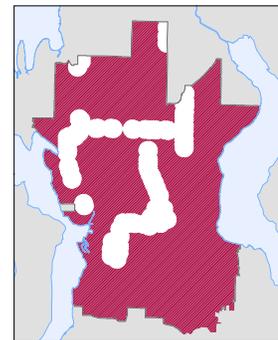
Percent of population served:
 Residents - 61%
 Older adults - 60%
 Minorities - 67%
 Speak language other than English - 81%
 People in poverty - 78%
 Affordable housing complexes - 85%
 Major employers - 90%
 Jobs - 83%

Percent of population served:
 Residents - 30%
 Older adults - 29%
 Minorities - 36%
 Speak language other than English - 49%
 People in poverty - 45%
 Affordable housing complexes - 43%
 Major employers - 67%
 Jobs - 53%

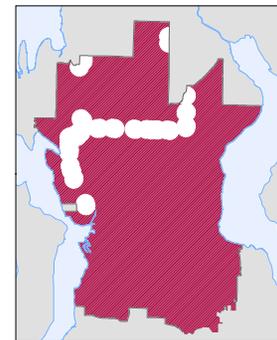
Percent of population served:
 Residents - 21%
 Older adults - 21%
 Minorities - 25%
 Speak language other than English - 38%
 People in poverty - 30%
 Affordable housing complexes - 29%
 Major employers - 59%
 Jobs - 38%

Areas lacking 30 minute or less Bus Service on Sunday (Fall 2011)

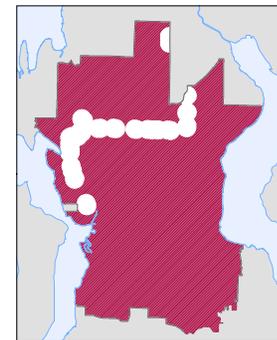
Base (09:00 - 15:00)



Evening (18:00 - 22:00)



Night (22:00 - 01:00)



Percent of population served:
 Residents - 30%
 Older adults - 29%
 Minorities - 36%
 Speak language other than English - 49%
 People in poverty - 45%
 Affordable housing complexes - 43%
 Major employers - 67%
 Jobs - 53%

Percent of population served:
 Residents - 22%
 Older adults - 22%
 Minorities - 26%
 Speak language other than English - 38%
 People in poverty - 30%
 Affordable housing complexes - 29%
 Major employers - 59%
 Jobs - 39%

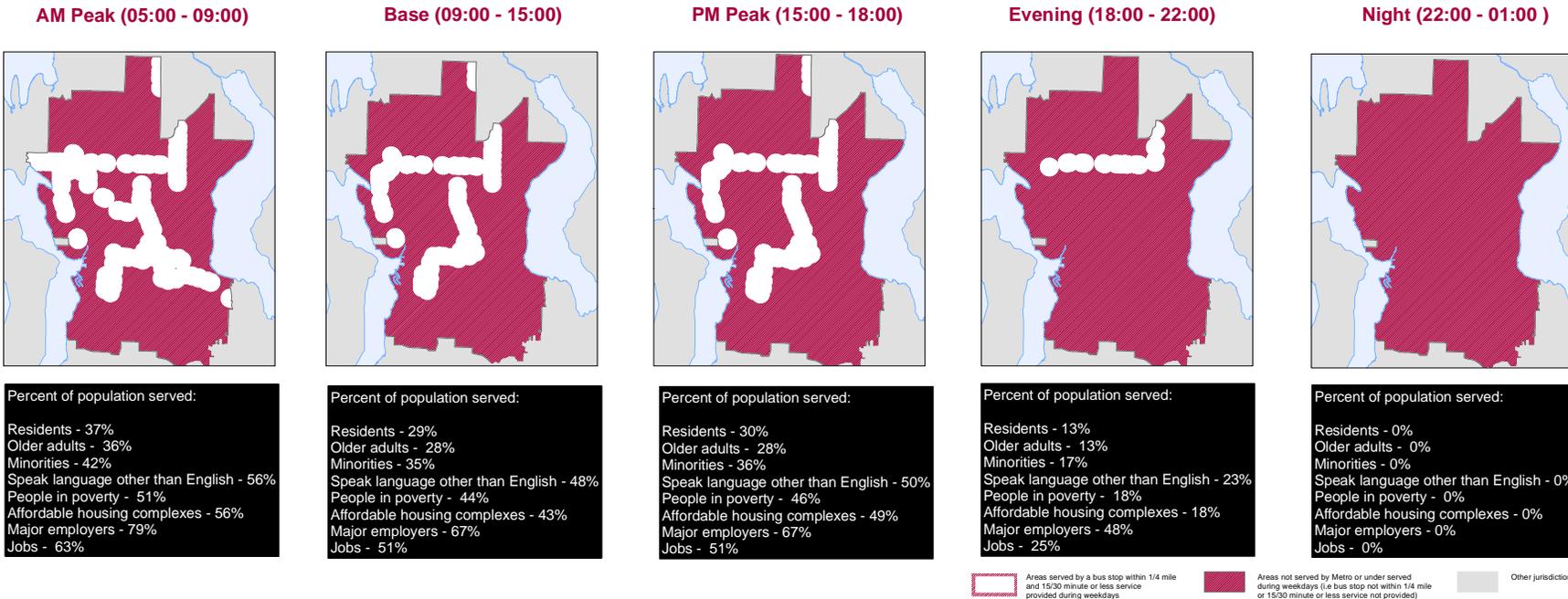
Percent of population served:
 Residents - 21%
 Older adults - 21%
 Minorities - 25%
 Speak language other than English - 38%
 People in poverty - 30%
 Affordable housing complexes - 29%
 Major employers - 59%
 Jobs - 38%



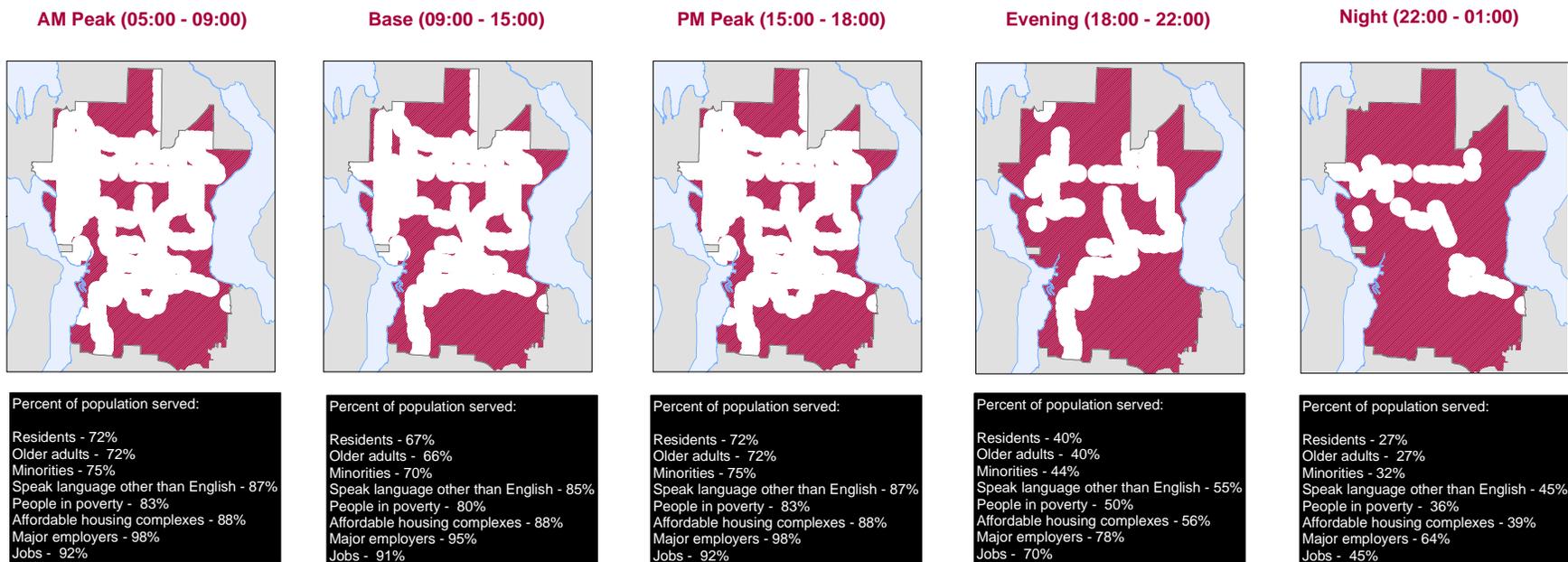
Weekday Service Level Coverage

Bellevue Transit Master Plan

Areas in Bellevue lacking 15 min or Less Bus Service on Weekdays (Fall 2011)



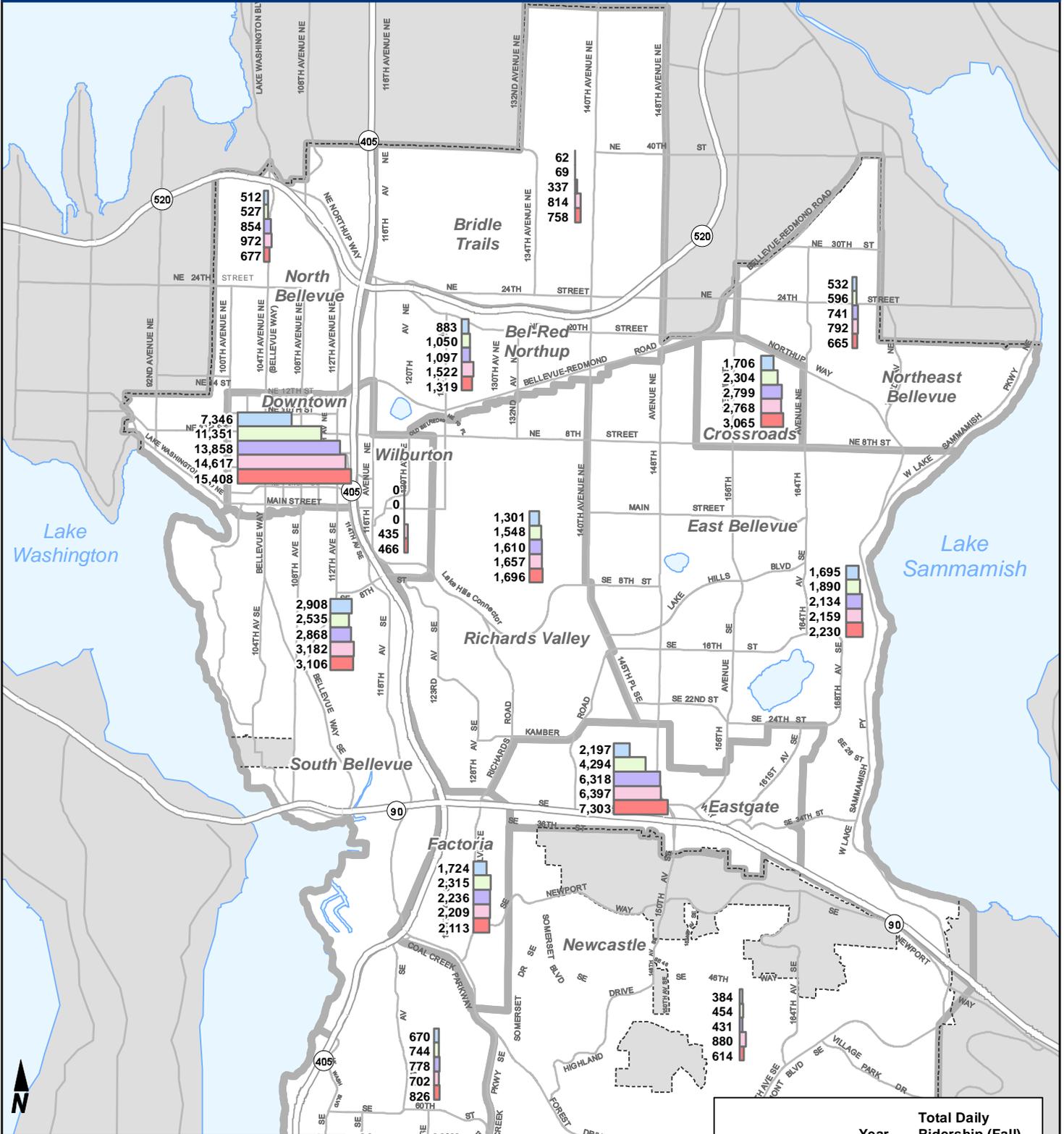
Areas in Bellevue lacking 30 min or Less Bus Service on Weekdays (Fall 2011)



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Puget Sound Regional Council 2011 Covered Employment, City of Bellevue's Commute Trip Reduction Program list of Major Employers, City of Bellevue Housing Affordability and Housing Choice Report, King County Assessor.



Total Daily Ridership - by MMA



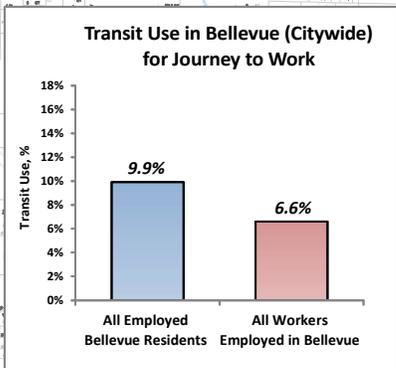
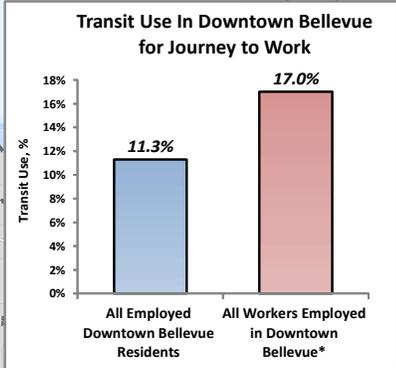
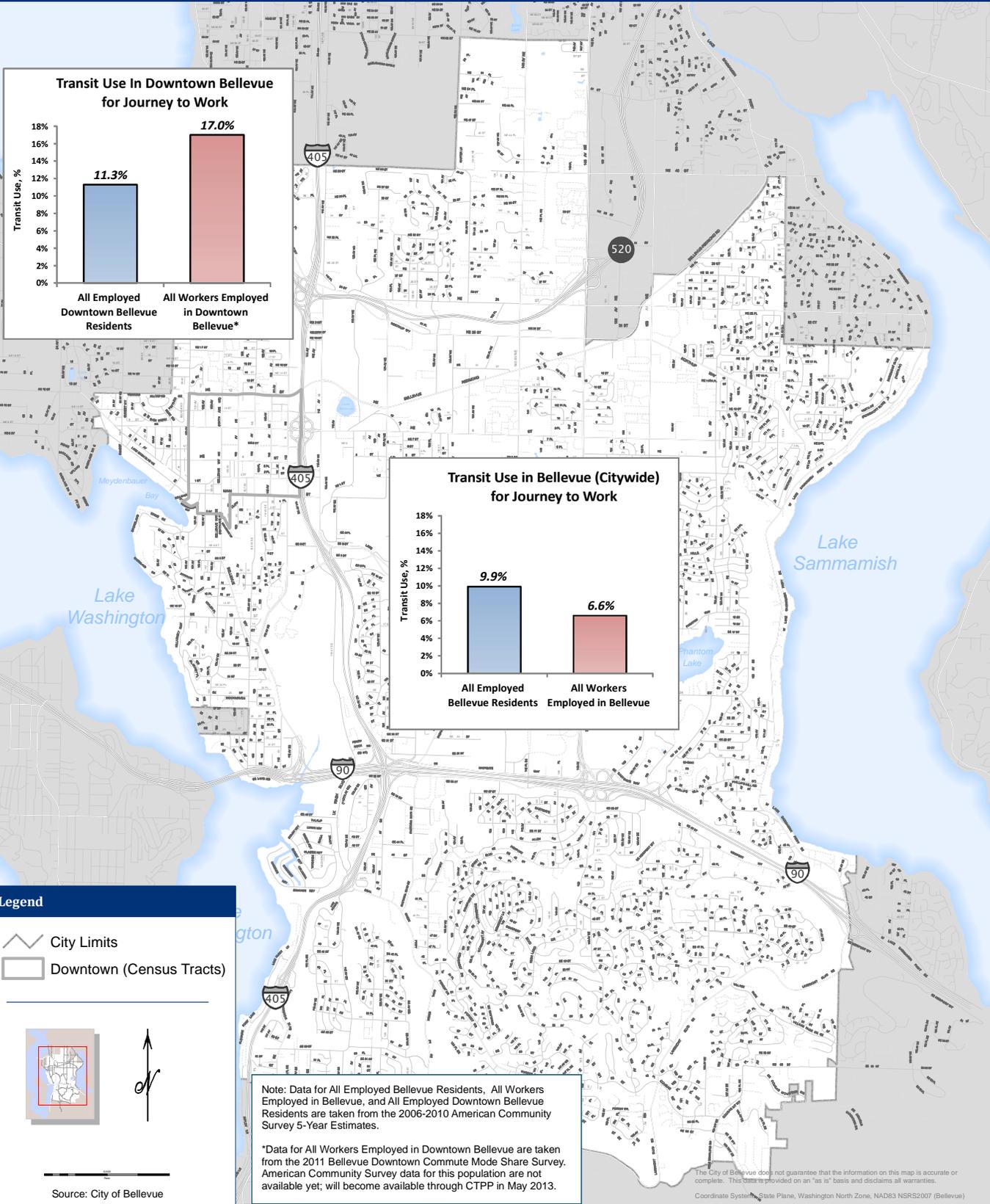
Note: The data shown on this map is for KC Metro and Sound Transit only; data was not available for Community Transit. The figures shown on the map represent data for areas within Bellevue city limits only. MMA 1 does not include ridership data from the South Kirkland Park & Ride even though 1/2 of the lot is within Bellevue City limits.

The MMA boundaries were changed slightly between when the 2007 and 2008 data was processed. Some of the variability shown on this map is due to this change rather than actual changes in ridership patterns.

Year	Total Daily Ridership (Fall)
2003	21,900
2005	29,700
2007	37,400
2009	39,100
2011	40,250

City Limits
 MMA Areas

Transit Use in Bellevue for Journey to Work



Legend

- City Limits
- Downtown (Census Tracts)

Source: City of Bellevue

Note: Data for All Employed Bellevue Residents, All Workers Employed in Bellevue, and All Employed Downtown Bellevue Residents are taken from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

*Data for All Workers Employed in Downtown Bellevue are taken from the 2011 Bellevue Downtown Commute Mode Share Survey. American Community Survey data for this population are not available yet; will become available through CTPP in May 2013.

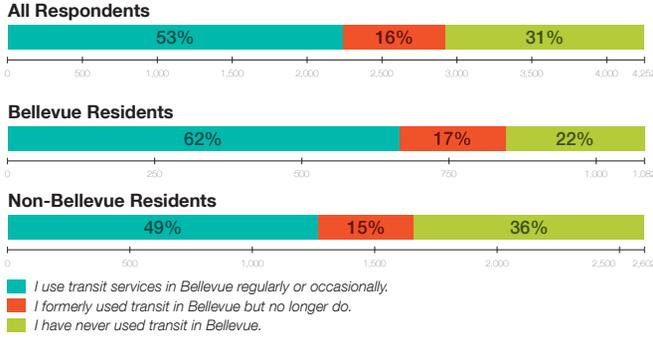
The City of Bellevue does not guarantee that the information on this map is accurate or complete. This data is provided on an "as is" basis and disclaims all warranties.

Coordinate System: State Plane, Washington North Zone, NAD83 NRS2007 (Bellevue)

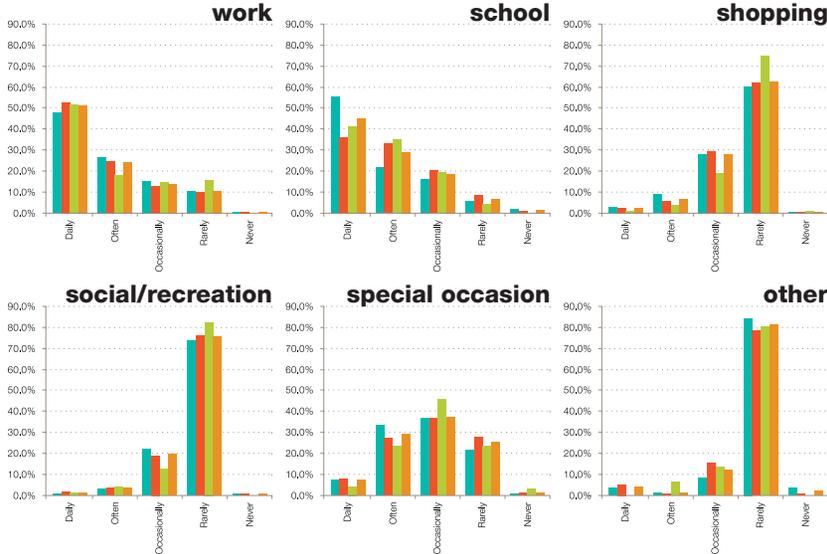
Community Outreach

Bellevue Transit Master Plan

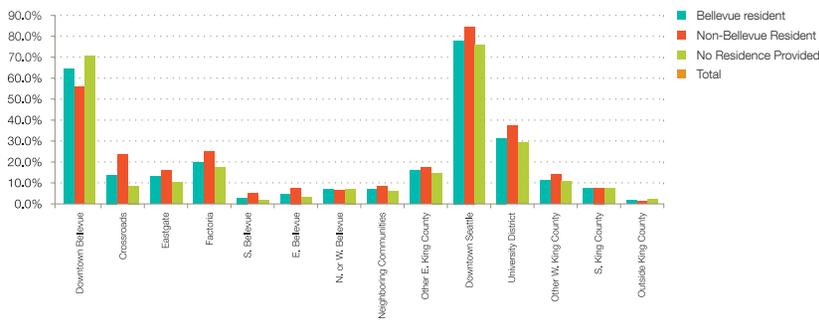
Do you use transit in Bellevue?



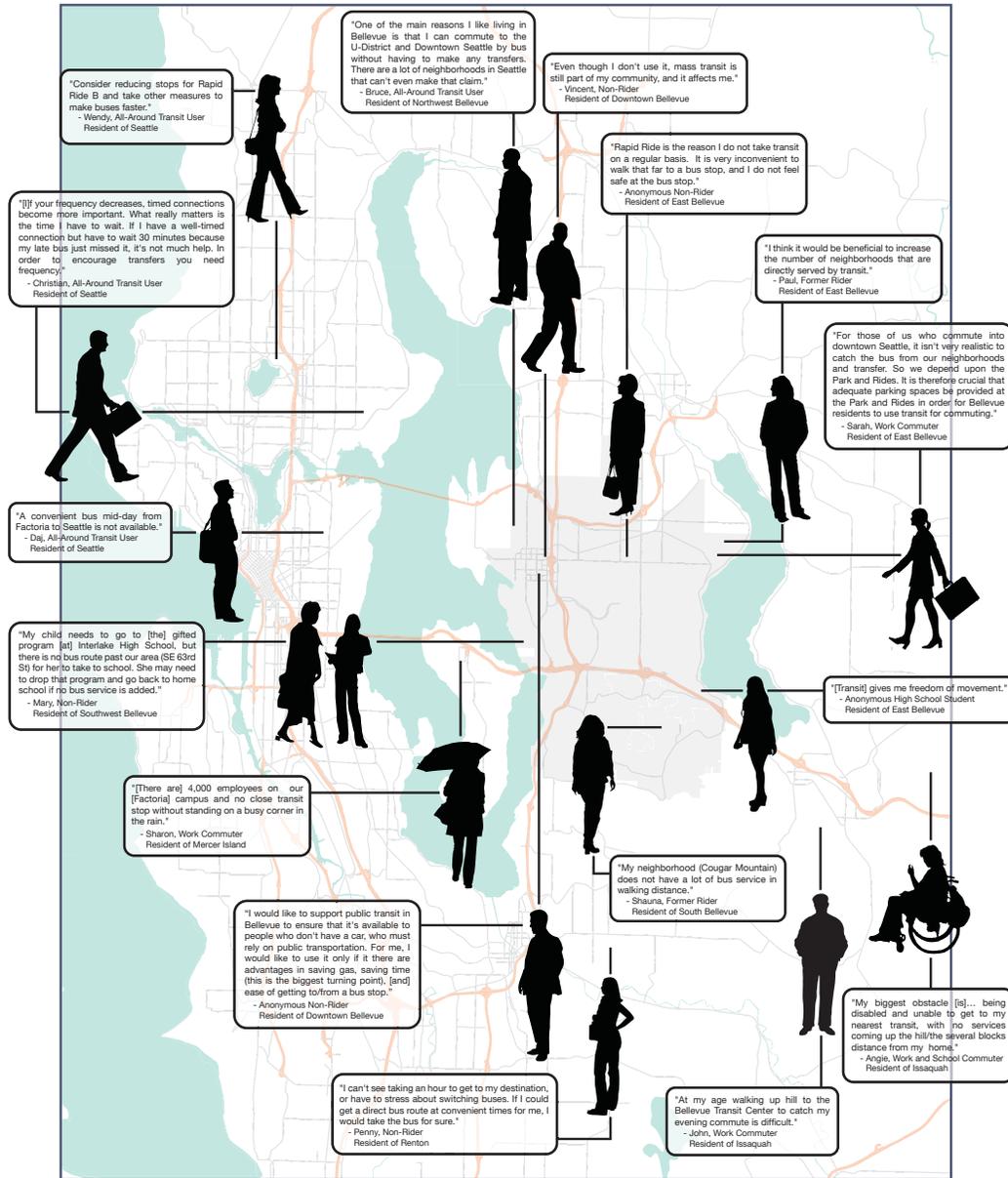
How often do you use transit for these purposes?



Where do you go using transit?



What have we heard so far?

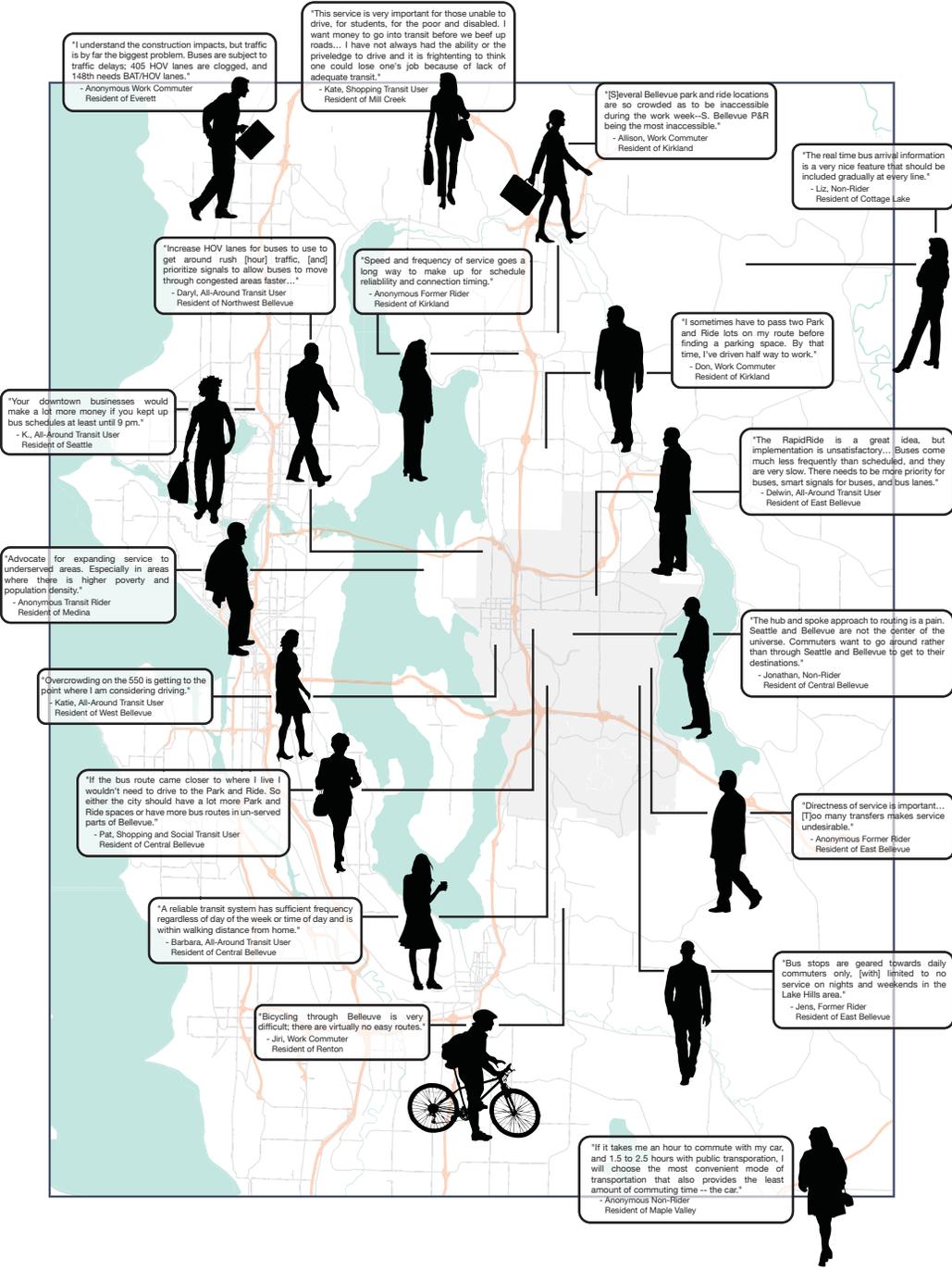


Community Outreach

Bellevue Transit Master Plan

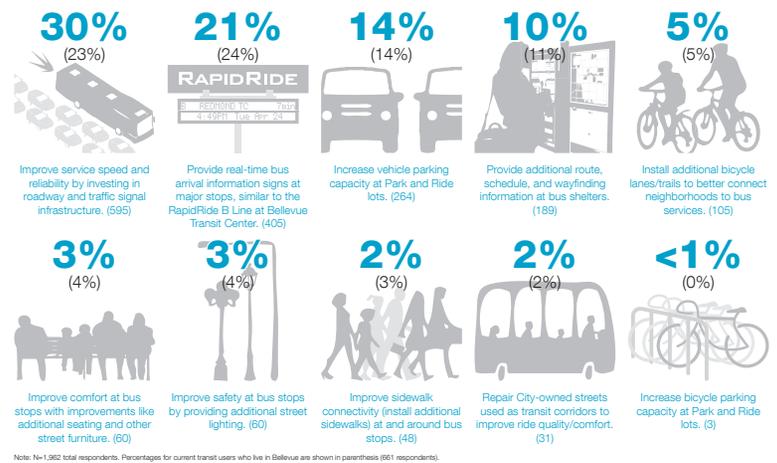


What have we heard so far?



How should the City invest in transit?

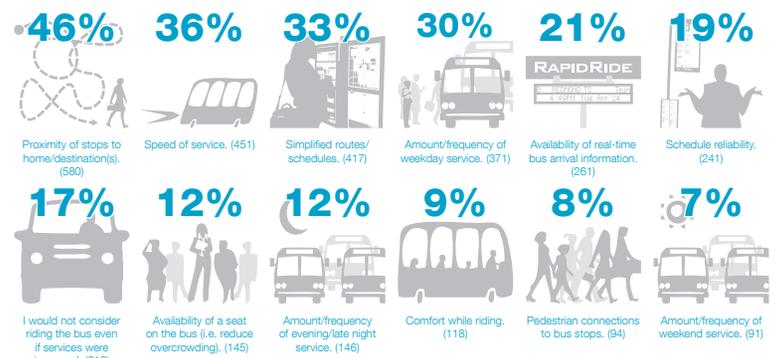
ACCORDING TO CURRENT TRANSIT USERS



Note: N=1,962 total respondents. Percentages for current transit users who live in Bellevue are shown in parenthesis (661 respondents).

What improvements would get you to consider riding the bus?

ACCORDING TO THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER USED TRANSIT IN BELLEVUE



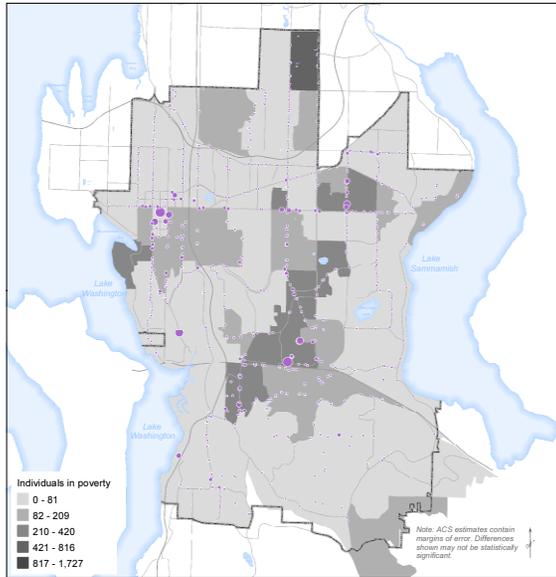
Note: N=1,257 total respondents.

Demographic Characteristics

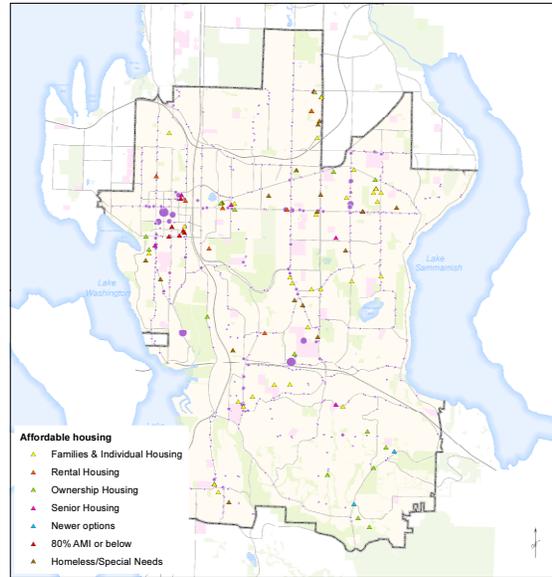
Bellevue Transit Master Plan



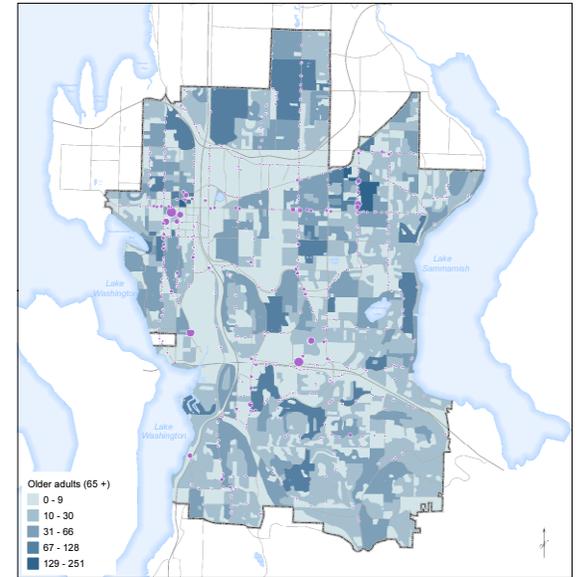
People in Poverty



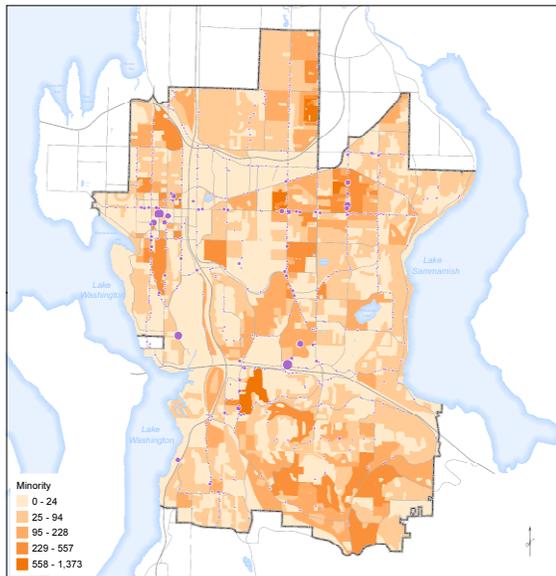
Affordable Housing



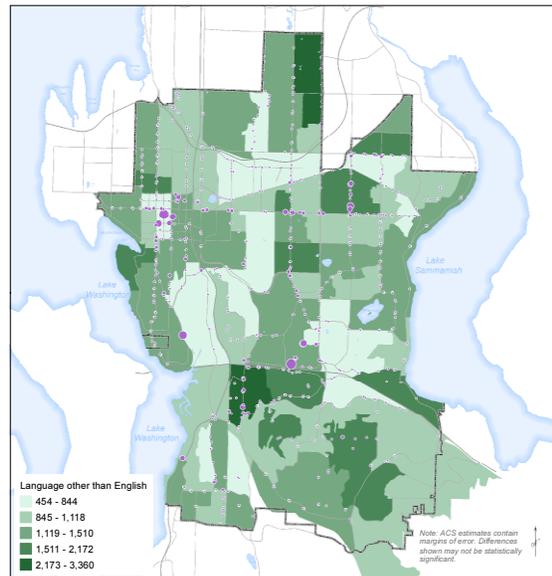
Older Adults (65+)



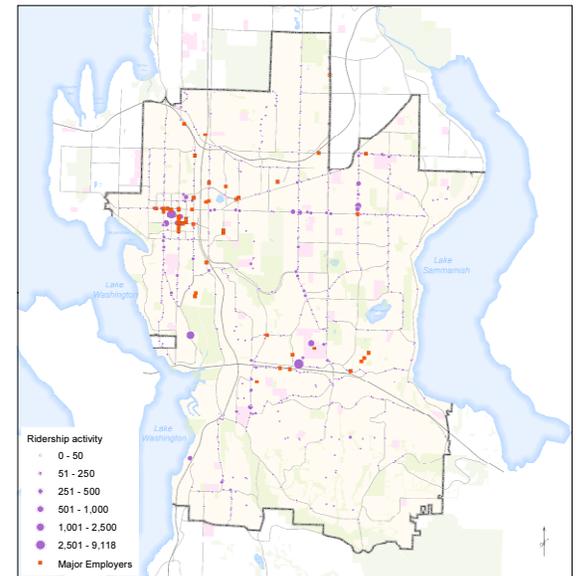
People who are of a Minority Race or Ethnicity



