



May 20, Bellevue City Council Testimony, Bellevue's Transit Master Plan

RE: Bellevue Chamber of Commerce testimony on Market Driven Strategies of Bellevue's Transit Master Plan

Good evening Mayor Lee, Deputy Mayor Robertson and council members. I'm Lincoln Vander Veen with the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce. This evening I want to express the importance of transportation mobility for Bellevue businesses and express support for the city's holistic focus on allowing market forces to drive public transportation planning. The Chamber has been on record supporting buses as a preferred transit method to get people to and from the workplace during peak commute hours. Bus travel to and from downtown Bellevue from employment centers to homes, and parts in between, helps employees, residents, and business patrons move Bellevue's economy forward.

Each year, the Chamber's Eastside Business Leadership Survey consistently shows business leaders in Bellevue believe mobility (namely, transportation infrastructure and overall mobility) is an integral part of business success in Bellevue. It is vital the system of public transportation meet the needs of Bellevue's most important activity and business nodes, including the CBD, Eastgate, and, more generally, the heavily trafficked areas of the 405 crescent. The market-driven focus on peak-travel frequency and high-ridership markets by the planners behind this effort is appreciated and vitally important; the Chamber supports the proposed Market Driven Strategies.

A holistic, system-wide approach to studying the most efficient ways to distribute bus transportation resources is helpful to the business community. It is important, also, that Bellevue's work on updating the Transit Master Plan not be done in a silo. Bellevue has many important Eastside partners and many within Bellevue's

business community live outside the city limits. Consistently engaging neighboring communities must be a part of this work.

The Chamber and our membership are aware of the unknown: whether the dollars available will meet the needs of a robust and efficient system of public transportation in Bellevue. That is why working to develop flexibility depending on available resources is vital to future planning and proper prioritization.

The Chamber has been an active participant in the Transit Master Plan process at different levels of our organization and we thank city staff for their outreach efforts to the business community. City staff has heard from many of our members in different settings on the importance of efficient mobility options and market-driven planning. We encourage city staff and council members to focus their discussions and planning on public transportation in Bellevue with our employers, employees, and patrons in mind. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening.