



## Washington State Transportation Commission

Bellevue Meeting Summary  
November 17 & 18, 2020

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Chair Jerry Litt opened the meeting at 12:00 noon with introductions by Commissioners and staff, an overview of the agenda, and virtual meeting protocols.

### **I-405 / SR 167 Express Toll Lane Low-Income Tolling Study** **Gabor Debreczeni, Economic Analysis and Forecasting Manger, WSP USA** **Catherine Larson, Principal Consultant, Larson Consulting Associates** **Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State Transportation Commission**

The project team presented proposed low-income toll program options for further study, as well as provided an update on a survey being conducted of low-income residents in the area of the I-405/SR 167 Express Toll Lanes corridor.

Mr. Debreczeni and Ms. Larson provided an overview of the stakeholder workshop process that examined low-income toll programs around the US. Twenty-one programs were identified. Based on their evaluation, the workshop narrowed the list to five programs for the Commission to consider.

The five programs that the Commission is being asked to consider and narrow to two are:

- Percentage discount – mostly benefit low-income users who are regular commuters during peak times
- Fixed discount – mostly benefit low-income users who travel at off-peak times and those who make short Express Toll Lane (ETL) trips
- Fixed toll credit (per month, etc.) – Allows users choice of whether they would use program for occasional high-cost trips or a larger number of low-cost trips
- Fixed number of free toll trips (per month, etc.) – would encourage use of ETLs for infrequent high-value trips
- Lower maximum toll – allows low-income users to plan to use ETLs with greater frequency during peak times

Beyond a low-income tolling program, the project team recommends that no matter which program is selected it include the following components:

- Provide a free *Good to GO!* Pass to program users
- Have an advisory panel including low-income users of the program with diversity regarding race, geography of residence, age, and gender
- Documentation will be available in all primary languages for the region, with translation available for other languages

- Program information to be shown in visual formats as much as possible
- Enrollment process will be accommodating for users with disabilities
- Enrollment will be available at physical locations located in geographically accessible areas

**Presentation:**

[Low-Income Tolling Study](#)

For more detail on agenda item 2, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:04:42, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** The project team will present to the Commission at the December meeting. The Commission will select two potential programs for further evaluation.

## **Mayor's Welcome**

**Lynne Robinson, Mayor, City of Bellevue**

Mayor Robinson welcomed the Commission to Bellevue, via a recorded message.

For more detail on agenda item 3, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:01:21, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

## **Transportation 101**

**Reema Griffith, Executive Director, Washington State Transportation Commission**

**Carl See, Deputy Director, Washington State Transportation Commission**

**Tamara Jones, Senior Policy Analyst, Washington State Transportation**

Commission staff provided an overview of the fiscal and policy framework of the statewide transportation system.

**Presentation:**

[Transportation 101](#)

For more detail on agenda item 4, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:17:24, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

## **Bellevue Transportation Issues, Challenges, and Successes** **Andrew Singelakis, Director of Transportation, City of Bellevue**

Mr. Singelakis briefed the Commission on Bellevue's transportation investments and key needs to support the growing regional economy.

### **Presentation:**

[Bellevue Transportation](#)

For more detail on agenda item 5, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:47:31, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

## **Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) VISION 2050**

**Josh Brown, Executive Director, Puget Sound Regional Council**

**Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management, Puget Sound Regional Council**

**Emil King, Assistant Director, Planning, City of Bellevue**

Mr. Brown and Mr. Inghram briefed the Commission on pillars of PSRC's [Vision 2050](#) plan. The plan, adopted in October 2020, extends the region's growth strategy to 2050. Mr. King discussed how the plan impacts eastside and Bellevue and provided an overview of Bellevue's growth strategy.

Mr. Brown provided a high-level overview of *Vision 2050* which focuses on:

- A strong economy and a healthy environment
- Preserve waters, farms, recreation, and resource lands
- Urban Growth Area and centers strategy
- Local actions to achieve regional VISION

Key policy themes:

- Increase housing choices and affordability
- Provide opportunities for all
- Sustain a strong economy
- Significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Keep the region moving
- Restore the health of Puget Sound
- Protect a network of open space
- Growth in centers and near transit
- Act collaboratively and support local efforts

Regional Growth Strategy:

- Most growth is happening in the Metro, Core, and High Capacity Transit (HCT) Communities
- 65% of the region’s population growth and 75% of employment growth is in regional growth centers and near HCT
- There are lower growth allocations in urban unincorporated and rural areas compared with long-term trends
- There is a better jobs-housing balance by shifting employment opportunities from King County to other counties in the region

**Presentations:**

[PSRC](#)

[PSRC-Bellevue](#)

For more detail on agenda item 6, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:02:01, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

**Transformative Transit Projects**

**Peter Rogoff, Chief Executive Officer, Sound Transit**

**Andrew Singelakis, Director of Transportation, City of Bellevue**

**Randy Corman, Councilmember, City of Renton**

**Liam Olsen, Mayor, City of Bothell**

Mr. Rogoff briefed the Commission on the East Link Extension and the I-405 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Mr. Singelakis, Councilman Corman, and Mayor Olsen shared how these projects will impact their communities.