People that Speak a Language Other than English at Home



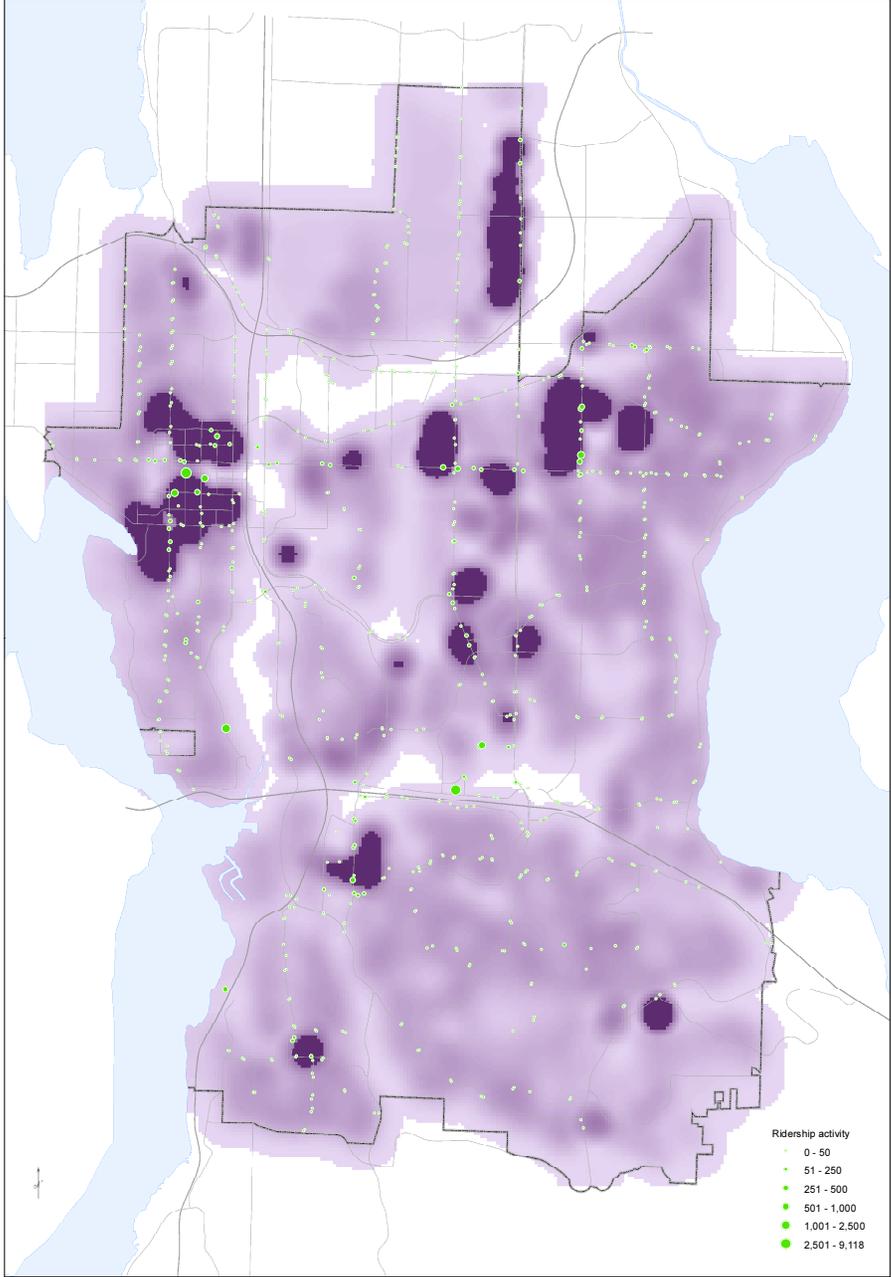
Major Employers



Ridership and Density

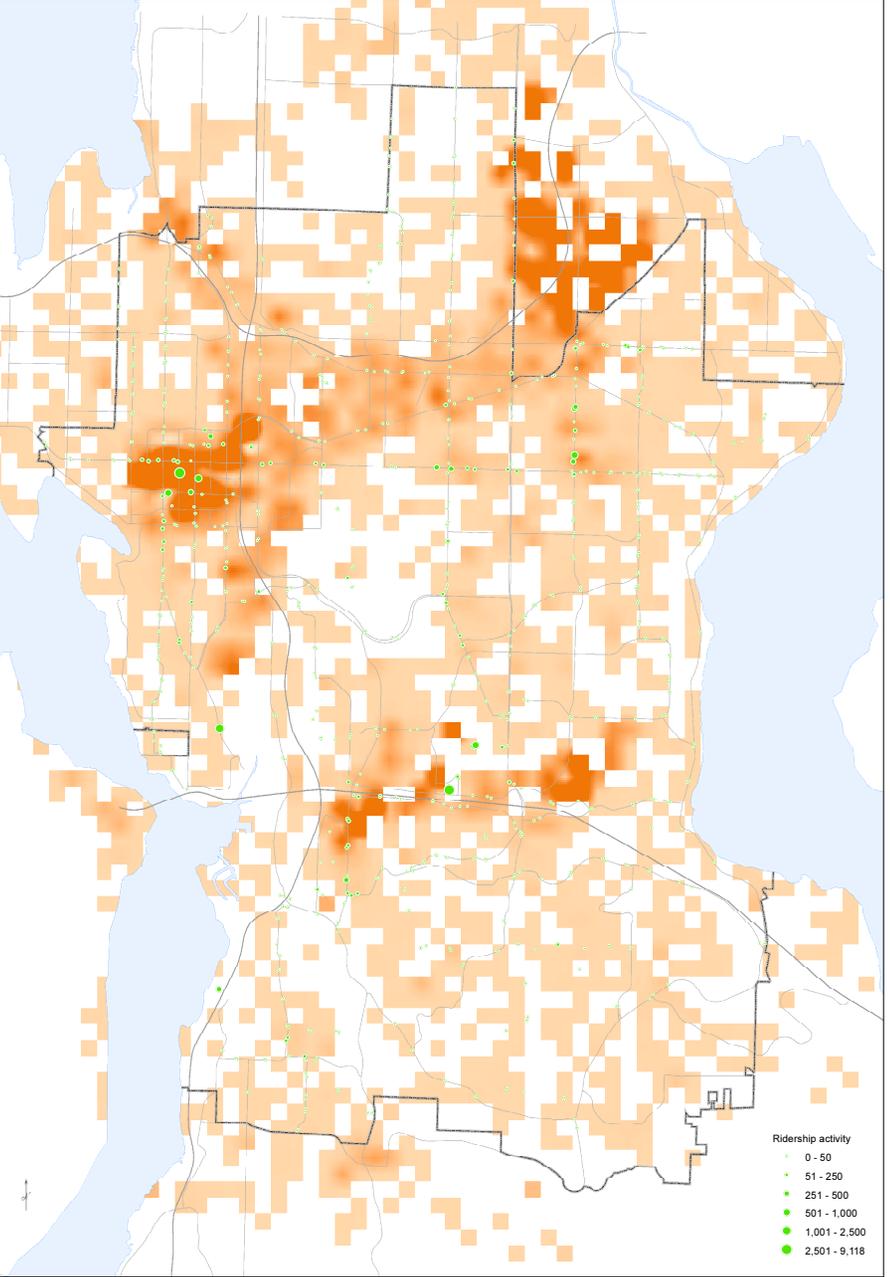
Bellevue Transit Master Plan

Population Density



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, King County Assessor, Puget Sound Regional Council 2011 Covered Employment

Employment Density



Pub: 1/14/2013 10:00 AM



Transit Facilities

Bellevue Transit Master Plan



Downtown bus stop.



Downtown bus layover.



Direct access ramp.



Transit information.



Downtown bus stop.



Transit wayfinding.



Downtown Transit Center.



Speed and Reliability Treatments

Bellevue Transit Master Plan



1 Queue Jump using Right turn only lane with far side stop, Powell and Milwaukie, Portland, OR



2 Queue Jump with near side stop, 45th and I-5 Ramp, University District, Seattle



3 In-lane Stops, 45th and Corliss – Wallingford neighborhood, Seattle



4 Contra-Flow Lane, Fifth Avenue and James, Downtown Seattle



5 Transit Island Fourth Avenue and Jackson/Main, Downtown Seattle



6 Transit Only Contra-flow Lanes – Downtown Minneapolis



7 Transit Only Signal – 45th and Wallingford, Seattle



8 Bus Lane Signing – Second Avenue, Seattle



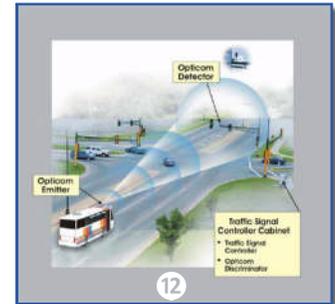
9 Bus Lane Markings – The Bronx, New York City



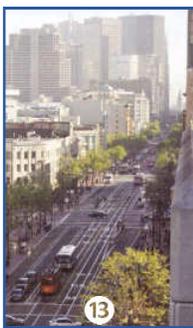
10 Dedicated Median Bus Way – Richmond, CA



11 Extended Curb as Entrance to Bus Only Lane – Fifth Avenue and Olive, Seattle



12 Transit Signal Priority – Concept



13 Market Street Bus Lanes – San Francisco, CA



14 Queue Jump Lane – Chandler, AZ

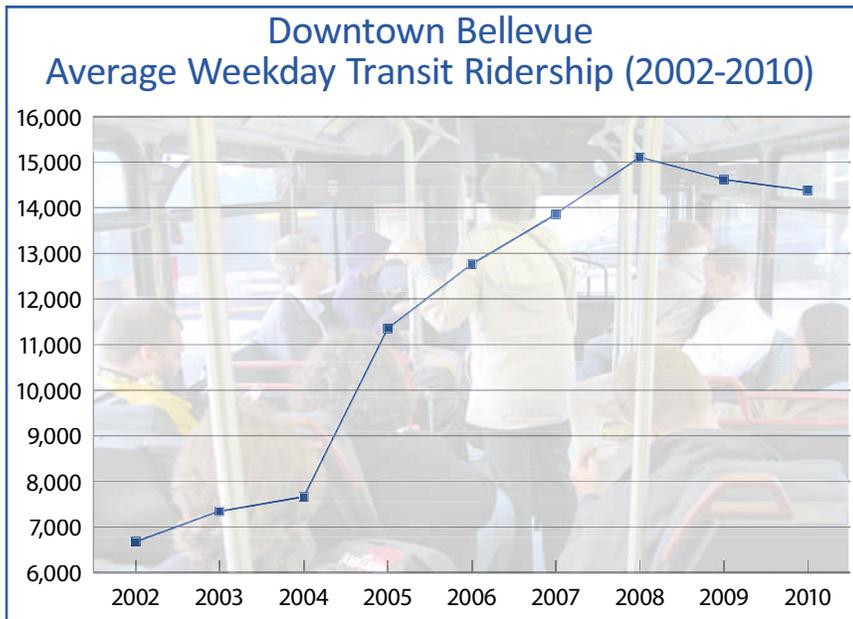


15 LYNX Bus Lanes – Orlando



Transit Market

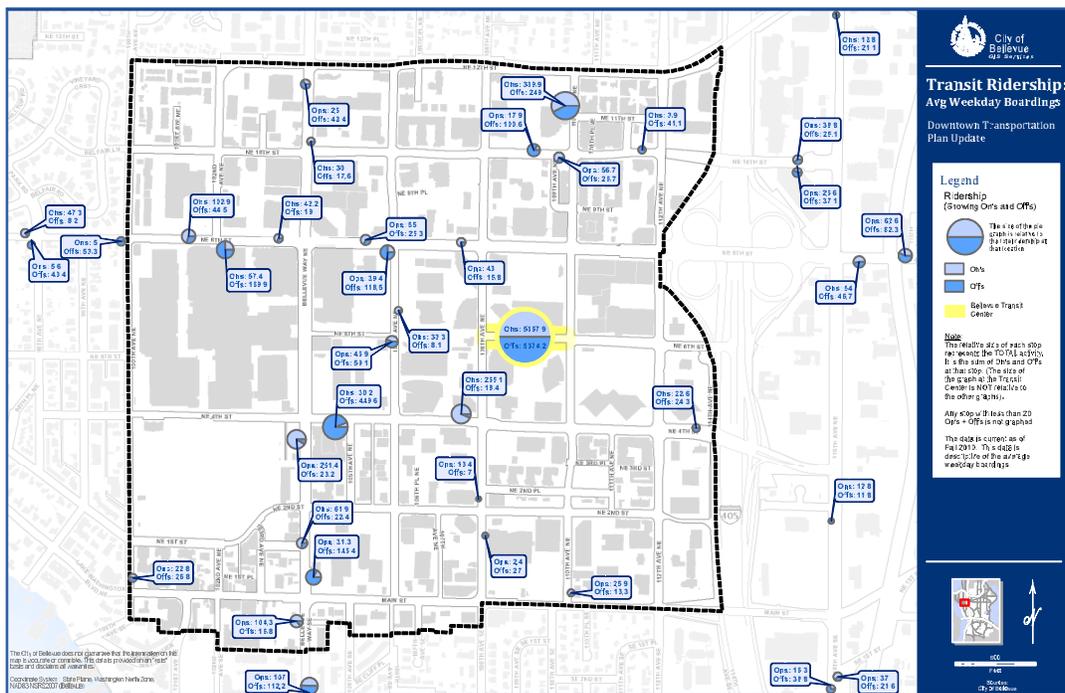
Bellevue Transit Master Plan



- 17% of commute **trips** to Downtown occur via transit.
- 25% of Downtown **workers** report that they commute by transit to Downtown, at least occasionally.
- 32% of commuters coming from Seattle report using transit one or more time in the previous week.
- 16% of commuters coming from within Bellevue report using transit one or more time in the previous week.
- 21% of commuters coming from the north (Kirkland, Snohomish County) report using transit one or more time in the previous week.

- 17% of those coming from the south (Renton, S King County) report using transit one or more time in the previous week.
- 37% of workers who currently drive-alone to work in Downtown report they are "likely" to try commuting by bus.
- 33% of Downtown workers have access to a free or heavily-subsidized transit pass through their employer.

Source: City of Bellevue 2011 Mode Share Survey



Transit Customers

Bellevue Transit Master Plan



Attachment D -

Forum Presentation



Bellevue Transit Master Plan



***Transit Master Plan Forum
September 18, 2012***



- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Forum Purpose**
- 3. Briefings Recap**
- 4. Meeting Logistics**
- 5. Discussion Topics**





Bellevue Transit Master Plan

Join Us!

Please join Bellevue city staff and your colleagues on Bellevue's Boards and Commissions in shaping the city's transit service vision.

On July 9, 2012 the Bellevue City Council initiated the Bellevue Transit Master Plan (TMP) an update of the City's 2003 Transit Plan.

Per Council direction, Bellevue staff will facilitate an informal discussion on transit among members of the Transportation, Planning, Arts, and Human Services Commissions and the Parks and Community Services Board.

WHAT: Transit Master Plan Forum

WHEN: Tuesday, September 18 (from 6 to 8 PM)

WHERE: City Hall (Conference room 1E-108 and 1E-113)

We look forward to seeing you there!

*For more information contact: Franz Loewenherz, Senior Transportation Planner,
floewenherz@bellevuewa.gov 425-452-4077*

Visit our project website: <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/bellevue-transit-plan.htm>



1. Good transit service is important to Bellevue residents, and public support for transit is strong in Bellevue based on 2012 Budget Survey results.
2. Average weekday bus ridership in Bellevue increased from 21,900 in 2003 to 40,250 in 2011, almost doubling in an 8-year period.
3. Good transit service is also critical to our economic vitality. We've heard from some of our largest employers that access to transit was an important factor in their decision to locate downtown.

4. The Bellevue Transit Master Plan will take into account the many notable changes underway in Bellevue as we plan for our transit needs in the future.
5. This project is timely in the current environment where King County Metro's financial outlook is uncertain, and service cuts and fare hikes are a real possibility.
6. This update of the 2003 Transit Plan supports Bellevue's land use vision and regional investments in bus and light rail infrastructure.

Bellevue Transit Master Plan

Other Transit Services

Metro Fixed Route Service



ST Regional Express



ST Light Rail Service



ST Commuter Rail Service



Access Paratransit



Dial-a-Ride-Transit (DART)



Commuter Vans

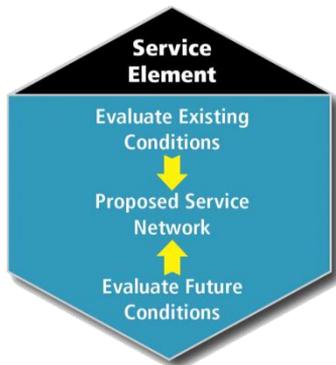


Taxi Script



- 1. Support planned growth and development in Bellevue with a bold transit vision that encourages long-term ridership growth.**
- 2. Engage community stakeholders in setting the priorities for transit delivery.**
- 3. Determine where and how transit investments can deliver the greatest degree of mobility and access possible for all populations.**

- 4. Incorporate other transit-related efforts (both bus and light rail) underway in Bellevue and within the region.**
- 5. Identify partnership opportunities to further extend transit service and infrastructure.**
- 6. Develop measures of effectiveness to evaluate transit investments and to track plan progress.**



Identifies the City’s transit service priorities that are responsive to different financial scenarios and attune to different time horizons.



Assesses roadway, signal system, and other rights-of-way improvements that could be made to support the transit vision outlined in the Service Element.



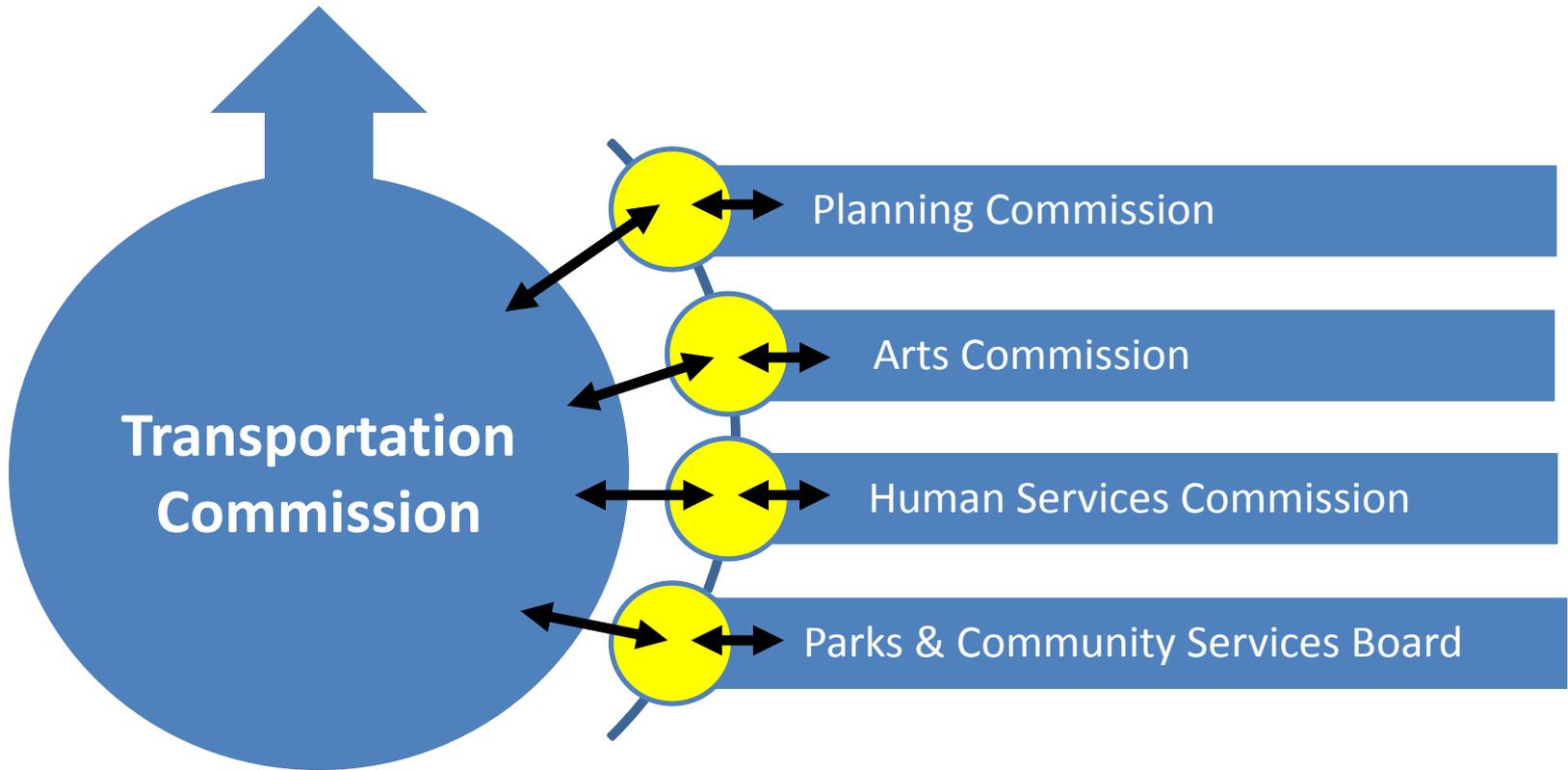
Articulates Bellevue’s interests as it responds to regional transit policy changes and financial uncertainties, and coordinates with partner agencies.

Transit Service Vision



- ▼ Transportation Commission Meetings
- ★ Transportation Commission Transmittal to Council
- City Council Briefings

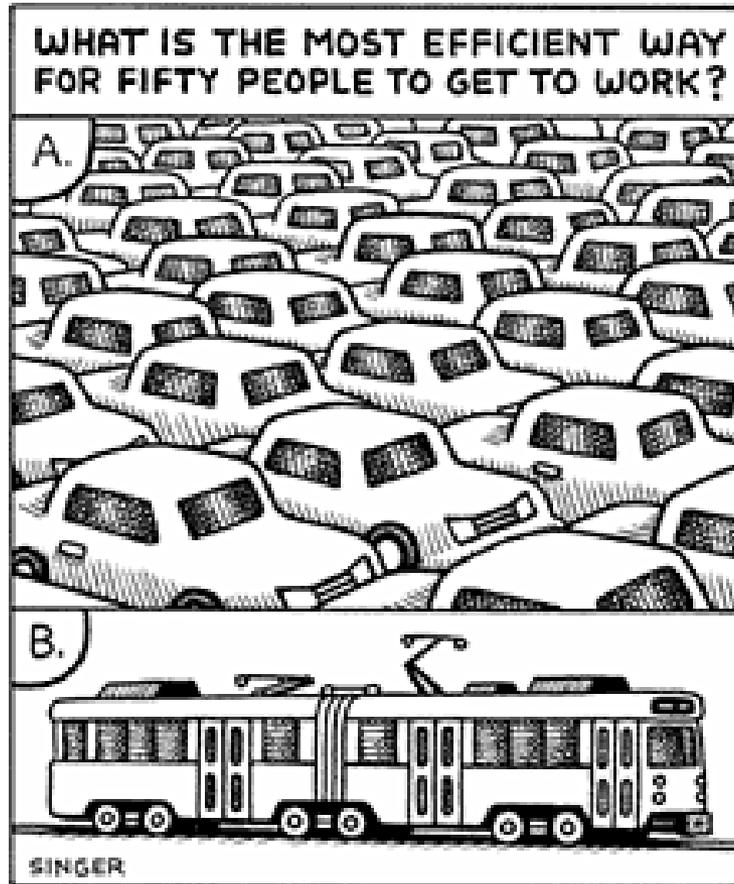
Bellevue City Council



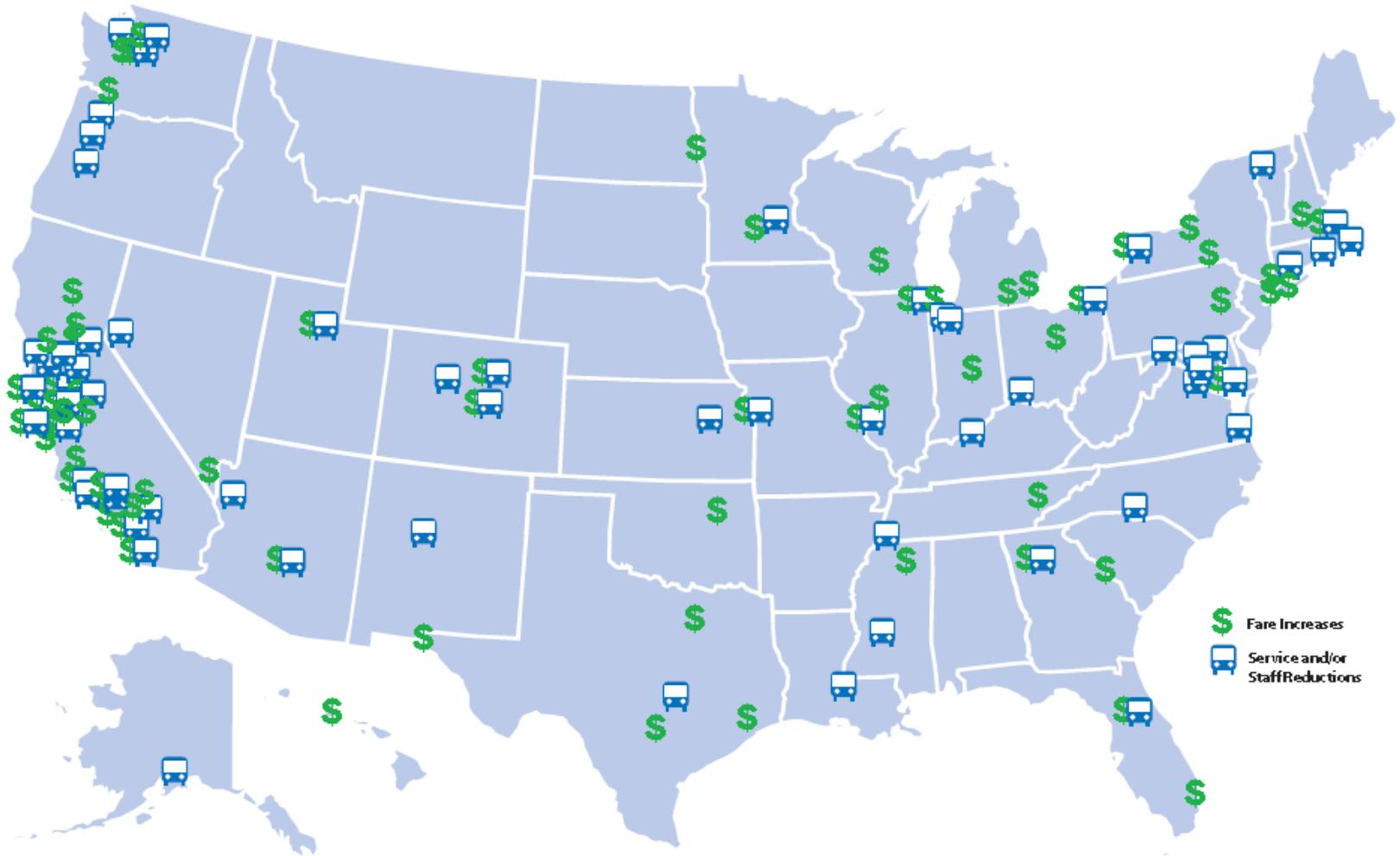
 Members of the Planning, Arts, and Human Services Commissions and the Parks & Community Services Board are invited to all staff briefings on the TMP to the Transportation Commission.

- 1. Max 2 reps from each Board/Commission per table.**
- 2. Supported by staff facilitator, note-taker, & scribe.**
- 3. Discussion topics.**
- 4. Reporting out to the broader group.**
- 5. No formal break.**
- 6. Summary sent out to participants for review.**
- 7. Input informs transit service vision.**
- 8. Questions?**

Trade-offs



2009 Transit Fare Increases, Service Reductions & Staff Reductions



Source: Nelson\Nygaard; "Standed at the Station"

Consider “the dynamic nature of Bellevue’s economic expansion [which] requires a bold transit vision.”



Source: Disney “Magic Highway USA” 1958 publicity still



“Other than having my daughters or friends take me places transit is my main source of transportation.”

Marj Leidy
Bellevue Resident



“My eyesight and back are really too bad at this point to drive. It would not be safe for me to drive.”

Stacey Dunn
Bellevue Resident



“I can’t afford to buy a car and so I use the bus every day to reach BCC. Transit is a crucial part of my life.”

Takhmi Dzhuraeva
Seattle Resident



“I am getting training to get back to work at the Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation in Bellevue.”

Tim Steinert
Kirkland Resident



ISSUES EXPERIENCED BY WORK COMMUTERS

65%



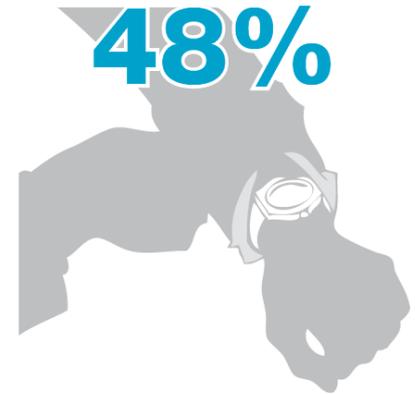
I had to stand while riding the bus because every seat was occupied. (880)

51%



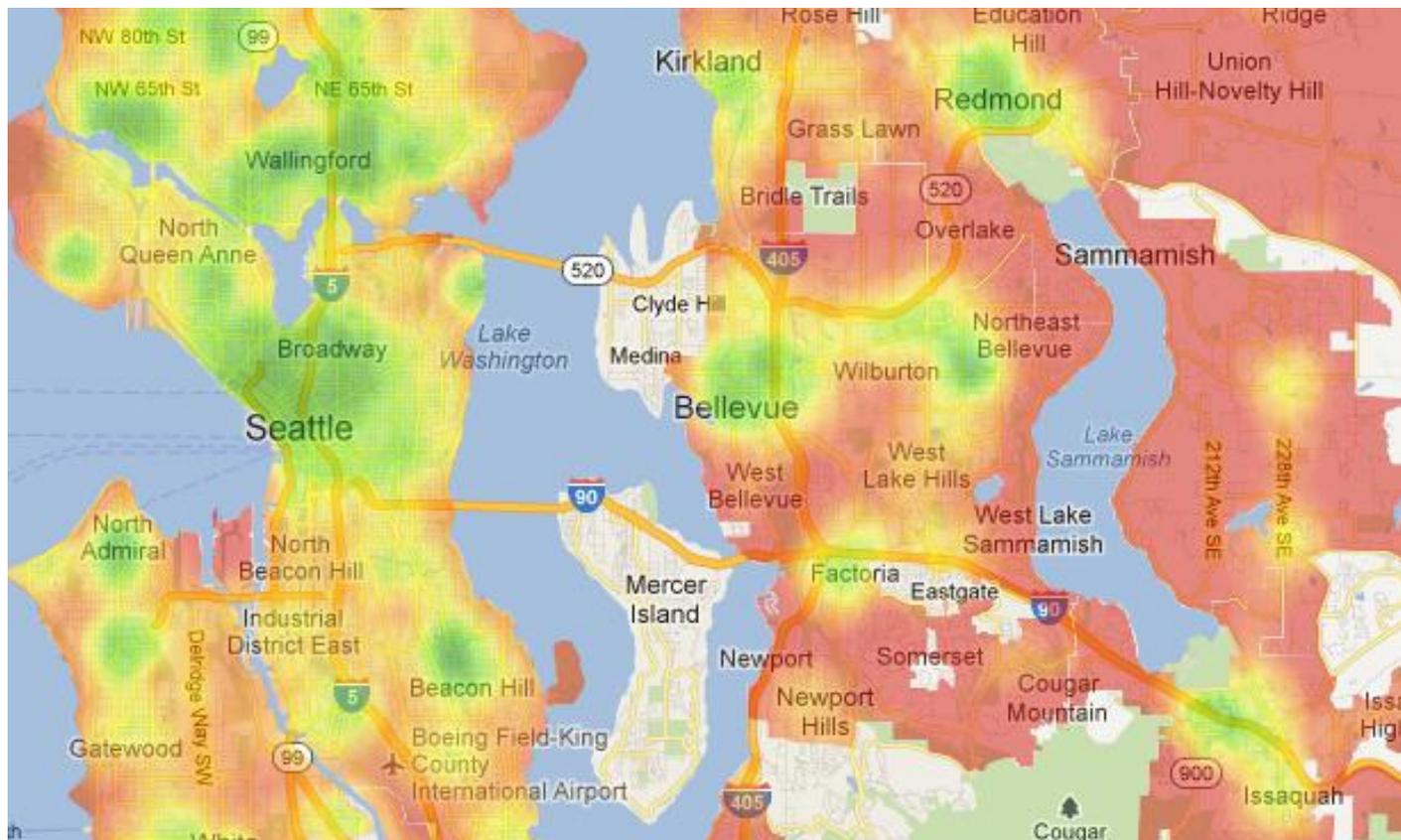
I was unable to stay out of the rain/snow/wind while waiting at my bus stop because there is no shelter/ the shelter is too small. (690)

48%



I was late for work/ an appointment because the bus arrived at my stop more than five minutes late. (650)

“TransitScore” measures how well a location is served by transit.



Transit Score	Description
90-100	Rider's Paradise — World-class public transportation.
70-89	Excellent Transit — Transit is convenient for most trips.
50-69	Good Transit — Many nearby public transportation options.
25-49	Some Transit — A few nearby public transportation options.
0-24	Minimal Transit — It is possible to get on a bus.

← Seattle Score: 59
 ← Bellevue Score: 39

<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/bellevue-transit-plan.htm>



Franz Loewenherz

Transportation Department

floewenherz@bellevuewa.gov

425-452-4077

Attachment E -

Forum Discussion Topics

Discussion Topics for Forum Participants

Bellevue Transit Master Plan



September 18, 2012



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Franz Loewenherz

Transportation Department

425-452-4077

floewenherz@bellevuewa.gov

<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/bellevue-transit-plan.htm>

Questions derived from *Human Transit: How Clearer Thinking about Public Transit Can Enrich Our Communities and Our Lives* by Jarrett Walker

INTRODUCTION

City staff is in the early stages of developing a transit service vision for Bellevue. Tonight, we'd like to get your impressions on the discussion topics below to help guide our future efforts. More opportunities for input will occur as the project continues, so it's important to note these items are just a starting point. We anticipate further discussion and we welcome your suggestions.

1. We'd like to take a moment to have each of you introduce yourselves to the other forum participants at your table and answer the following questions before we launch into the discussion topics:
 - a. Have you used transit in the Puget Sound region?
 - b. When did you last use transit and how often did/do you use it?
 - c. What type of transit trips did/do you take (work, school, social, special events, other)?
 - d. If you have never used transit in the region please explain why not.
2. What are the two or three most important ways transit benefits Bellevue?
3. Considering the four trade-off scenarios on pages 2 through 9, how can we ensure that costs and benefits are shared equitably at a time when transit agencies are reducing/eliminating low ridership routes.
4. Please respond to the four trade-off scenarios on pages 2 through 9 with a long-term perspective (2030) that considers "the dynamic nature of Bellevue's economic expansion [which] requires a bold transit vision." (Bellevue City Council Project Principles, approved July 9, 2012).
5. What do you think are the greatest strengths/weaknesses of the current transit system in Bellevue?
6. Any follow-up comments?

QUESTION

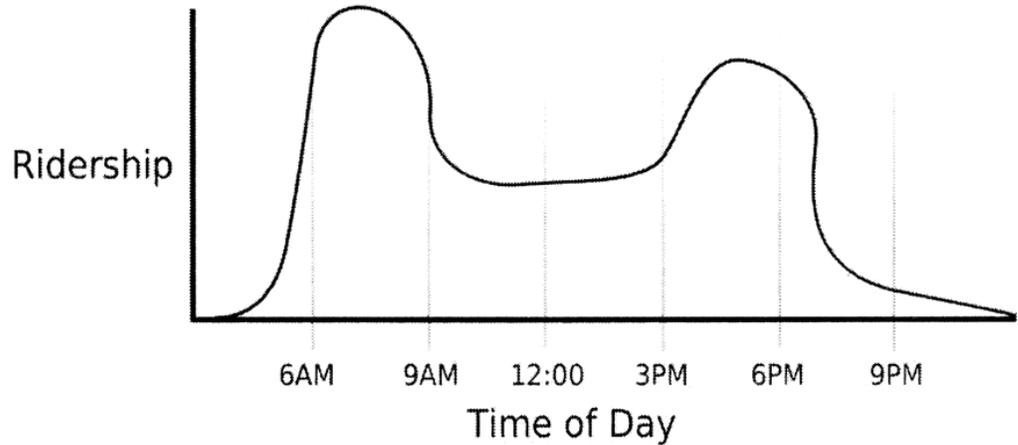
Is transit mostly about serving a peak-period or “rush hour” commute pattern, or is its top priority to provide a consistent service all day? Or is it a balance of these, and if so, where do you strike that balance?

Services with a short span, such as peak-only services are usually oriented to serving commuters. Service that wants to be useful to many different people for many kinds of trips requires a longer span, extending across the day and evening and also across the weekend.

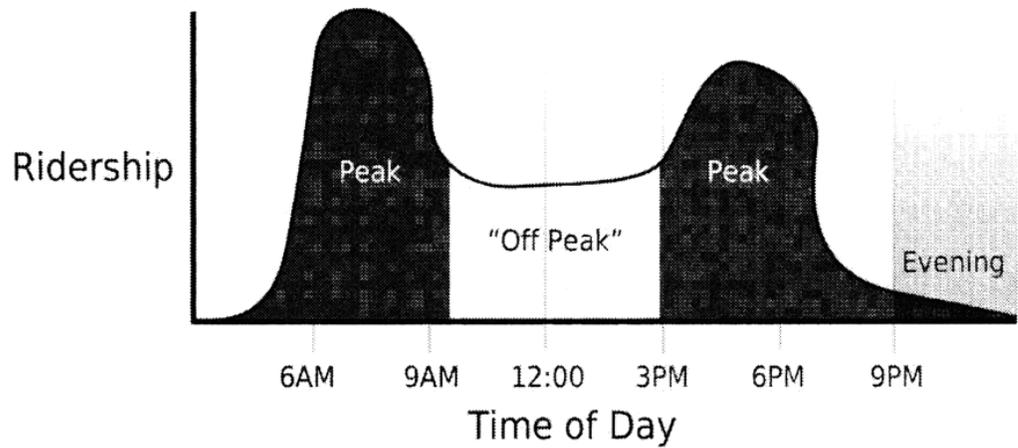
Typically, as indicated in the illustration at right, the “off peak” period does not have the same level of ridership performance that occurs in the peak hour, and therefore is less cost effective. That said, cutting off-peak service disproportionately affects minority and low income populations who are dependent on transit for access to jobs (e.g., service industry employees are particularly reliant on off-peak service, as their shifts require evening work hours).

When considering this trade-off scenario it is worth noting that transit agencies are more apt to target off-peak service in their deficit reduction strategies. In March 2011, the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) conducted a survey of its public transportation agency members to gauge the effects the recession is having on agencies. The results show that transit agencies continue to face funding challenges and have responded with the following service cuts: thirty two (32) percent indicated that they had “eliminated or reduced off-peak service”; twenty four (24) percent indicated that they had “reduced peak-period service”; and, thirteen (13) percent indicated that they had “reduced the geographic coverage of service.”

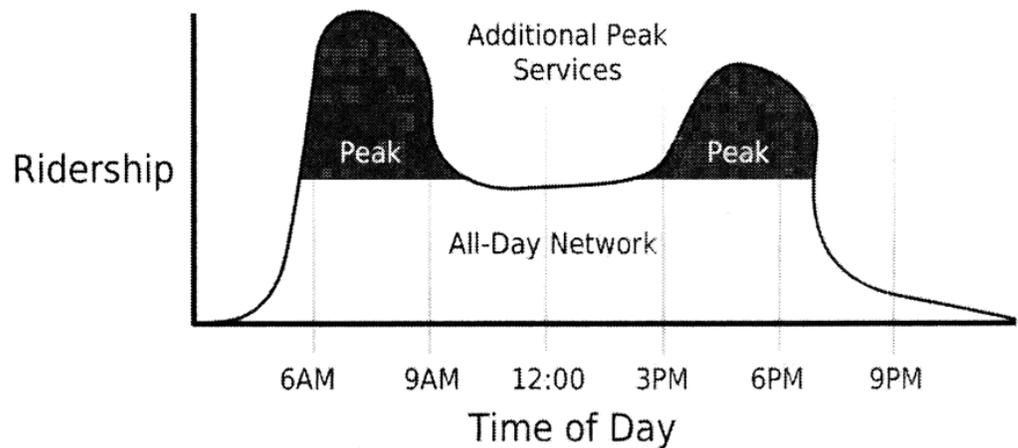
Given a peaking pattern....



... do we think of the peak as our main product?



... or do we think of the all-day network as our main product?



Two ways to think about peaks. *Credit: Erin Walsh*

QUESTION

Would you rather have a direct but infrequent service or a more frequent service that requires a transfer connection?

In the Direct Service Option (see illustration at right) we run direct service from each residential area to each activity center which results in nine transit lines. Suppose we can afford to run each line every 30 minutes. In contrast, in the Connective Option we run a direct line between every residential area to one activity center which results in three lines, so we can run each line three times as often at the same total cost as the Direct Service Option.

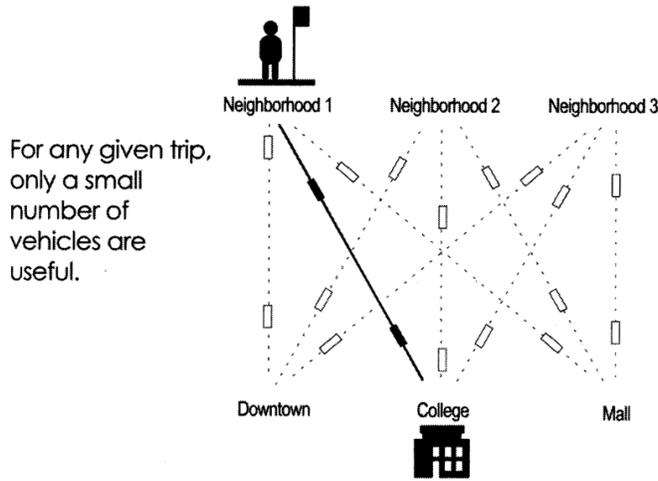
Conventional wisdom holds that transit customers regard the direct service option as more appealing because the out-of-vehicle travel time spent transferring is regarded as burdensome. That said, experience around the world shows that riders will transfer if the schedule and stations are designed properly.

If you can walk across a platform onto a waiting train or bus, and quickly head toward your destination, if you can transfer without financial penalty, if you can easily find directions from Point A to Point B without hunting among multiple maps and websites – then a transfer is pretty painless and a trip can be useful.

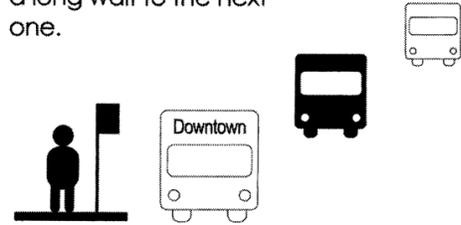
As indicated in the illustration at right, the connective service option has several advantages: (i) enhanced frequency means you are less dependent on the reliability of any one trip (even if vehicle runs late), you'll still have another service soon; and, (ii) it's simpler to understand and learn the whole system.

a)

Direct Service Option

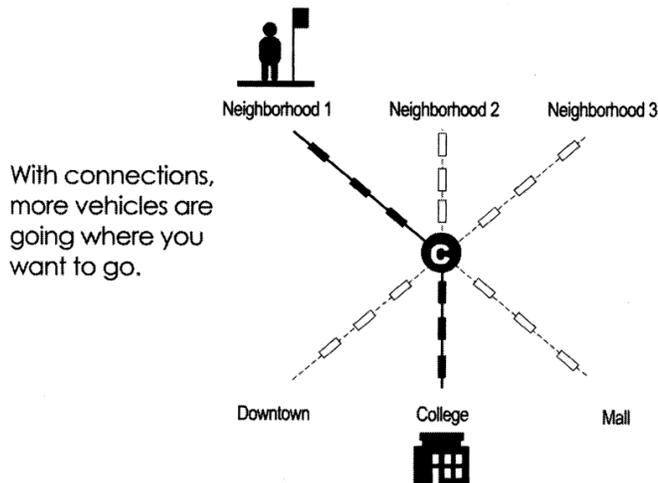


The early bus doesn't go where you want, and if you miss yours, it's a long wait to the next one.

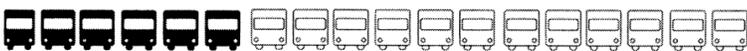


b)

Connective Option



Since any bus will take you to the connection point, you can arrive early or late without problem.



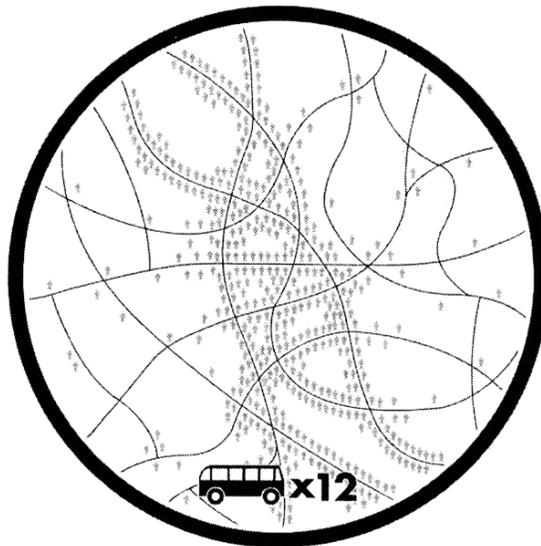
Two ways of serving the simple city. *Credit: Alfred Twu*

QUESTION

Is transit mostly about serving destinations directly, or is the top priority to provide improved service coverage?