**Presentations:**

[Transformative Transit-Sound Transit](#)

[Transformative Transit-City of Bellevue](#)

[Transformative Transit-City of Renton](#)

[Transformative Transit-City of Bothell](#)

For more detail on agenda item 7, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:46:41, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

## **WSDOT Transportation Challenges and Successes**

**Mike Cotten, Regional Administrator, Northwest Region, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)**

**Lisa Hodgson, Program Administrator, I-405/SR 167 Corridor Program, WSDOT**

Mr. Cotten provided an overview of the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) Northwest Region. Ms. Hodgson provided an overview of projects on the I-405/SR 167 Corridor.

### **Presentations:**

[WSDOT NW Region Update](#)

[I-405/SR 167 Update](#)

For more detail on agenda item 8, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:37:01, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

## **Smart Mobility**

**Chris Long, Interim Assistant Director, Traffic Management, City of Bellevue**

Mr. Long provided an overview of Bellevue's nationally recognized traffic management center. The technology used is applied to make Bellevue's streets safer and more efficient, in real time.

The adaptive transportation system used by Bellevue has reduced travel time during peak hours by 25-35%. The system controls 225 intersections, including some that are owned by WSDOT and neighboring cities. By the end of 2021, every intersection in Bellevue will have a 360° camera view, allowing for improve traffic flow and real-time safety improvements.

### **Video:**

[Analytics for Smart Cities](#)

### **Presentation:**

[Smart Mobility](#)

For more detail on agenda item 9, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 04:14:55, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** Meeting summary approved unanimously.

**Follow-Up:** Post on the WSTC web page.

Chair Jerry Litt reminded the Commission that the meeting will continue Wednesday, November 18, 2020, and recessed the meeting.

**November 18, 2020**

Chair Litt opened the meeting at 9:00 am with introductions by Commissioners.

## **Transportation Equity and Innovation**

**Michael Shiosaki, Director, Parks and Community Services, City of Bellevue**

**Geoff Crump, Chief Operating Officer, Hopelink**

**Terry White, Interim General Manager, King County Metro**

**De'Sean Quinn, Strategic Planning Manager, King County Metro**

**Franz Loewenherz, Principal Planner, Transportation, City of Bellevue**

The panel briefed the Commission on how the City of Bellevue and its transportation partners, Hopelink and King County Metro, are working to meet the diverse transportation needs of its community, including details on the new Crossroads Connect pilot program.

Mr. Shiosaki provided an overview of Bellevue's changing demographics. 41% of Bellevue's population was born outside of the US. In 2019, 44% of Bellevue's population spoke a language other than English at home. The top five languages are Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Hindi, and Russian. 17% of Bellevue School District students qualify for free or reduced lunch. 30% of Bellevue's population are low-income.

Mr. White and Mr. Quinn provided an overview of the equity work being done by King County Metro (Metro). Most of the 150,000 riders who continue to rely on Metro for essential trips are people of color. King County Metro is centering on equity, safety, and climate in Metro's work. By applying this approach, the agenda can better advance key outcomes. Metro wants the public to be aware of available fare options and how they can access these. Customers who are enrolled in one of six state benefit programs can receive a subsidized annual pass, good for unlimited rides on Metro and Sound Transit. Metro expects to enroll 3,000 riders a month.

Mr. Loewenherz described a new, on-demand service called *Crossroad Connect*. The service is a partnership between the City of Bellevue, King County Metro, and Hopelink, available to residents of the Crossroad area, connecting riders who are starting or ending their trips at RapidRide B Line stations in the service area to homes, jobs, schools and stores. Crossroads Connect is intended to improve mobility and respond to unmet travel needs.

### **Video:**

[Crossroad Connect 2020](#)

### **Presentations:**

[Transportation Equity-Bellevue Community Services](#)

[Transportation Equity-Hopelink](#)

[Transportation Equity-Metro](#)

[Transportation Equity-Crossroads Connect](#)

For more detail on agenda item 11, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 00:04:09, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

### **BelRed Streetscape**

**Emil King, Assistant Director, Planning, City of Bellevue**

**Ron Kessack, Assistant Director, Capital Program and Services, City of Bellevue**

Mr. King and Mr. Kessack briefed the Commission on major transportation projects the City is implementing to support the BelRed and Spring Districts transformations, where the city converted a former semi-industrial district into a vibrant mixed-use community.

To complete the BelRed/Spring District vision, funding is needed for planned improvements on SR 520, include the SR 520/124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE interchange.