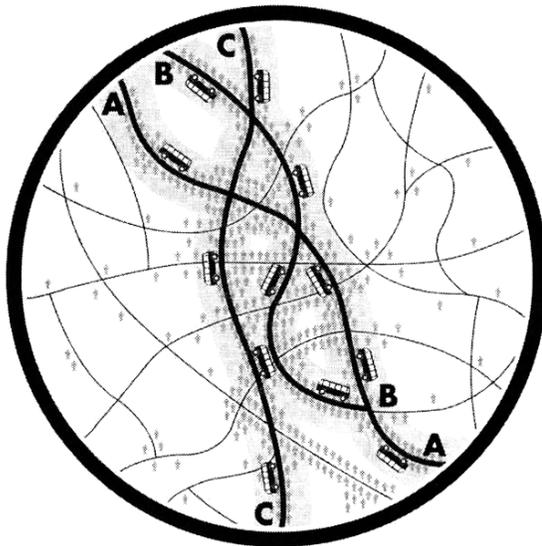
In the Fall 2011 service change, the restructuring of route 222 (which results in a 10 minute faster trip over the previous service between Newport Way and downtown Bellevue via Factoria) was achieved through eliminating the circuitous routing through Enatai and the Beaux Arts community. This real world example of the trade-offs associated with ridership vs. coverage goals are further illustrated in the graphic at right.

To optimize for ridership, a service identifies where large numbers of people start and where they go, and designs routes that connects most people with their destinations. This results in limiting service expansion in areas where transit services are unlikely to be efficient or productive, such as hard to serve areas, or where population is unlikely to grow. To optimize for coverage, a transit service strives to enable freedom of movement for a diverse range of people and trips by serving as much of the geographic area as possible (frequently this entails increasing the number of routes serving multiple origins and destinations).



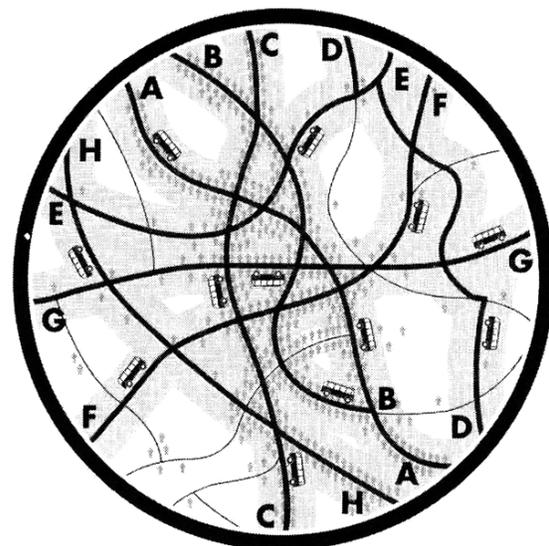
Here's a transit agency's service area. The lines are roads, and the small people indicate population density. The agency can deploy twelve buses.

RIDERSHIP GOAL



For ridership, concentrate all service in denser areas. Three lines each have 4 vehicles, offering frequent service.

COVERAGE GOAL



For coverage, you need eight routes, so each will have only 1-2 vehicles, offering infrequent service.

Extreme service allocation goals in a fictional city. *Credit: David Jones*

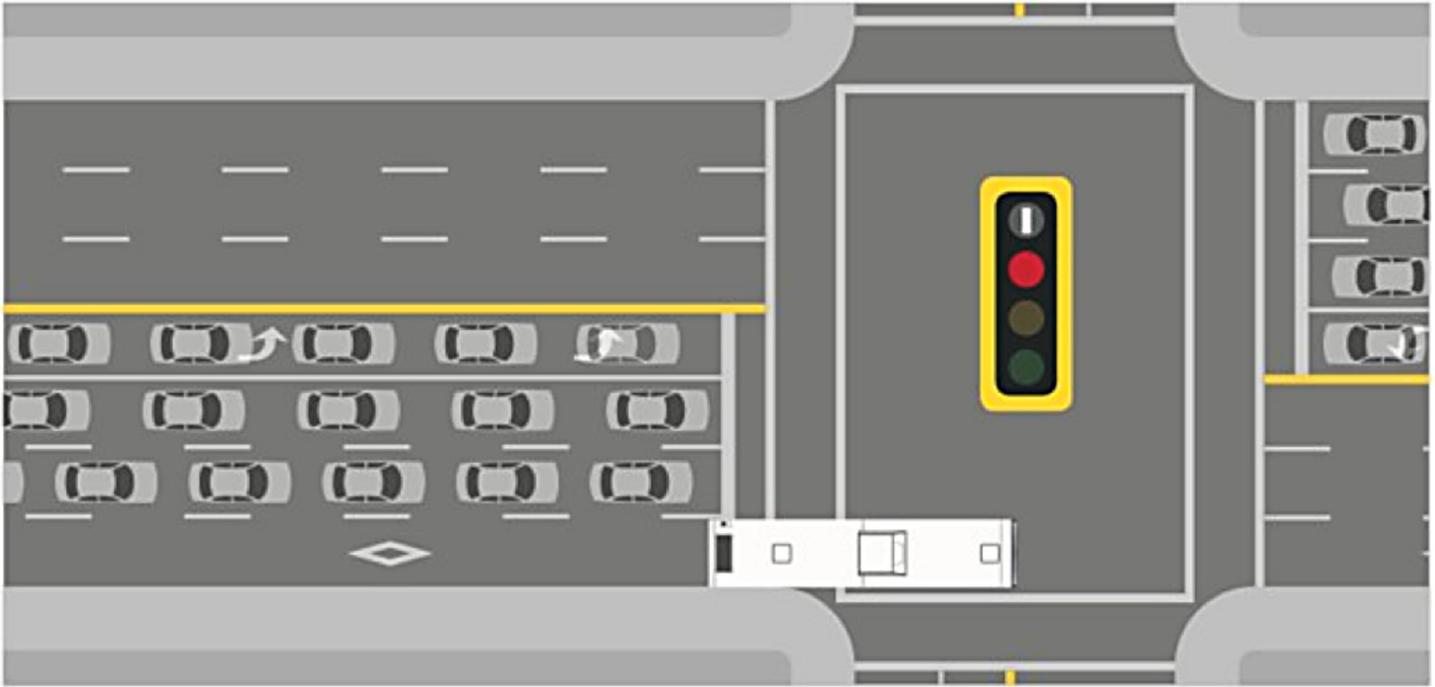
QUESTION

Under what circumstances might it be appropriate to impact auto travel time (increase delay) to more quickly and reliably move buses through congested corridors in Bellevue?

Despite the importance and efficiency of buses, compared to the automobile, these vehicles are weighted equally with automobiles at traffic signals where a bus carrying 50 passengers is treated the same as an auto with a single person. Delays caused by traffic signals and by street traffic congestion can lead to the requirement for added transit vehicles (and thus added capital and operating cost) to provide the same service frequency.

One approach to minimizing delays to bus transportation is by implementing bus signal priority. Bus signal priority is an attempt to minimize or eliminate delays to buses at a signalized intersection by temporarily altering the traffic signal phase so that an approaching bus receives a green phase when it arrives. The potential savings in bus travel times can allow buses to maintain its schedule and provide better reliability in travel times.

Although signal priority has proven to be an effective tool for reducing delays to buses, this technique is not always beneficial to the overall traffic network. Providing priority for transit vehicles along a corridor with a large number of transit vehicles can cause a coordinated network to be out of step resulting in an overall increase in delay. Bus signal priority also has the disadvantage of penalizing the cross-street traffic when high transit volumes exist at the corridor. In responding to this question, forum participants should consider what kinds of trade-offs need to be balanced to strive for win-win results for both transit users and private vehicle users.



Measures to improve transit's speed and reliability - such as bus-only lanes or transit signal priority at intersections - make transit more attractive and cheaper to operate.

SOURCE: TransLink



Attachment F -

Summary of Discussion

Bellevue Transit Master Plan Forum

September 18, 2012

TABLE 1

Terry Smith, Parks & Community Services

Facilitator

Sean Wellander, Transportation Staff

Scribe

Alex O'Reilly, Parks & Community Services

Display Notes

Arina Fateeva

Arts Commission

Aaron Laing

Planning Commission

James McEachran

Human Services Commission

Lynne Robinson

Parks & Community Services Board

Vic Bishop

Transportation Commission

Franz Loewenherz

Transportation Staff

Themes

1. The current transit system is Seattle Centric and the City will need to address this issue in the long range vision.
2. Mostly transit is used for employment (going to and from work). This should remain the highest priority.
3. Serving downtown Bellevue is the number one priority.
4. We still need cars; our infrastructure is different than in Europe where cars are not as needed
5. I-405 use and impact needs to be considered in the Transit Master Plan.
6. Transit needs to ensure access for non-drivers, student's, older adults and people with disabilities.
7. Buses don't run where I live and don't fit my schedule. It is hard to coordinate with using childcare drop off, too.
8. Bus service is not flexible; too much time to use. Circulators would be more effective.
9. Night safety concerns.
10. Bus service is good for entertainment like Seahawk games.
11. Metro Trip Planner no longer works; it is "scrambled".
12. Lots of service in Seattle but not the balance of King County, e.g. East King County
13. This planning activity is good, but can we really influence Metro Transit Planners on routes?

1. Introductions

- a. Have you used transit in the Puget Sound region?
- b. When did you last use transit and how often did/do you use it?
- c. What type of transit trips did/do you take (work, school, social, special events, other)?

If you have never used transit in the region please explain why not.

FAC Terry Smith, Parks & Community Services

Facilitator

VB Vic Bishop

Transportation Commission

Infrequent rider. Buses don't go where he wants to go. Likes to control trip. Uses bus to Seahawk games.

AF Arina Fateeva Arts Commission

No buses near her house. 1.7 mile uphill walk to nearest stop. Would like services for family (son, mother). Likes idea of RapidRide.

LR Lynne Robinson Parks & Community Services Board

Used transit a lot when lived in Seattle. Currently use it for shopping. Not efficient for High School student. Service has degraded from Woodridge. Hasn't ridden in 3 years. Feels time wasted. Easier to get to Interlake HS than Bellevue HS from Woodridge.

JM James McEachran Human Services Commission

Never ridden a bus here. Nor has any in family. Children in other cities use mass transit routinely. Safety issues with bus at night.

AL Aaron Laing Planning Commission

Active transit user. 15 years in region. Previously lived in Seattle, used transit daily –work/school. Now carpools with wife, 2 small children to Seattle. Sometimes takes Sound Transit 550 from S Bellevue P&R. Having kids changed view of transit. Safety issues, inconvenient with kids.

LR Used to take bus to airport from S Bellevue P&R. Used to use 'Trip Planner' but now it doesn't work as well.

AL Agree 'Trip Planner' doesn't work as well.

VB 85% of bus trips on metro have both ends in Seattle. SoundTransit is a different system. Daughters use Community Transit to college. Son at UW uses U-Pass. Metro system primarily serves Seattle.

AL Much discussion within planning community. How much influence will Bellevue have? FL described developing a bargaining position. City of Bellevue has a disparity between resource inputs/investment and services received.

2. What are the two or three most important ways transit benefits Bellevue?

JM Works across from Bellevue College. 37,000 students, lots of buses from every direction. Multiple trip origins. What happens when they can't drive anymore?

VB Most important for transit for to serve Downtown Bellevue. Lots of employment. Need concentration to have efficient service. Map of Microsoft employee residences is scattered. Productions are households.

AL Something that gets overlooked – emergency vehicle response time. LOS measure not just inconvenience but also impacts firefighters etc... Important public safety issue.

LR Transit use decreases traffic. Safe transportation for ‘compromised’ drivers –teenagers/elderly. Kids taking bus to Seattle Center and meeting friends. Not many older adults can conveniently use transit.

JM Human services/economic aspect important.

VB Downtown access important.

AL Downtown access, mobility, some people immobile without transit. Really key to have system to serve those people, especially with changing demographics. High percent of seniors in their own households. Older and disabled, students.

LR Transit decreases traffic.

VB Disagree, very small/no impact. Only 3% of all trips.

FL 3% is all trips. Transit reduces traffic significantly during peak.

Additional Comment:

- Emergency Response Times: this is an important public safety issue so first responders must have access to streets

3. Consider the four trade-off scenarios on pages 2 through 9. How can we ensure that costs and benefits are shared equitably at a time when transit agencies are reducing/eliminating low ridership routes?

Page 2/3 Peaking Patterns

Is transit mostly about serving a peak-period or “rush hour” commute pattern, or is its top priority to provide a consistent service all day? Or is it a balance of these, and if so, where do you strike that balance?

What is more important:

Peak Time: 3 votes

Off Peak: 0 votes

Combo: 1 vote

FAC Discuss 4-scenarios. Seattle centric probably won’t change. Read through 4 questions. Example of peak routes.

VB Far and away the dominant market share of transit are the work trips. Peak times.

AL Irony of providing mobility for social services is that it actually increases congestion somewhat. Competing goals. We’re asked to create a hierarchy here. An important benefit (reduced congestion) is counter to social equity.

LR Where/who are the riders? Workers/medical patients/students/shoppers.

VB Very few shoppers.

- AF** Recreational users, -bicyclists, seniors going to parks.
- FAC** Dilemma- resources for one takes from others.
- AL** We're talking mainly bus service. Should consider multi-modal – pedestrian/bicycle/auto as well. Hub/connector; a good system has a 'bigger' mode at the hub. Buses are flexible, better for point to point.
- VB** Huge operational issue. Easier to do option 1 than option 2. Difficult to serve dispersed nodes. Suggest option 2 – connectors with downtown Bellevue as the center, not downtown Seattle.
- AL** Difficult to evaluate tradeoffs. Select a permutation of all 3 questions – flexible, inexpensive (compared to other modes).
- VB** Bus is expensive.
- AL** I mean compared to rail. Peaking can be adjusted by varying work shifts. E.g. Boeing has various shifts. Potential for Bellevue College, downtown Bellevue, Eastgate. Need to discuss staggered shifts with major employers. Likes peak/direct coverage options.
- VB** State law –Commuter trip Reduction. Impacts large employers; that conversation is already there.
- LR** Other trips beside workers/students.
- AL** Microsoft putting jobs in the community. We can ask them to stagger their work day. If we can change that aspect of the peak we can have good service all day.
- FAC** Short term vs. Long term. Increasing peak service impacts other users. How much does our community value off peak trips?
- LR** Each group can choose the option best for them. Direct in peak and connectors in off-peak.
- VB** What is the most important? 40 years as traffic engineer, designed transit signal priority system. Difficulty is buses cross jurisdictional lines. Each has different operational system and gets feedback from drivers stuck in traffic.
- JM** Reliability important. Elderly with medical appointment. Safety issues for elderly/children.
- LR** Divide between peak/non-peak.
- AL** Places that do this, Seattle has bus lanes (3rd Ave), dedicated ROW improves reliability. Massive cost. Takes capacity out of system and increases other congestion.
- VB** Transit represents 3-5% of trips and won't change. Transit serves work trips but are a small portion of total trips. City of Bellevue is predicting 6-fold increase in transit trips.
- AL** Landuse aspect. Impression is that we are too auto-dependent. We're not Europe. We need to think beyond the workforce. Reject idea of getting rid of cars. Future cars will be less polluting. What are the other 85% of trips (the non-work/non-peak)? Light rail can't serve to take children to

an emergency room. Planners suggest having everyone live where they work. 'Bold Visions' need to be grounded in reality. Unless vision is flexible, we come back to this discussion.

LR Why do people take the bus? Parking is a big motivator.

AL Bay area has approximately 200,000 less parking spaces than cars. Current development laws say that transit access can eliminate parking requirements. Residents use transit but need car for other trips.

FAC What is more important, peak v off-peak? Can't do both to the level we may want.

VB Peak period more important. In short term with limited resources then peak more important.

AL Another issue, how much is transit subsidized?

VB Fares cover about 23% of costs.

AL Eliminating peak service will make budget issues worse.

JM Transit should serve the economic engine. Likes RapidRide. Different kind of off-peak trip. Reliable.

AL If we separate those with means and access to other modes, we acknowledge those who have no other choice. Do we eliminate all mobility for a portion of our population?

LR I think you're mixing populations. Many services currently available to support those with limited access.

AL Personal view –major employers should pool resources and provide service. Priority should be peak commute if not depriving others of access.

VB Eastside contributes much due to tax base (sales tax, RTA tax) and is the retail economic engine of the region. Eastside contributes more than the services received because Metro is Seattle centric.

AL SoundTransit concept of suburban equity. Growth in SE King County/Maple Valley clogs inbound roads. The financial contribution is small but the plan is to expand transit service. Bellevue has more jobs than residences. About 1.5 times population. Currently transit system is Seattle-centric but not Seattle centered employment.

VB The I-405 master plan is being ignored. It had a major transit component.

AL If we want investment in bedroom communities, we need to make Bellevue the destination. We are investing in ourselves.

VB We need a transit system to serve Downtown Bellevue, otherwise it won't grow.

Page 4/5 a) Direct Service Option vs. b) Connective Option

LR Linked/connected routes are different riders.

AL Point to point commuters. Downtown Bellevue functions as a hub.

LR Transit system could provide direct service during peak, connected during off-peak.

AL Downtown circulator would be better with a smaller vehicle. Maybe shuttle service between hubs.

LR Different ridership. Workers drive to Park and Rides, other users will take connector option.

VB Vanpools are the best transit option. Serve long trips. King County vanpool is the largest/best in the nation. Almost tax-subsidy free. Study says potential is 10 times current use.

FAC Currently uses vanpool. Much faster than bus.

Page 6/7 a) Serving Destinations Directly / Ridership Goal vs. b) Coverage Goal

VB Being Seattle-centric is a weakness.

AL RapidRide is a success. Maybe look at doing one along Bellevue Way.

LR Current system doesn't serve students/patients.

AL Currently only serves work commuters. Rapidride exceeds initial projections.

FAC Is inaccessibility a weakness?

AF That Rapidride doesn't just serve workers is a strength.

LR Most seniors don't use transit.

VB RapidRide uses 10 minute headways, don't need a schedule.

LR Excellent hubs – Eastgate/S Bellevue P&R, Crossroads. Trip planner doesn't work well.

VB Other trip planning providers work better.

AL A weakness is that we will lose some key transit routes when EastLink comes in. South Bellevue P&R will be offline for about 5-years during construction, and it will be difficult to get those riders back.

VB Question – are Park and Ride lots good or bad for congestion? They draw trips onto roads.

AL BART system in bay area has many advantages. Rail is the backbone of the system but also need service from other modes.

Page 8/9 Under what circumstances might it be appropriate to impact auto travel time (increase delay) to more quickly and reliably move buses through congested corridors in Bellevue?

Costs/benefits shared equally

Who: Students, patients, workers, shoppers, people using it for recreation

What: Need a multi-modal options for a good transportation system

Options:

- Can get more riders in connective option
- Must choose a combination depending on the rider
- Business: ask them to stagger shifts downtown to control peak hours (e.g. Boeing) to potentially control congestion
- What works for employers does not work for everyone; need direct service option for peak but connective for non-peak for older adults going to doctor's appointments, youth going to after-school, etc.
- Transit works well for work trips but not the rest of the day
- Will this be true in 20-30 years?
- We still need cars; our infrastructure is different than in Europe where cars are not as needed. If cars do not burn fossil fuels they are a more efficient way to go here without damage to the environment. Reality is that all people can't live near where they work.

Motives for bus riders:

- Parking cost
- More convenient
- Takes them directly where they need to go

Bold Vision:

- Important to provide limited mobility population first with transportation as they have limited access
- Bellevue is stuck with a Seattle-centric system
- Bellevue transit needs to become Bellevue-Eastside focused; Seattle is sending its residents to Bellevue to work.
- Equity Issue: outside of Seattle, there is not equity of bus service coverage. East KC gets less service for the taxes that it pays.
- Metro is making more investments in South KC; 405 is being ignored; it needs to be considered in the Master Plan.
- Long Term: we must have a connected system for downtown Bellevue to grow.
- Van Pools are the best public transit system (KC van pools rated best in the country); they need to be a piece of the Transit Plan for Bellevue
- Shuttles to connect to fixed routes and hubs are critical to having a connected system

Strengths:

- BRR unmitigated success; needs to be expanded to a N/S corridor; BRR encourages more people to use the bus due to 10 min. headways for increased reliability
- Current system serves commuters for work well
- Infrastructure is set up for more buses
- Excellent hubs at some Park and Ride lots

Weaknesses

- Current system is Seattle-centric
- Current system doesn't serve students, patients, people with disabilities older adults; only serves commuters
- Off peak service is not good; lack of access on weekends, especially; lacks frequency
- Lack of access to getting to a bus stop; need shuttles or circulators

- Inability to plan routes with Metro Trip Planner now
- Public needs more education on riding the bus
- We will lose some transit when light rail is being built (e.g. South Bellevue P/R) because of construction. Then we will lose riders who won't easily come back.

Bellevue Transit Master Plan Forum

September 18, 2012

TABLE 2

Emily Leslie, HS Parks Staff

Joseph Adriano, HS Parks Staff

Kurt Latt, Transportation Staff

Facilitator

Scribe

Display Notes

Janice Stout

Erin Powell

Hal Ferris

Scott Lampe

Kris Liljeblad

Human Services Commission

Parks & Community Services Board

Planning Commission

Transportation Commission

Arts Commission

THEMES

1. Top ways that transit benefits Bellevue are congestion relief and the economic benefits from workers and shoppers, as well as infrastructure reduction costs.
2. Regarding peak vs. off peak service, peak service needs to accommodate as many workers as possible while maintaining baseline services for non-peak users, keeping in mind other populations, e.g. older adults, etc. who need off peak service. Peak service also needs to maintain geographic coverage. Consider different bus vehicle options, varying size and designs to cater to particular needs.
3. Bellevue has an aging population and many are not low income or ethnic minority; we must think more broadly about marketing to all populations and addressing their needs.
4. Tailor future transit oriented developments to be more accessible; develop Comp Plan amendments to allow greater density to support transit. Also, in regard to demand for Downtown Bellevue, there is greater demand North-South than existing transit capacity provides.
5. The amount of time spent riding transit is the most important in decision-making for bus riders. Online route planning, phone apps, etc. are good tools to help riders make decisions.
6. In the future, East Link will be the main transit option with collector/circulator buses to take riders to smaller neighborhoods, Park and Rides, etc. East Link stations need to be able to link riders to the rest of the region.
7. Regarding serving destinations directly vs. improved service coverage, we need a mix of both. Routes should be where the density is with more creative ways for parking and bike support; consider charging for parking. However, we can't forget people who live in the low coverage areas, especially with the aging population and the trend toward "aging in place."

1. Introductions

- a. **Have you used transit in the Puget Sound region?**
- b. **When did you last use transit and how often did/do you use it?**
- c. **What type of transit trips did/do you take (work, school, social, special events, other)?**
- d. **If you have never used transit in the region please explain why not.**

KL **Kris Liljeblad Arts Commission**

Lifelong transit rider, particularly to Downtown Seattle and Downtown Bellevue. Mostly use the bus for work trips and sporting events. I fully recognize that a lot of people depend on transit for other types of trips. Different times of day and different types of riders when contrasting with peak times. I get frustrated when I have to stand because there aren't enough seats. I understand that there aren't enough resources. The growth of transit use reflects the increased needs among people trying to reduce fuel consumption, reduce cost, and reduce environmental impact.

SL Scott Lampe Transportation Commission

I do a lot of walking. I take transit occasionally, as needed (e.g., to conferences at Seattle Center). I see buses and see how many buses have very few people on them. Transit uses a lot of resources when not used efficiently.

Kurt Kurt Latt Transportation Staff

Uses transit depending on need. Buses get caught in traffic, and we're waiting for it to come. Sometimes, buses don't arrive. I drive for a little bit, I like the bus when it's good. Hate it when it does not work.

EP Erin Powell Parks & Community Services Board

Single occupancy vehicle driver 99% of the time. Lives in Bellevue, works in Redmond. I've actually enjoyed taking the bus, I chat with people. But I don't use it that much. Part of it is the work schedule.

HF Hal Ferris Planning Commission

Started taking the bus eight years ago. Live in Bellevue, work in DT Seattle. Extremely convenient for me. They leave every five to ten minutes. It is a peak-hour focus. If you miss the last bus #210, you can't get back, so I drive to the P&R. I take the bus wherever I need to go when I'm downtown. When I have an evening meeting, I drive (because buses drop off after 7 PM). We try to get our kids to take the bus, but back then the service didn't take them to where they needed to. I understand the limits of the available resources. How do we serve transit 20 years from now, not just today?

JS Janice Stout Human Services Commission

JS – I've lived in Bellevue for 42 years. Earlier on, my husband wanted to use the bus. Frequently he couldn't get on—there was not even standing room. We gave up on the bus. I needed my car every day—working in Seattle and for the BSD. Now we use the bus occasionally. I've since given up the bus because I can't get on and off the bus (physically). We have not found the bus to be much help to us—and now they've reduced the service significantly. You don't need your car in Rome, London, those are major cities. But we have to think long-term. An aging population in Bellevue ... we need to plan to serve.

2. What are the two or three most important ways transit benefits Bellevue?

EP Reduce congestion.

KL People are into productivity on the bus.

HF More active communities. People walk more (health benefits). Improves infrastructure.

EL Economic benefits: magnet for companies.

- KL Environmental, AQ benefits.
- JS People will ride the bus to Bellevue to play and spend. Moves a diverse population, bringing workers and shoppers. Hope that when we go forward with the Spring District, we will be conscious of regional linkages.
- HF People who shop will have big items delivered. So they shop here and have it delivered.
- SL Increases transportation options for families, e.g., with only two cars but more drivers in one family.
- KL Can take transit regionally, linking transportation modes.
- HF Good transportation system is fundamental to viability, the city will stagnate, and residents who want that will choose not to live here.

3. Consider the four trade-off scenarios on pages 2 through 9. How can we ensure that costs and benefits are shared equitably at a time when transit agencies are reducing/eliminating low ridership routes?

Page 2/3 Peaking Patterns

Is transit mostly about serving a peak-period or “rush hour” commute pattern, or is its top priority to provide a consistent service all day? Or is it a balance of these, and if so, where do you strike that balance?

- JS Significant that we not promote/implement something that limits the long-term aspects of the plan; do not limit our options down the road. Must have a multi-modal system down the road. Think big, think beyond. Have to think of how we transition our short-term to the long-term.
- JS Most elderly are not low income and not minority; must think more broadly about populations in this city. Are we marketing to all these people ... the aging population who use the off-peak times?
- JS Different vehicles to accommodate more people ... certain times of the day in London, the double-deckers were accessible. Schedules clearly told you what kind of bus would arrive at what time.
- KL In terms of trading off peak services vs. midday, particularly regarding social equity ... fundamentally you have to maintain baseline services midday. Then the peak has to accommodate as many workers as they can (farebox is an important revenue source). Those situations where the buses are running empty – the bus is important to those people.
- KL Long-term: Some neighborhoods will always be difficult to serve. Other types of services will be needed. Where are the areas like DT, Spring, Eastgate, where we can grow the land-use around the transit service quality we expect to see in the future?

- KL** If you're trying to make a trip to DT Bellevue so you can make a trip somewhere else ... some of these long regional trips ends up being a really long trips.
- HF** There is a geographic coverage issue. It's not realistic to serve low-density SF areas with constant service. There are ways we can do things to incent people to take the bus, e.g., more P&R. We need to maintain the peak service, but need to be efficient. Geographic coverage is related to peak/non-peak.
- HF** Bel-Red is an example where the uses will be walkable. Density of services will available, also in Eastgate, Factoria ... more residential. We have these established density nodes ... transit of the future needs to be frequent. We have no more SF lots in 20, 30 years.
- SL** Ridership aspects of routes ... shifted routes away from our area. Van pools are an alternative system. Link will have four cars (takes more people).
- SL** Transit oriented development (TOD) ... tailor future developments to be more accessible. E.g., DT Bellevue's density fits with TOD.
- SL** If you look at the demand for Downtown Bellevue, there's a much greater flow North-South, not East-West. We need Bus Rapid Transit on I-405.
- EP** – Higher capacity buses can accommodate more people. We need to look at that. Just get bigger buses during the peak hours.

Page 4/5 a) Direct Service (Infrequent) Option vs. b) Connective (Frequent) Option

- HF** b) If transfers are frequent, then the latter works. This may even make it a shorter trip. It depends on the total amount of time. A direct trip, infrequent, with layovers, may take longer. If you're a regular transit rider, you figure it out.
- Heavy/light rail is the spine. Wheeled vehicles can access the neighborhoods. In the future, East Link will be the main, and collector/circulator buses will take you to the little neighborhood P&R (e.g., churches, small businesses, reliably).
- KL** b) Frequency is really critical for a quality of service. I use route planning by Metro, because you know when the next bus is.
- East Link stations will have to link you to the rest of the region. You'll have to know the other service options feeding to the neighborhoods.
- EP** It's the linkages that can morph into other things. Bus drivers are very helpful to inform your transfers (real human beings).
- Need benches in shelters.
- JS** Metro in DC, large system, lots of lines. If you check the schedule, you can transfer across platforms and levels ... any tourist can use it. It's planned well. Signs. Maps. Every stop. Station Names.

The current Bellevue plan: the stations are too far apart. We've got to dream. Density has created itself around transit stations. Metro Access is very difficult for physically challenged people. Very unreliable.

SL DC does have a lot of resources for that purpose.

Page 6/7 a) Serving Destinations Directly / Ridership Goal vs. b) Coverage Goal

JS A mix of both. To go one way or the other is going to kill us financially, long-term, short-term. The number of users may well increase. You can't forget the people in low coverage areas. The aging in place concept is important.

Make sure you don't take parking from retailers.

HF Big issue ... in some places, there are smaller buses you can call ahead. If it's infrequent service in a broad region, people won't use it. People will use what they know will be regular service, as long as they can get to the transit (bike, park, walk). Look at how many empty parking slots are out there, because people aren't using them.

Until 2030, we'll just keep getting denser around these nodes. People need access points that are safe and clean. Just as we work on transit/street plans, include dedicated right-of-way to promote reliability, dependability.

If parking is free, people will use it. Don't have parking minimums in high transit areas. In some cities, there's a parking maximum. If you don't build the parking, and if you have good transit, people will use it.

KL There is pressure on King County and Sound Transit to reduce unproductive service. To expect that service is going to grow in the short-term is unrealistic. For now we should maintain strong productivity on the transit service we have.

Long-term, when Sound Transit is operating East Link, we may see more B-Lines as circulators. As development moves further east, the standing room problem will make it impossible to get on the bus. Those major corridors affect the type of vehicle and frequency that will serve the routes.

SL The challenge is getting people from neighborhood areas to reliable transit, as long as the bus route will get you to where you want to go.

Bus rapid transit will serve a huge demand that East Link won't serve ... emphasis on the 405 N/S capacity.

Incentives for employers to encourage workers to carpool, take transit.

EL Routes should serve the densest areas, but with creative ways for people to park, bike, walk to access that transit.

Page 8/9 Under what circumstances might it be appropriate to impact auto travel time (increase delay) to more quickly and reliably move buses through congested corridors in Bellevue?

JS In Downtown Portland, the appeal of using the street is gone. The lights are around transit. Good transit systems: traffic is not as much an issue.

HF Coordinated signals for the buses. Would work for Bus Rapid Transit and streetcars. People will be upset if they see a restricted lane with no buses going through it. We don't have new lanes for dedicated right-of-way. We'll have to take away a lane.

Applying this will prioritize the transit use at the expense of the car.

Is it possible to maintain the same convenience for the automobile and still provide effective transit? You will eventually make using the care inconvenient.

Allow land use to accommodate dense uses like in Seattle neighborhoods. Don't concentrate businesses/services in one area.

E.g., Newport Hills may have to change, will need more transit to redevelop the dead commercial up there.

KL Coordinated signals make sense in heavy transit corridors. It's difficult to have quality service when it's unpredictable as it gets stuck in congestion. Keep buses on schedule.

Priority should be adaptive signal, then add transit priority, where there are routes that are difficult to keep on schedule.

In the long-term, service will feed Light Rail, with Bus Rapid Transit feeding. Station areas will need to accommodate those transfers between all the feeder buses. This will require curb space and some signal priority may be needed in station nodes.

There is an urban design issue, the place has to be desirable but still work to move people efficiently.

SL If you have the opportunity to create a dedicate transit lane...

Lights can adjust based on transit conditions.

Better pedestrian and bike access, as alternatives to cars.

EP Lights in Bellevue don't favor buses. Can the bus driver trigger the light? Bike lanes are needed.

Kurt The technology is there: drivers can trigger lights.

5. What do you think are the greatest strengths/weaknesses of the current transit system in Bellevue?

Strengths:

- Reliability during peak service
- Density in downtown
- Safe and clean service
- Ease of use of the system
- Friendly drivers
- Multi-modal increasing
- Diverse population using transit
- Ease of ORCA card

Weaknesses:

- JS - Does not serve elderly/special populations well
- KL - Poor service coverage, relative to geographic areas.
- Poor service coverage during off peak times
- KL - Regional system has poor reliability – Bellevue is a victim of outside route performance.
- Limited parking options near where riders catch the bus.

6. Any follow-up comments?

- EP - How does East Link play into transit?
- SL - north/south still challenging even with East Link in place.

Bellevue Transit Master Plan Forum

September 18, 2012

TABLE 3

Paul Inghram, Planning Staff
Janet Lewine, Planning Staff
Mike Mattar, Design Staff

Facilitator
Scribe
Display Notes

Stefanie Beighle
Stuart Heath
Pat Sheffels
Tom Tanaka

Human Services Commission
Parks & Community Services Board
Planning Commission
Transportation Commission

Themes

1. It is important for the core service – high ridership routes – to be well operated as it reflects the entire system, helps reduce congestion, and provides most users with their impression of transit.
2. The high efficiency, high ridership routes provide the most value to the system and should be the highest priority.
3. While, the higher ridership routes are a priority, we still need to find a way to serve the disadvantaged population, including seniors and those without other means of transportation. Consider exploring targeted strategies to meet this objective in place of low efficiency routes.
4. Recognize the changing demographics in 2030, including an older society, more minorities.
5. Look at creative solutions, such as tax incentives for companies, partnerships with non-profits, and shuttles.

1. Introductions

- a. Have you used transit in the Puget Sound region?
- b. When did you last use transit and how often did/do you use it?
- c. What type of transit trips did/do you take (work, school, social, special events, other)?
- d. If you have never used transit in the region please explain why not.

SH Stuart Heath Parks & Community Services Board

(has used transit) Before moving to Bellevue/Bridle Trails 2 years ago, he commuted for work each day for 18 years from Ballard to DT Seattle. Now he works from home, but does take the 550 into Seattle for work related trips.

PS Pat Sheffels Planning Commission

(has used transit) Uses transit when she can from Bellevue to Seattle. However, it's not easy to make transit work: park & rides are usually full; service is limited to and from arts/theater events, especially later in the evening. Would like to have transit available to and from the airport. The current service usually doesn't work. The bus that picks up high school students in her neighborhood may be convenient for her, but she didn't know that she could use it.

SB Stefanie Beighle Human Services Commission

(has used transit) Before she had kids she used transit for work from Bellevue to Seattle. Now it's been over a year since using transit. She would like to make transit work – to Sonics games or concerts/events in Seattle, but the park & rides are full, buses are packed and the ride is slower than taking the car. She'd rather not stand all the way to Seattle.

TT Tom Tanaka Transportation Commission

(has used transit) Works in the Seattle DT Waterfront area and uses all sorts of transportation between Bellevue and Seattle including car, bus and bike. Although Eastgate P & R is not as convenient as South Bellevue P & R, uses Eastgate because South Bellevue has no parking. Tom notices that buses get overcrowded when school is in session—lots of high school and Bellevue College riders.

2. What are the two or three most important ways transit benefits Bellevue?

SH Main benefit to Bellevue is moving people who live outside Bellevue to work and school in Bellevue. In Bellevue transit works for commute trips; but beyond that we should look to see if fixed route, articulated buses meet the other transportation needs that Bellevue will have in the next 20 years.

PS Transit in Bellevue primarily benefits the working commuter, especially those who work in downtown Bellevue. Transit in Bellevue does not serve seniors well; and it does not work well for appointments, shopping and errands.

SB Transit in Bellevue does not work for shopping and events, especially in the evening. What came of the City's support for shuttles, especially for seniors? Bellevue has a growing elderly population. A shuttle would benefit seniors and the disabled.

PS A shuttle could connect seniors and the disabled to Bellevue's hospital zone.

TT The Metro circulator shuttle requires Bellevue funding which hasn't been budgeted by Bellevue.

SH For the elderly a shuttle or a circulator bus would work better than a big Metro bus.

TT An important benefit of transit is that whenever a transit trip replaces a single auto trip it eases the congestion that hurts all businesses and all commuters. Transit is important because Bellevue could not reach its projected growth without transit. We can't just build roads to meet our growth. This fact somewhat overrides questions of cost-effectiveness. Unlike NYC or the Bay Area we don't have the transit infrastructure or the transit culture to rely just on transit.

Traffic congestion has a big picture cost: the more time people spend commuting, the less time they have to be involved with their families and communities.

SH It's good to take a constructive look at where mass transit is today and where it should be in the future. Do we need to develop different transit that serves the way we will live and work in

the future? I can be more productive working from home; even working in my car where I can make business calls that I couldn't make on a bus. Do we need to develop incentives to encourage transit use and living closer to work?

PS In 2030 there will be more elderly who won't be able to walk 5 blocks from their home to a bus stop. Bellevue has changing demographics that need non-commute transit: young singles that don't own cars; more minorities, more households without kids. These groups need short trip, more convenient, more predictable transit.

SB Transit in Bellevue benefits bike commuters, a bike/bus trip gives a larger range for bike commuters. It can be a problem when there are not enough bike racks on the bus. Transit in Bellevue also benefits the disabled. Lots of bus trips include riders that use the lifts.

PS Para-transit is heavily used in Bellevue.

SB Transit also benefits English Language Learners who may not be able to get a license.

3. Consider the four trade-off scenarios on pages 2 through 9. How can we ensure that costs and benefits are shared equitably at a time when transit agencies are reducing/eliminating low ridership routes?

Page 2/3 Peaking Patterns

Is transit mostly about serving a peak-period or "rush hour" commute pattern, or is its top priority to provide a consistent service all day? Or is it a balance of these, and if so, where do you strike that balance?

PS If we focused on the peak trips, would that increase ridership?

SH Focusing on the peak would serve workers; that should be the highest priority. Metro and Sound Transit may be able to accomplish more by focusing their services. Ultimately, transit will be good for the environment, will provide services to the disabled, elderly, ELL and minority residents. For now, given the current budget constraints, the highest priority for the fixed route buses is giving a positive experience to peak riders.

PS I agree that peak service must be improved first; but there is still a need for additional day/non-peak bus service that should be served as available.

SB Are there bus routes that stay within Bellevue? Do these serve the 2 food banks in Bellevue? There is a big problem getting clients to the food bank. On some level, the community needs to address these basic needs.

SH The Boys and Girls Club is another example of the need for shuttles. It seems we might consider have less big buses for more shuttles on some routes.

SB I don't like the experience of peak transit, there is not enough shelter waiting for buses in the rain and buses are overcrowded.

TT I serve on the Board of HopeLink; I know transit is a big issue for those struggling in our community. Still, the success of transit is tied to the success of serving working commuters. Our future requires it; we can't build enough additional freeway lanes and roads to meet peak demand. We need to serve transit commuters.

Other transit systems, especially in other countries, people accept crowds and standing. Overcrowded routes are a real problem when there is no room on a bus and waiting commuters are left at the bus stop.

SH Transit should address the need to access technology and be productive on the bus.

It would be interesting to see how much money could be saved by focusing on peak routes; and then see where that money could best be used to serve non-peak users.

Page 4/5 a) Direct Service Option vs. b) Connective Option

TT b) Connective Option is more efficient

PS b) More frequent service (Connective Option) preferable to no transfer

SB I prefer the connective route because it allows for more options, choice (b).

TT b) With Connective Option, you can create transit corridors.

SH b) If the Connective Option has 5 min waits, it's not a problem if you have to wait for the next bus. With newer technology, we can also stay productive while we wait.

Page 6/7 a) Serving Destinations Directly / Ridership Goal vs. b) Coverage Goal

SH a) Ridership Goal, we have to serve outer area riders in a way that's cost effective. Targeted coverage rather than fixed route transit may be better for serving elderly and special needs.

PS a) Ridership Goal –should be the focus during peak hours.

SB a) Ridership Goal and focus on peak is best choice. But with the caveat that the mobility needs of other users, especially the elderly and disabled, need to be addressed.

TT a) Ridership Goal – with consideration to geography and other limitations.

TT People like rail because you know where it's going and you don't have to think about a schedule. Rapid Ride has that advantage.

PS Rapid Ride also has real time schedule information.

TT Rapid Ride fits Ridership Goal: it's fixed, frequent and the next best thing to rail. The Rapid Ride corridor is dependable.

- SH** Isn't there GMA Policy to develop transit supported density along certain corridors? If that is correct, then the transit plan should match that policy.
- PS** It is hard to ignore the existing development that was built out before transit came along. We can work toward tying land use to transit in new or redeveloping areas like Bel-Red, but not for most of Bellevue.
- SH** (closing comment) Regarding Ridership Goal vs. Coverage Goal: The King County materials that we were provided seem to assume that ethnic minorities and poor people fall into one category. Bellevue should examine those assumptions as it applies to Bellevue's population.