**Presentation:**

[BelRed-Streetscape](#)

For more detail on agenda item 12, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:04:54, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

### **Bellevue Downtown Business Environment**

**Patrick Bannon, President, Bellevue Downtown Association**

**Joe Fain, President & CEO, Bellevue Chamber of Commerce**

Mr. Bannon and Mr. Fain briefed the Commission about transportation priorities for Bellevue's growth corridor.

Mobility is the top driver for businesses. In the next few years, it is expected that 15% of new jobs and 70% of new leases for office space in Bellevue will be tied to the technology industry. This industry has made it clear that having access to biking and pedestrian facilities are instrumental to decisions on where to put offices. This is an example of something that has been historically viewed as recreational facilities, becoming a real economic driver impacting business decisions. The business community has identified improvements needed in the downtown area to improve safety, reduce congestion, connect systems, and link key projects.

For more detail on agenda item 13, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 01:34:09, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

## **Active Transportation Issues, Challenges, and Successes**

**Warren Jimenez, Director, Parks Division, King County**

**Curt Warber, Project Manager, King County**

**Carrie Hite, Parks and Recreation Director, City of Redmond**

**Jay Arnold, Deputy Mayor, City of Kirkland**

**Mike Ingram, Senior Planner, Transportation, City of Bellevue**

**Stephen Uy, Head of Public Policy and Community Engagement, Facebook**

A panel of trail owners and stakeholders provided an overview of the Eastrail, highlighting key projects, and describing private sector investments. The Eastrail is a 42-mile regional trail on a former rail corridor. The Eastrail will connect Eastside cities, offering transportation and recreational opportunities.

Eastrail is a railbanked corridor, previously owned by BNSF. It serves as a connector between residential neighborhoods and business opportunities. Eastrail is more than a trail - it is an integrated transportation corridor, paved and developed to ensure community and land use integration.

There has been substantial investment: over 15 miles of trail open by 2021; over \$30 million in partnership funding; over \$60 million in major projects by 2023. There remains \$200 Million in unfunded needs to close gaps, pave the entire trail, and make connections to neighborhoods:

### **Video:**

[Experience the Eastrail](#)

### **Presentations:**

[Eastrail-King County](#)

[Eastrail-Redmond](#)

[Eastrail-Kirkland](#)

[Eastrail-Bellevue](#)

[Eastrail-Facebook](#)

For more detail on agenda item 14, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 02:17:16, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Action:** None.

**Follow-Up:** None at this time.

## **Commission Business**

### **October Meeting Summary**

There were no changes requested to the October Meeting Summary.

There was discussion of condensing meeting summaries given the meetings are recorded and posted on both the WSTC and TVW websites. Also, WSTC meeting summaries includes information for each agenda item on where precisely in the recording interested persons can

access specific presentations. Given the meeting summaries are not transcripts, nor reflecting a regulatory meeting or action, it was decided that moving forward the WSTC will not vote on the meeting summaries, but will discuss them and any needed changes in the monthly meetings, as is the case now.

Commissioner Restucci moved approval of the summary. Commissioner Jennings seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action:** October meeting summary was approved.

**Follow-Up:** Summary will be posted on the Commission web page.

### **Reflections and Recommendations**

- Importance of being prepared. Meeting highlighted the importance of advance planning. Bellevue is where it is because of their advance planning, which involved an inclusive process.
- In the last 40 years, the area has experienced a lot of growth. The collaboration between the eastside cities, the private sector, and other public entities.
- Was struck by the different economic situation that we are in now then we were when the Legislature directed the Low-income toll study. This could be short term, but could continue after
- Bellevue is doing a great job with planning and growth. Shocked to hear that the downtown is the area of the greatest growth.
- Would like to be back in the area in 2023, when Eastrail opens.
- Would like to see a focus on conversation with affordable access to commercial space for small businesses.
- Impressed with the amount of growth in the area and the approach.
- Concerned with impacts of COVID
- Glad to see the partnership with King County Metro and Hopelink and creative approaches to addressing transportation equity issues.
- Impressed with the smart mobility presentation and the Bellevue adaptive traffic signal system.
- Discussions on equity and transport were enlightening
- Partnership between Downtown Business Association and the Chamber of Commerce is exciting. Impressed with the list of projects to complete and the relationship with the business community and the city.
- Eastrail project cooperation was also very impressive, the partnership between multiple jurisdictions demonstrates what can be accomplished when stakeholders and decision makers think regionally when it comes to solving problems.

For more detail on agenda item 15, please refer to the [TVW Meeting Recording](#), starting at 03:04:42, on the progress bar found at the bottom of the screen.

**Next meeting: December 15 & 16, 2020**

## TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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JERRY LITT, Chair

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ROY JENNINGS, Vice-Chair

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SHIV BATRA, Member

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JAMES A. RESTUCCI, Member

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HESTER SEREBRIN, Member

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KELLY FUKAI, Member

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DEBBIE YOUNG, Member

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

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DATE OF APPROVAL