Page 8/9 Under what circumstances might it be appropriate to impact auto travel time (increase delay) to more quickly and reliably move buses through congested corridors in Bellevue?

- TT** In DT Bellevue it gets very complex to coordinate cycle times, turn lanes and other variables. The graphic on p. 9 is simplistic.
- SB** Does having bus priority increase traffic accidents? Does having a Bus and Turn Lane increase traffic accidents? Is bus priority more dangerous for pedestrians?
- PS** Bus priority of some kind is needed on NE 8th and on 148th where the bus has "pocket" pull-outs at some stops. No one will let the bus back into traffic. It's a big loss of time for busses.
- SB** You have to consider the cost of having bus priority lanes.
- TT** The ability for a bus to move through traffic easier than cars is one of the reasons to ride a bus.
- SH** We should think outside the box; explore whether some transit should be privatized; like the shuttles. Government tax incentives could allow the organizations that need the shuttles--like hospitals, HopeLink, Boys & Girls Club-- to pay for the shuttles.
- TT** I worry that the public ends up holding the risk in public/private partnerships.
- SH** In my non-profit work I see that the non-profit sector does just as good or better than the public sector. We should consider that (on average) 90% of United Way funds go to the people they are helping; the government gets only 60% of funds to the people they are helping. If there is a problem we need to put everything on the table. The Boys and Girls Clubs are currently providing the transit they need so why not take a look to see if that model will work for the food banks, senior centers, etc. and then figure out how to support those organizations.
- TT** It's hard to get funding from non-profits-- they run very lean these days.
- SH** Yes, but the question is what is the best use of scarce transit resources.
- PI** But what if we had dependable transit corridors and the non-profits and food banks and medical offices located on these corridors?
- TT** There's also the issue of topography: there's a lot of hills that make even short walks difficult.

- PS** Especially for seniors.
- SB** People in Bellevue like their cars.
- TT** One third of Bellevue residents are minority (foreign born); and under 18 it's 50% minority.
- PS** Bellevue is an affluent community. Transit isn't well accepted.
- SB** It's the transit riders from all over the region that ride into and through Bellevue that boost transit use.
- PI** Bellevue is the central node of the Eastside. Even with Metro service cuts, there are still inefficient routes. People will defend a route that serves their community- even if they don't use it.
- SH** This is a good process and a good discussion. There has to be a balance.

Bellevue Transit Master Plan Forum

September 18, 2012

TABLE 4

Paul Krawczyk, Transportation Staff
Gwen Rousseau, Planning Staff
Tresa Berg, Transportation Staff

Facilitator
Scribe
Display Notes

Mayor Conrad Lee
Diane Tebelius
John Carlson
Mark Van Hollebeke
Michael Yantis

City Council
Planning Commission
Planning Commission
Parks & Community Services Board
Human Services Commission

Themes

1. Don't Punish SOV
2. Provide Bus service to Hubs (like park n Rides) and attract users to the Hubs.
3. Base bus service on empirical data (most ridership for the dollar)
4. Almost all the members loved the Rapid Ride B line (very effective)
5. It's important to make bus access attractive and comfortable and safe
6. Direct service is better and no one likes more than 2 transfers.
7. People have multiple commute options; look for new technology to attract new riders (wifi, circulator, etc.)

1. Introductions

- a. Have you used transit in the Puget Sound region?
- b. When did you last use transit and how often did/do you use it?
- c. What type of transit trips did/do you take (work, school, social, special events, other)?
- d. If you have never used transit in the region please explain why not.

MY Michael Yantis (Human Services Commission)

Takes the bus to Husky games, and when he was working downtown he would use busses in the bus tunnel to get to other parts of downtown.

DT Diane Tebelius (Planning Commission)

Carpools to work. She does not use transit because she travels to work too early in the morning and too late at night. Has used park and ride in past.

MH Mark Van Hollebek (Parks & Community Services Board)

Takes bus a couple of times a week for work. Travels between Microsoft's Main Campus and Downtown. Also takes transit for special events in Seattle. The 550 is good, but can be crowded.

ML Mayor Conrad Lee (City Council)

Buses to Seattle, but not often. He has also taken the bus to the airport. Believes it is important to have travel options/choices for our community.

JC John Carlson (Planning Commission)

Used to use transit all the time, but now he has to be at work too early in morning (3:30 am). His mom, who is 78, uses the bus frequently. He uses buses when he works part-time.

2. What are the two or three most important ways transit benefits Bellevue?

MH Transit draws businesses to Bellevue, for instance the B-Line had created ease of movement from Microsoft's Main Campus to Downtown. The B-Line is better than the Shuttle. It runs more often and is bigger. Major benefit of transit is its ability to draw major companies to Bellevue. You can also move more people.

MY Livability, especially in these economically challenging times. Many opt to give up one car. Transit enables one to get places when they want to.

ML A major benefit is transit's ability to attract employees and businesses.

MH Saves money on gas – one advantage of employees getting a free bus pass – it costs me \$75 to fill up

MY We're also aware of the environmental benefits. It is worth something.

ML It is getting more difficult to get to Seattle with traffic and parking.

DT Time is money. The I-90 commute is seldom bad.

MY Once you are downtown you don't drive

MH Accessibility is a benefit – for people with disabilities and for everyone

JC Transit is a social convenience - a service that is there and available if you want to use it.

UK Bellevue is laid out well if you're heading to Downtown.

JC Bellevue Square is a destination.

ML Yes, Bellevue is a tourist destination for international visitors – friends, relatives, and businesses.

MH Clients and partners stay in Bellevue because they can quickly get to Microsoft as well as Downtown Seattle – Bellevue is a hub.

3. Consider the four trade-off scenarios on pages 2 through 9. How can we ensure that costs and benefits are shared equitably at a time when transit agencies are reducing/eliminating low ridership routes?

Page 2/3 Peaking Patterns

Is transit mostly about serving a peak-period or “rush hour” commute pattern, or is its top priority to provide a consistent service all day? Or is it a balance of these, and if so, where do you strike that balance?

JC King County geographic evenness used to be sold as “social justice.” Clearly defining social justice is important

CL Social justice has to do with people like seniors, low-income, and the disabled who have to depend on buses – that is a tough one to address.

DT It looks like peak service is more productive/efficient and non-peak is less productive. Choosing between them is a political decision.

MY Yes, but hopefully they will consider our input.

MH Why I don’t take the bus is because I have several trips and service is not there.

MY Which would we err on? For economic viability we would err on Peak service.

MH Looking at the charts on page 3, it looks like there would have to be some minimum of all day service – giving people the ability to get to places.

JC But then you would end up with fewer riders

DT People have to know that transit is going to work for them. One of the things that make Bellevue great is its schools. Parents take children to the dentist, soccer etc. and transit isn’t useful to them. You don’t want to shut that out. Not everybody should be forced into using transit.

MY A balance is needed.

Page 4/5 a) Direct Service Option vs. b) Connective Option

DT Direct service is better. People don’t want to stand out in the rain.

MH Transfers are not desirable, but you can make them better by making bus routes more frequent. Maybe one transfer is ok, but 2 or 3 – no way. There are more options and more life at the transit center.

- DT** If the Park and Rides are hubs, then I think they work pretty well.
- JC** Issues that drive bus ridership are not just stats, but how does riding the bus make you feel – Is the bus clean, does it smell nice, is it safe? What might be a safe ride for Mark and I may not be a safe ride for Diane or my Mom. Is it convenient – can you drink a coffee and get Wi-Fi? These are the kinds of issues that can affect ridership.
- MH** The express routes are usually the ones that feel more safe.
- CL** What is the overall experience like – not just the number of stops is important. You have to do customer service in a way to make people feel good.
- JC** That goes for bus stops and transit centers as well.
- MH** It is important for them to be well lit.
- JC** I have known people who do not want to take the bus if it is going to the Federal Way Transit Center.

Is making bus service more attractive/ enjoyable a near or long-term goal ?

Page 6/7 a) Serving Destinations Directly / Ridership Goal vs. b) Coverage Goal

- JC** I like how Mark put it about size of service – it has to be more convenient to get people out of their car
- MH** The B-Line goes exactly where I want to go and it is frequent enough to not need a schedule.
- CL** There is a psychological expectation when there is a schedule. If the bus does not arrive for 5 seconds, then people say the bus is late.
- DT** What are the stats for the B-Line?
- FL** Ridership is up 15 percent from what it was on the previous routes that serviced that corridor.
- MH** Certain segments of the B-line are busier than others, such as Crossroads to Overlake for instance.
- JC** What does the B-Line cost?
- MH** Regular bus fare
- DT** What were the reasons for this route (B-Line)?
- FL** It was one of the highest ridership routes. The B-Line is intended to mimic light rail with its no schedules, etc.

- CL** The key is its short headway and reliability
- MY** You have to have a feeling that it is safe.
- MH** But that is for those that have a choice. Students and others use transit out of necessity.
- DT** Two solutions – B-Line and Direct Route. The answer is a mixture – you can't get rid of one or the other. You can move buses around – not trains.
- JC** In Paris, Tokyo, London, Manhattan, Boston – there rail makes perfect sense – you just don't have the density here.
- MH** In 2050 will we? NYC rail was planned long before there were that many people there. Back then people had a vision.

Page 8/9 Under what circumstances might it be appropriate to impact auto travel time (increase delay) to more quickly and reliably move buses through congested corridors in Bellevue?

- MH** It is a forcing function to help people...
- MY** It is only a matter of time. You can't continue to build enough roads. It is only a question of when. If you are going to improve bus service, you ought to improve service now.
- ML** There must be incentives instead of forcing it.
- MH** What about HOV lanes? They are both an incentive for buses and carpools and a disincentive for cars.
- JC** HOV lanes sometimes work to reduce congestion, but sometimes they don't. The HOV lanes from Vancouver to Portland made congestion worse for example.
- MH** Empirical data should drive decisions.
- MH** There are probably technological solutions that will emerge such as GPS devices, traffic timing where you would create synchronistic cars. But hard to say technology will fix it all.
- MY** It is going to cost less energy for a train versus a car. Fifty years ago we had a better system than today, when we only had one car.
- JC** Despite improvements service has gone down because people got that second car.
- DT** When I was 10 years old I took a bus to see a ? and came home and it was perfectly safe.
- MY** When I was 7 years old I took the bus to the Y in downtown Seattle
- CL** What has caused this change? During this time of prosperity and growth? When people get prosperous, they buy cars – they are a status symbol. If the economy does not get better will we experience the reverse?

JC Just look at a High School parking lot today. When I was in high school I was on a Schwinn Varsity. That's what got me back and forth.

MH If you look at trends, more recent generations are moving back into urban, more dense areas – moving back into the city, even with small children where your backyard is a park. Young people are looking for a more urban/more cosmopolitan life style.

ML That might be the case, but the basic idea is freedom. Planning that will hopefully change behavior – that is more challenging. We can continue – technology can bring about an evolution of more intelligent transportation. With technology, 10 or 30 cars can be just as efficient as a bus/train.

MH Rather than talking about the future, you can use empirical data and get there now. Planning Commission folks can bring about dense hubs. You zone things in an intelligent way and you connect them with transit.

JC You have that in Downtown – a new neighborhood sprung up.

MH A product of good planning

JC I don't think they were expecting it.

MH Building codes and parks – there are reasons why people are drawn to Downtown. Intelligent City Planning asks – how do you attract people to downtown?

JC Some smart capitalists had more to do with it

MH It is a combination of both – they have to be able to build it in the first place.... If you plan hubs instead of silly sprawl...

JC Bellevue has done a good job of planning.

DT Planning in Bellevue is wonderful.

JC People just don't know about how great our Parks System is.

CL Downtown is very vital – it is a mix – how do we make them work better?

MY If you had a transit system that you could walk a block to, what would you prefer? That system or your car?

MH I wish many trip scenarios were easier on transit such as getting to the airport. Rail is consistent, safe, clean and quick.

If you had that efficiency, would you use it more? If you are not used to it, you won't. But if you do, it is a no brainer.

- DT** I lived in a high rise in DC, but I didn't want to live like that. That is why I moved back to Bellevue. Just don't make me.
- MY** You have more opportunity... All groceries can sit on loop... If it wasn't a time issue I think I would be more willing to take transit.
- CL** We all have our own preferences.
- MH** Individual preferences versus trends – I am not planning for just me - I am planning for the future and what the trends show – what is the efficiency of each system – the SOV is not supported.
- CL** I agree we need to plan – that is where balancing comes in. The question is, “What is the priority?” Let's give everyone the option to choose. Where do we start to begin?
- JC** If the bus is clean, safe, affordable and convenient, people will use it. They get more value out of it.

What do you think are the greatest strengths/weaknesses of the current transit system in Bellevue?

- CL** It doesn't connect neighborhoods together.
- MH** Connects Bellevue to Seattle well
- CL** Buses are often too full and the current system does not connect Bellevue to other cities well enough
- MH** Rapid Ride is a strength
- JC** RR is a wonderful addition and helps fulfill social justice and convenience – a really smart idea
- MH** The Bellevue Transit Center is nicer than other places. Could access to Park and Ride hubs be improved for surrounding neighborhoods via walking?
- JC** For neighborhoods, has anyone floated the idea of Church parking lots as mini park-and-rides?
- TB** Some have done that. There is one on NE 8th by Bellevue Square
- DT** Use existing resources to expand
- CL** Some park-and-rides have connections. It is a model that could be used – need more in other areas.
- DT/MH** People complain that people use Park-and-ride lots for other uses.

JC Park-and-rides are safe

MH Wifi on Rapid Ride and ST buses is another strength

Main Themes Discussion:

CL More discussion needed on opportunities – what can we do, what should we do?

MH I wonder about short shuttles to hubs

DT That is something I may not disagree with, but it is all economic.

CL If it is on a loop - model is Hong Kong – and run every 5 mins

DT The problem is kids taking cars to school – use incentives

MH That would be exceptional – a downtown circulator

CL These are all good ideas – and use all technology such as PRT – be creative and innovative

Bellevue Transit Master Plan Forum

September 18, 2012

TABLE 5

Kevin McDonald, Transportation Staff

Facilitator

Scott MacDonald, Public Art Staff

Scribe

Judy Clark, Transportation Staff

Display Notes

Kevin Turner

Planning Commission

John Bruels

Human Services Commission

Dallas Evans

Parks & Community Services Board

Olga Perelman

Human Services Commission

Jay Hamlin

Planning Commission

Genevieve Tremblay

Arts Commission

Themes

1. Focus transit service on major corridors and provide access to those corridors with feeder transit and ped/bike facilities.
2. Provide equitable access and information to existing and prospective transit users.
3. Transit should shape and support land use vision, economic vitality, and sustainability goals.

1. Introductions

- a. Have you used transit in the Puget Sound region?
- b. When did you last use transit and how often did/do you use it?
- c. What type of transit trips did/do you take (work, school, social, special events, other)?
- d. If you have never used transit in the region please explain why not.

KT Kevin Turner

Planning Commission

He has used transit but not recently. He used to commute to Seattle from Bellevue daily before the 550 route existed. Commissioner Turner stated that snow was a major issue with riding the bus. He would also ride the bus into Seattle for a Mariners or Sonics game.

JC John Bruels

Human Services Commission

He uses transit 3-4 times a week. He also uses transit for recreation. He has taken his children on rides to SeaTac Airport on the Light Rail line from Seattle. Commissioner Bruels stated that "It's fun and cheap."

DE Dallas Evans**Parks & Community Services Board**

He used to use transit a lot along “the red carpet.” Now, he uses it primarily for trips to SeaTac Airport, but even then he states that early morning and later evening routes, when he is often travelling to the airport are limited. He recently used Metro, obtaining a Metro transfer not realizing that the transfer wouldn’t work on a Sound Transit bus. All he had in his wallet was a \$5 bill, which he had to use, making for an expensive transit trip.

OP Olga Perelman**Human Services Commission**

She has used transit and that she found it convenient for trips over the lake on SR 520. The last time that she rode transit was last week. She also stated that she has used transit for trips to the airport or special events.

JH Jay Hamlin**Planning Commission**

He does ride transit. The last time he did was over the weekend when he and his wife went on an adventure, trying to get into the Seahawks game but instead found themselves having a glass of wine at a place near the stadium. He also stated that he used the RapidRide B Line about half the time for his commute to work.

GT Genevieve Tremblay**Arts Commission**

She has used transit. Her experience can be separated into three chapters. The first chapter was when she lived on Capitol Hill where she used transit all of the time. The second chapter was when she moved to Mount Baker where she used it less frequently. The third chapter was when she moved to Bellevue. Using transit became a harder sell for her children, so transit is rarely the option used, except an occasional trip to Seattle.

2. What are the two or three most important ways transit benefits Bellevue?

KT It helps people get to work.

JB Transit is the sustainable mode of transportation and that it represents the way forward. Parking is not a good use of land. People can experience the human activity and vibrancy of the Downtown sidewalks. For some people transit is the only source or option for transportation.

GT It is too bad that Downtown Bellevue is stuck with such a wide street grid. Some people have mobility issues who are served by transit. Transit allows you to sit back and watch the different people and neighborhoods, which people generally can’t do when they are driving.

DE Children use transit for their school commute. It helps with one-way trips when time is not critical.

JH It can be faster if you consider parking as a component of driving. Also, when buses are crowded there is more interaction between the riders – no “cocooning” like in a SOV.

Staff member Kevin McDonald asks the Board Members and Commissioners to be more specific about Bellevue and how transit benefits it.

DE Every parking spot removed increases our ecological vitality. Convention planners look at traffic conditions when they are siting a convention. This brings a huge economic benefit to the city with convention attendees buying food and hotel stays. He states that it is all about the “velocity of money.” He clarified this by stating that it is about moving money into the city as quickly as possible.

GT Tolls create a further barrier for driving between Seattle and Bellevue, transit reduces the barrier. Transit provides a huge cultural impact by increasing livability. Transit allows you to sit back and watch the different people and neighborhoods, which people generally can’t do when they are driving.

JB With car transportation there is no exchange across communities.

KT Transit benefits Bellevue because it helps you get there.

3. Consider the four trade-off scenarios on pages 2 through 9. How can we ensure that costs and benefits are shared equitably at a time when transit agencies are reducing/eliminating low ridership routes?

Page 2/3 Peaking Patterns

Is transit mostly about serving a peak-period or “rush hour” commute pattern, or is its top priority to provide a consistent service all day? Or is it a balance of these, and if so, where do you strike that balance?

OP Wondered why fare hikes are not mentioned. Raise fares to avoid cuts. People are more than happy to pay 50 cents more. Also, Bellevue is aging, and she wondered how older people would get around when transit is mostly on major corridors.

JB Wondered if other means of subsidizing might be explored like business sponsorship – because businesses benefit greatly from good transit service. Also, current services that augment the system are for the elderly and people with disabilities but the working poor don’t have those same options.

JH The Connective Option is smart.

DE I favor setting up high-ridership corridors for transit that serve high density areas. Businesses and residents can choose to be near these transit corridors, or not. To the point about an aging population, older people make a decision to stay in their homes or not.

GT Developers consider transit in their proposals.

KT Demographics could show where additional service is needed.

Staff member Kevin McDonald asked the table about changes to the span of service.

KT He would hate to see the off peak service not covered - shrink the Peak in order to spread service hours.

JH He wouldn't like to see the off peak service not covered. He thinks the all-day predictability of routes like the RapidRide B Line is what makes it successful. There is a trade-off between predictability and responsiveness – and the transit service should be predictable. A trolley system might be an option to explore as a supplement to routes.

GT A nimble system could be created to help the off peak that shifts quickly to demographic changes in order to address the cuts. Transit could respond to a form of crowd sourcing keeping the system nimble and specific to users during off peak periods. At some point a leap has to be made and that the system needs to address in real ways how we are sustainable and use our resources. She suggested that orientation and mobility services could be developed in partnership with Microsoft thus leveraging technologies that are here.

JB The Direct Service Option doesn't work for a mom who needs to handle kids, work and errands since it requires so much planning. In regards to the changes to the span of service there would need to be community-engagement as a vital component to deciding where cuts are made and that cuts to the span of service needs to be fair and across the board.

OP A supplemental system to the Connective Option could be made up of a bike or Segway sharing program elevated from the ground like the Highline in New York City. It is also important to consider the foreign-born riders and how do we get transit to them.

DE If the city builds the “backbone structure” of the transit system based on high-ridership corridors, then residents, businesses and developers will respond.

KT Options are better than just simply major routes and suggested an all of the above approach with major routes with a bike and Segway system in feed.

- 4. Please respond to the four trade-off scenarios on pages 2 through 9 with a long-term perspective (2030) that considers “the dynamic nature of Bellevue’s economic expansion [which] requires a bold transit vision.” (Bellevue City Council Project Principles, approved July 9, 2012)**

DE Transit needs to be made easier and faster so that people would make decisions to ride based off of the convenience.

Dedicated bus lanes were mentioned.

KT Dedicated bus lanes should only be run during peak hours and wondered where in Bellevue there might be room for a bus-only lane. Keeping people off of the highways is a priority and that an incentive system could be set up to reward businesses for alternative forms of commuting. He mentioned telecommuting or setting different hours for employees as examples.

OP Where would the bike lanes fit into dedicated bus lanes? Dedicated bus lanes would have to be very selective.

JH Consider a trolley on NE 8th Street between Downtown and Crossroads, and between Eastgate and Crossroads. Feed these main transit corridor with good pedestrian and bicycle access and feeder transit routes

Unattributed:

- Peak-period dependency for commuting is morphing today. For daily needs, a network system works best
- Use employment data and land use changes as the basis to adjust transit service
- Span of service is important – especially later evening service for service workers and partiers
- Easy access to park and ride facilities – Eastgate is a good example
- Insert more pedestrian and bicycle connections at the end of cul-d-sacs for better access between neighborhoods and to transit
- Provide elevated, grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Implement a bike-share program to supplement transit for the “last mile”
- Provide multi-modal options
- Good information and education for existing and prospective transit passengers is important – wayfinding, next-bus, etc
- Bellevue is experiencing an identity and culture shift away from strictly an auto-orientation
- Focus on choice and opportunity and multiple mobility options
- Serve who live in Bellevue
- Community access – physical access in the ADA sense – visual and audio, plus information access through a variety of means
- Don’t force people to depend on auto access in denser areas – especially Downtown
- Prioritize bus on certain high-ridership corridors using HOV lanes and transit signal prioritization, queue jumps, time of day transit priority, BAT Lanes, freeway entrances
- Look at enhancing travel demand management programs, including telecommuting and flexible work hours
- Provide better transit access to schools – would significantly reduce auto trips

5. What do you think are the greatest strengths/weaknesses of the current transit system in Bellevue?

DE A weakness to our current system is that the “backbone is missing.” The dominant ideology is to try to appease everyone. We need a plan that serves high density land use and gets people to change their travel behaviors versus pleasing everyone. Look at Portland, Oregon’s transit system as an example of a good system. At the beginning there was low ridership but business and communities developed around the routes and now it is of the best transportations systems in the country.

GT The RapidRide B line is a strength. Bel-Red is a great strength since it is sustainable and holistic in its planning. Take the Bel-Red vision and apply it elsewhere in the city: Factoria, Eastgate, Crossroads, Wilburton.

KT A weakness is that transit is not cost-effective and that options that don’t require a driver need to be explored. Current method of transit service delivery is inefficient.

JB Sees the effort to address the changing demographic as a strength. Demographics and culture are shifting to support transit

JH Great transit center and park and rides

Unattributed:

- Light rail is not cost-effective in the short term, although once the capital infrastructure is in place, cost-effectiveness improves over the long term

Bellevue Transit Master Plan Forum

September 18, 2012

TABLE 6

Cathy VonWald , Parks & Community Services Staff	Facilitator
Andreas Piller , Transportation Staff	Scribe
Bernard Van de Kamp , Transportation Staff	Display Notes
Darek Jarzynski	City of Bellevue
Stephen Hunt	King County Metro
Sherwin Lee	Seattle Transit Blog
Howard Katz	Bellevue Network on Aging
Richard Englund	Bellevue Network on Aging
Hannah Kimball	Bellevue Network on Aging

Themes

1. Several participants noted that as it currently operates, transit in Bellevue provides limited value for many travel needs. It was acknowledged that transit seems to be well used by work commuters, students, those attending special events in Seattle, and those without other travel options, including those who cannot drive, new immigrants, and the disabled, but transit was considered to be inconvenient for shopping trips, doctor's appointments, and midday and weekend travel.
2. The value provided by transit in Bellevue depends significantly on one's location in the city. Transit currently primarily benefits those traveling to Downtown Bellevue, while many neighborhoods in south and east Bellevue have little or no useful service.
3. Support for implementing a downtown circulator service was expressed by each of the Network on Aging participants. The stated purpose for such a service was to improve mobility within Downtown Bellevue, which was said to be too large an area with superblocks that are too large to comfortably navigate on foot. Other table participants expressed reservations about the circulator concept, suggesting that circulators do not exist in most cities cited by participants as great transit cities, and in other places where they do exist, they typically do not perform well.
4. The importance of addressing the 'last mile' was considered in several different forms. Increasing Park & Ride capacity was considered one important way of addressing this issue; bicycle racks on buses were noted as another successful solution, while small-bus local circulators and even airport-style moving walkways were suggested as other potential solutions.
5. Although ridership was seen as being heavily peak-oriented, it was eventually agreed that a balanced approach should be taken to provide basic all-day service with increased service during peak commuting hours.

6. Participants generally did not think of transferring favorably, but they recognized that the connective service option seemed like the more logical solution to support over the direct but less frequent service option. It was emphasized however that support for such service is contingent on transfers being quick and reliable, with shelters available to keep waiting riders protected from rain.

1. Introductions

- a. Have you used transit in the Puget Sound region?
- b. When did you last use transit and how often did/do you use it?
- c. What type of transit trips did/do you take (work, school, social, special events, other)?
- d. If you have never used transit in the region please explain why not.

RE Richard Englund

Bellevue Network on Aging

I mostly use transit to go to the airport—maybe twice per year. I live close to Downtown Bellevue, but I don't find it practical to get around without a car. Downtown is too big of an area to walk. I think introducing a downtown circulator service is key.

HK Hannah Kimball

Bellevue Network on Aging

I haven't used transit in Bellevue and have little experience using it elsewhere in the region. I think the circulator that Richard spoke of sounds like a good idea, but I don't know the obstacles keeping it from implementation.

My perception is that transit is not convenient—it won't get me from Point A to Point B. Also, I don't want to have to wait outside for a long time, especially in inclement weather.

HK Howard Katz

Bellevue Network on Aging

I used to use transit to attend baseball games in Seattle, until Mariners attendance declined and parking became more available, so now I drive. For Seahawks games, where parking is hard to come by, I still use transit. Bellevue has one of the worst transit systems I have been associated with. I can't use it get to the North Bellevue Community Center, so I drive instead.

SL Sherwin Lee

Seattle Transit Blog

I use transit for most of my travel needs—especially for commuting to work and social occasions during the week. I am more likely to drive on weekends, especially for social trips, due to the reduced transit service those days. I live in Somerset, where it is hard to depend entirely on transit without a car. Transfers are typically required for me to get where I'm going.

CV Cathy VonWald

Parks & Community Services Staff

The hills in Somerset are certainly a deterrent and can make it difficult to use transit in that neighborhood.

SH Stephen Hunt

King County Metro

I use transit frequently, most often to get to work in Downtown Seattle.
I live in West Seattle. I also bike often—more often than transit day-to-day.

DJ Darek Jarzynski

City of Bellevue

BV Bernard Van de Kamp

Transportation Staff

2. What are the two or three most important ways transit benefits Bellevue?

RE Transit brings a lot of employees into the city.

HK Transit in Bellevue doesn't serve anybody—except to get to Downtown Bellevue. If you aren't going downtown, it isn't useful. When Sound Transit [East Link] comes to Bellevue, I won't use it to get to the airport because it will take me to Downtown Seattle first, then I have to transfer. I can drive to the airport in 20 minutes—why would I use Sound Transit?

CV What about for shopping and other kinds of trips?

RE I don't use transit much, but I do see a lot of people use it, especially students going to Bellevue College. So it seems to be beneficial to students and commuters.

CV What about for doctor's visits? Is transit useful for those trips?

RE I don't think so.

HK No.

CV What about RapidRide? It seems to be beneficial; people seem to like it. I use it to get to work and I think it's great—it's a slightly circuitous trip for me from North Bellevue, but it's frequent and dependable.

DJ RapidRide—and transit in general—is also great for high school students, who use it often. It helps the Bellevue School District save money so they don't have to provide normal school bus service.

RE Several of you have said you use transit to come here [Bellevue City Hall], which is right next to the Transit Center. What if it were going somewhere else—like Old Main? It would be very difficult to get to with transit.

CV I think that north and south travel tends to be okay, but going east and west can be difficult.

- HK** If you asked me to convert to using transit today, I couldn't do it. I wouldn't know how. You'd have to give me a map and explain it to me.
- CV** So the consensus seems to be that transit is useful for commuters and students—both college and high school. Sherwin, do you have any comments on this?
- SL** Transit provides choice to various communities—such as immigrants and students, among others. People in Lake Hills and Crossroads use it for non-work trips, which is great. It might not always be the most efficient mode, but it gives them a choice to get where they're going. Another important benefit of transit is related to the economy. Transit helps to capture and direct future growth.
- CV** Accessibility is also a benefit—everyone can get on the bus, including those with disabilities.
- HK** I volunteer at the Hope Heart Institute, and many of those people use transit regularly—it helps them live a better lifestyle. They avoid the hassles of owning a car, which saves money. Also, taking transit saves time because they can be productive while they ride instead of driving.
- CV** Transit can be less stressful than driving.
- DJ** Yes, I would like to emphasize this. Transit is less stressful.
- HK** In New York City, where I lived previously, I was able to read a full newspaper daily while I used transit to get around. Now I can't read anymore because I'm driving around.
- SH** One other thing is to consider how we think about transit. Transit is not just generic travel. Transit excels at serving multiple people who are going in the same direction, so it is better for some trips—like work commuting—than it is for others. Doctor's appointments, for example, may not be as well-suited for transit travel. We have to focus on which trips transit is good for—when many people are moving in the same direction. Looking to the future, transit will benefit as Bellevue's urban centers continue to grow, as these attract more people. Community Transit in Snohomish County considers the maximum capacity of road widths while planning for growth. If Bellevue is to achieve development goals in limited space—that is, without expanding roads—this is one thing to possibly consider.
- RE** One of the things that has been obvious for some time is that dispersed population density makes it hard to provide transit service. However, we are approaching New York City population density in Bellevue today, but without services like a circulator, we do not have transit service that is comparable to New York City. I think I understand why the circulator concept is not more popular: service planning is controlled by the county, who have different

goals, so this is not a high priority for them. But I believe that if we were given the opportunity to test such a service, we could prove that it would succeed and make it something permanent that they would be interested in too.

HK The best transit locally is in Seattle. Five months ago, I went to the Veteran’s Administration Building. I wanted to avoid having to pay for parking, so I parked further away and rode transit in the Downtown Free Ride Area. I was able to find my way by bus by asking other people for directions. I have also used buses there to go to the symphony and ball games.

CV So you’ve also used transit for social and special event trip purposes; great!

3. Consider the four trade-off scenarios on pages 2 through 9. How can we ensure that costs and benefits are shared equitably at a time when transit agencies are reducing/eliminating low ridership routes?

Page 2/3 Peaking Patterns

Is transit mostly about serving a peak-period or “rush hour” commute pattern, or is its top priority to provide a consistent service all day? Or is it a balance of these, and if so, where do you strike that balance?

HK As I’ve mentioned I don’t use transit often, but I often see that buses are packed in the mornings and evenings, but appear to be empty in the middle of the day. So I see it as peak-oriented, with less service being needed during the day.

HK If 65-70 percent of resources were concentrated in peak hours, taking large numbers of people in the same direction, is it efficient enough to conserve enough resources to provide more flexibility at other times of the day?

SH This is another instance where how we think about transit is important. As a comparison consider: Is a road network intended primarily to get people to work, or is it there to provide mobility generally? Clearly roads are most used in the peak period, but is that their only purpose?

HK No.

SH You might have six lanes on the freeway because they fill up in the peak period, but it serves people travelling all day.

RE To the question of either-or or both—I see it as both.

CV So it is a balance.

- SH** Peak period on a roadway is what drives your cost. The same is true of transit—lots of buses require more drivers and facilities, and more and larger bases. So we should consider the question: Am I willing to deal with some crowding on buses and at stops during the peak to maintain more service during the day?
- DJ** It is also worth mentioning that even if you just think about work, it doesn't always start at 6:00 PM like the peak bus service. Sometimes we work late (like tonight); sometimes we have meetings to go to in the middle of the day.
- SL** Transit is part of the transportation network. It can't be commuter-only, otherwise anyone outside that box will find it useless. The Eastside's frequent transit network advertised by Metro [holds up map] would be worthless without an all-day network to supplement it. A business may operate in the red during the week, but on the weekend they will make a profit. The same applies to transit with the relationship between all-day and peak-only service.
- CV** RapidRide has been well-received, in part, because it is frequent and reliable. People know they can go to the bus stop and it will be there within ten minutes. And I think I am starting to hear a consensus that service should be consistent all day.
- BV** What do we mean by consistent? The same service level all day—peak and off-peak? The real question here is, given that we face the real prospect of service cuts from Metro in the next few years, what ought to go? Reduce peak service or reduce all-day service?
- HK** Address special needs, especially for older adults. Provide regular, consistent, small bus transportation to serve their needs: Downtown, hospitals, doctors. If it was convenient, I would take it.
- RE** I hate to hear about planning for cut backs. If that's what you plan for, that's what you're going to see happen. Plan for what you want to see succeed. If you plan for cuts, you'll get cuts.
- BV** What do you see as big priorities?
- HK** The combination of cars plus buses or trains. Park and Ride lots are important. We need multi-level facilities to accommodate special events, because we generally can't expand the lots outwards anymore. When I use transit, I usually reach it by driving, not walking.
- RE** The Boomer generation is beginning to get past 60. Lots of them are looking to give up their car and take up transit, so we need to make it convenient for them to do so.
- CV** Convenient, consistent all-day service with increased peak service is the consensus then, I believe.

HK Sherwin mentioned the notion of minimum basic all-day service, then an overlay of additional service during the peak. Is that what Metro does now?

SH Yes.

Page 4/5 a) Direct Service Option vs. b) Connective Option

HK In Paris and New York City, transit is how I did things. I didn't know my way around, and in Paris couldn't even speak the language, but I had my map so I could do it. If we had a bus system like that with a lot of easy transfers, I would use it.

CV I have more options now than in recent years. I always have to transfer, but I can use transit to get where I'm going. As long as you don't have to wait 30-45 minutes...

HK Yes—it has to be fast.

SL In Asia, it is common for people to have to transfer two or three times, but it is easy and fast for them to do. Here, there is a stigma to transferring; it makes transit less attractive. But direct service everywhere is cost prohibitive. Metro's new guidelines target the more connective, transfer-based option. We have to teach riders how to do it—how to work with transfers.

HK So do you think that's just our 'get-in-my-car-and-go-straight-where-I'm-going' mentality?

SL I think so.

HK It seems like from a logical perspective, we would want to support the connective option. I suppose I could probably be convinced to slow down, smell the flowers, and transfer.

BV Just bring an umbrella.

SH Direct service is more in line with commuting patterns—lots of people travelling to and from the same locations. We have a tendency to think of transit the same way we do cars—serving Point A to Point B. But we can't do that with transit; that isn't how transit is designed to work, as different people are often trying to get to different places. It should also be noted that the connective option does not imply slower service. Because you have more buses—more frequency, as depicted in the Forum packet—it could actually be faster because you will spend less time waiting.

RE I think that there is much we can learn from cities with connective service, like Paris.

Page 6/7 a) Serving Destinations Directly / Ridership Goal vs. b) Coverage Goal

- BV** This question comes down to deciding where transit service should fall on the spectrum between, at its extremes, door-to-door service versus concentrated service along major corridors and at Park and Rides. Where should service be?
- CV** And how far should we have to walk to get to it? None of us are getting any younger. Are we able to go two blocks? Bellevue has geographic/topographic issues that can make it especially hard for some people to walk to the bus.
- RE** I think Mayor Lee touched on a good point in his opening statements. We need to solve the problem of the last mile. If the last mile problem could be solved, you could help ridership on the trunk lines by bringing more people to them.
- HK** Let's say Sound Transit is here in 2020 and we have special needs. We have a hospital station that is not at the hospital. People will have to walk over a mile to get to doctors' offices. So how can we address this? Maybe with local circulators. Maybe with some sort of airport-style moving platforms.
- CV** You mean the small driverless trains?
- HK** No, I mean those long moving walking platforms. But yes, what about those little elevated driverless trains? Why can't we have those?
- BV** Money—those are very expensive.
- SL** Also notable here is transit's link to economic development. For employers looking to attract employees, a place that maximizes frequency is more marketable than infrequent service that comes only every hour or two to neighborhoods. The same can be said for property developers. The ridership goal generally achieves better ends than the coverage goal.
- BV** I would also like to note that there has been discussion between the City and Metro before—several years ago now—about circulator service in Bellevue, like that which you have mentioned.
- HK** To clarify, what do you mean by circulator?
- BV** Smaller buses that serve localized areas, like Downtown Bellevue.
- HK** There has been no discussion about driverless trains?
- BV** No.

- RE** Does Bellevue operate any service itself?
- BV** No. Metro and Sound Transit are the regional service providers.
- SH** We have mentioned circulators a few times now. Let me ask you this. Is there a circulator in Downtown Seattle?
- HK** Yes.
- SH** Is there? Which route?
- SL** There is going to be one.
- SH** Well, yes, there will be one. But there isn't one now, and we have been commenting that getting around downtown Seattle with transit is relatively easy. Is there a circulator in Manhattan?
- HK** No.
- SH** Is there a circulator in Paris?
- HK** No.
- SH** If you focus on how you can effectively connect your intra-city network to the broader area, there is no need for a circulator service. It can be difficult for people to figure out which routes they need to take, because when they see the signs at the stop it just says a number and 'Bear Creek', when all they want to do is go five blocks. But if the intra-city network can be thoughtfully planned while connecting those routes to the broader area, then the issue isn't one to be solved by a circulator, but rather by improving and simplifying information.
- SL** Two of the only major U.S. cities that I know of that have circulators are Detroit and Jacksonville. And Detroit is looking into shutting theirs down, because it is expensive to operate and can be a redundant service.
- BV** A common thing we have found when planning for a possible circulator is that people don't understand how the system works. The service is there, but people don't know how to use it.
- HK** If you own a car, you have a car mentality. Using the bus takes planning, looking at a map, knowing which routes to take...

Page 8/9 Under what circumstances might it be appropriate to impact auto travel time (increase delay) to more quickly and reliably move buses through congested corridors in Bellevue?

- BV** The idea of giving priority to transit tends to follow from the idea that a single bus carries many more people than a single-occupant car. A common example of such priority measures is smart signals, which can change as a bus is approaching so that it doesn't have to wait at a red light as long. Is it fair to make the other cars wait?
- HK** Is it workable? Don't you then cause traffic jams?
- BV** During peak hours, it doesn't make much difference, since traffic tends to be backed up at intersections anyway, whether or not the bus is given priority.
- HK** If you fix transit like on NE 10th St, nobody would use the bus. You can drive 50 mph down that street and get where you're going very quickly!
- SL** The impact that transit priority measures have on cars tend to be minimal. Queue jump lanes and HOV lanes are some examples of transit priority measures, which is what is pictured in the Forum packet. One local example is on NE Pacific St in Montlake. People sometimes complain that car lanes are congested while the transit lane is mostly empty, but this is actually a sign that it is working. On a four-lane highway, an HOV lane accounts for only one-quarter of the total lane area, but it may account for 40 percent of the person trips because all the vehicles that use it are high-occupancy.
- CV** Does Bellevue have enough right-of-way to add HOV lanes, like on NE 8th St?
- BV** Bellevue roads are built-out in many places, so adding new lanes is not an option. Intersections are often flared out to move people through more quickly; reconfiguring some of them could make it possible to implement queue jump lanes like Sherwin was explaining.
- HK** I have a solution for you at 106th Ave and NE 8th St: chop down the tree!
- BV** *[Laughing]* You mean this tree—the tree that's on our city's logo?
- HK** Yes that one—chop that tree down and you would have room for an extra lane!
- RE** Traffic management in Bellevue is the best that I have seen. Obviously I don't drive around everywhere, but it is really excellent here.
- HK** I agree. And thank you, thank you, thank you for the blinking left arrow.

- BV** I can't take any credit for that, but we have a great traffic engineering department, and we hear a lot of positive feedback about those.
- SH** When you consider how to give priority, it again depends on how you perceive transit. If you concentrate transit on major corridors, it isn't just the larger number of people on one bus that benefit. More people are then using transit on the entire street, making the trade-off a much easier one to make. This isn't just a question of expanding rights-of-way, but also of repurposing them. Community Transit's maximum capacity of road widths is again a useful example to point to on this subject.

What do you think are the greatest strengths/weaknesses of the current transit system in Bellevue?

- CV** I think we have already addressed this, but does anyone want to add any other comments? I would add that having multiple bike racks on the front of buses is pretty handy.
- BV** It's about helping connect that last mile...
- HK** We've been talking about planning for growth, but I don't see it happening. Until the economy turns around, I don't see how we can talk about growth. The Federal Reserve wants to keep interest rates low through 2015—I don't expect to see any real growth start happening again for at least another five years.
- BV** Things certainly aren't growing as fast as they had been in recent years, but there is still some development happening.
- CV** With older adults, immigrants, and non-English-speaking populations growing, more rider education is needed.
- HK** When you have the security of your car to take you from Point A to Point B, and when you get off the bus somewhere you don't know, and you don't know how long you have to wait for the next bus to come, it is intimidating.