

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT:

Introduce the Bellevue Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative

STAFF CONTACT:

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FISCAL IMPACT:

None. The Bellevue Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative is funded by the City Council as part of the 2015-2016 Operating Budget. The Transportation Department is advancing this initiative with in-house staff and “One City” collaboration – cost-effectively leveraging resources across departments and community partners to achieve multiple outcomes.

POLICY ISSUES:

Comprehensive Plan:

Bellevue’s Comprehensive Plan acknowledges that responding to anticipated growth in travel necessitates a sustained commitment to “plan, build, and maintain an integrated, comprehensive network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in collaboration with community stakeholders.” This network of facilities should “provide transportation choices for those who can or wish to travel by foot or by bicycle to destinations within their neighborhood, city, and the greater Eastside and region” and “provide a safe and accessible street environment for all users” (see Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation System Goal; Transportation Element).

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan:

On February 17, 2009, Council adopted the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan (Ordinance No. 5861). The 2009 Plan establishes specific short- and mid-term objectives relating to the implementation of priority bicycle corridors, sidewalks along arterial streets, and the reduction of motor vehicle collisions involving pedestrians and bicycles (see Policy PB-2). Annual progress reports indicate that the City is not presently implementing improvements at a rate consistent with its targets.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:

Action
 Discussion
 Information

No Council action is sought at this time. At its February 9, 2015 study session, City staff will provide Council with an overview of the Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative approach and seek input on the proposed program principles and preliminary scope of work.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Policy PB-26 directs staff to: “Update and review the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan every five years. The updates should consider the existing and future role of the single occupant vehicle in relation to non-motorized and public transportation modes, as well as newly annexed areas, areas experiencing unforeseen development and/or redevelopment, and other emerging issues.” In accordance with Policy PB-26, staff facilitated a two-hour workshop with the Transportation Commission on October 9, 2014 seeking input on a preliminary scope of work to update the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.

Commissioners were in agreement that the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan articulates a shared vision of a desirable future that remains relevant today. As such, Commissioners were not supportive of expending resources on a master planning process that revisits/refines the overall construct of the 2009 plan report at this time. Instead, Commissioners requested that staff develop an action-oriented implementation initiative that results in specific outcomes that advance the projects and programs identified by the 2009 Plan.

In response to Commission feedback, staff prepared ten draft principles that will provide consistent direction over the course of the Bellevue Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative (see Attachment 1). The following principles were developed from feedback received from the Transportation Commission at its October 9, 2014 workshop and from meetings conducted throughout September 2014 with staff in various divisions in the Transportation Department, the Parks & Community Services Department, and the Planning & Community Development Department.

1. Continue to aspire to the vision established by the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, pursue its goals, which should not be diluted, and monitor its established measures of effectiveness.
2. Undertake an action-oriented initiative that advances projects and programs to help realize the City’s vision.
3. Provide a safe pedestrian and bicycle environment, which is a prerequisite to making non-motorized travel a viable, attractive option in Bellevue.
4. Advance the implementation of Bellevue’s planned Bicycle Priority Corridors to facilitate continuous bicycle travel along a connected grid of safe facilities throughout the city and the region.
5. Research pedestrian and bicycle count technologies to improve the City’s data driven decision-making.
6. Determine where pedestrian and bicycle investments can improve the connectivity of the multi-modal transportation system.
7. Coordinate with other efforts underway in Bellevue related to pedestrian and bicycle issues.
8. Identify partnership opportunities to advance the implementation of non-motorized projects and programs.
9. Engage community stakeholders in setting the priorities for investment in non-motorized facilities.
10. Refine existing metrics to track plan progress and engage other departments as needed to foster a One City commitment to active transportation.

The Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative scope of work comprises the following seven task elements, each supported by targeted public outreach and data-driven technical research and analysis (see Attachment 2):

- Task 1 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Assessment and Awareness Report
- Task 2 – Lake Washington Loop Pre-Design Analysis Report
- Task 3 – Transit Master Plan Integration Report
- Task 4 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Strategy Report
- Task 5 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Count Assessment Report
- Task 6 – Bike Share Feasibility Analysis Report
- Task 7 – 2009 Plan Progress Measurement and Management Report

At its December 11, 2014 meeting, the Transportation Commission voted unanimously to recommend that Council initiate the Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative (PBII) a complement of action-oriented efforts to advance non-motorized projects and programs identified by the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan. The Transportation Commission recognizes that the PBII responds to feedback from multiple surveys in which Bellevue residents have indicated a need for the City to prioritize increasing travel options. For example, Bellevue has consistently received the lowest rating for “doing a good job of planning for and implementing a range of transportation options” among 24 community indicators (see 2013 Bellevue Performance Measures Report). The PBII connects planning and implementation by identifying the steps needed to make significant progress towards advancing the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.

Once the City Council initiates the Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative, staff will work with the Transportation Commission to refine the seven tasks identified in the preliminary scope of work to more thoroughly elaborate on the intended outcomes of this initiative and timeline. Two essential next steps in scope refinement will include highlighting opportunities to strengthen relationships between city departments and boards and commissions, consistent with the “One City” initiative, and articulating a clear strategy for engaging citizens in the process of making Bellevue a great place to walk and bike. Special attention will be required to enlist the participation of “under-represented” communities such as immigrants and non-native English speakers.

NEXT STEPS:

At its February 9, 2015 study session, City staff is seeking Council input on the:

- draft program principles of the Bellevue Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative;
- preliminary scope of work of the Bellevue Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative.

At the February 17, 2015 Council meeting, Chair Scott Lampe of the Transportation Commission will seek Council approval to initiate the Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative during the Reports of Community Council, Boards, and Commissions portion of the regular session.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Bellevue Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative proposed program principles and preliminary scope of work.
2. Revise the Bellevue Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative proposed program principles and preliminary scope of work.
3. Provide other direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION:

Alternative 1 – Approve the Bellevue Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative proposed program principles and preliminary scope of work.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1 – Proposed program principles
- Attachment 2 – Preliminary scope of work

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL DOCUMENT LIBRARY:

- 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan
- 2013 Pedestrian and Bicycle Progress Report



Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative Program Principles

The City Council envisions an accessible, well-connected network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities for Bellevue that (i) enhances livability, (ii) supports economic vitality, and (iii) serves the mobility needs of people of all ages and abilities. The Council developed the following set of Program Principles to direct the Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative, a complement of action-oriented efforts that advance non-motorized facility designs and programs identified by the *2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan* to meet or exceed the City's 2019 targets and position the City to realize its long-term vision for a walkable and bikeable Bellevue.

<p>1. Continue to aspire to the vision established by the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, pursue its goals, which should not be diluted, and monitor its established measures of effectiveness.</p>	<p>The <i>2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan</i> developed a comprehensive vision for the future of the city's pedestrian and bicycle networks. The Council believes that the 2009 Plan continues to be an accurate representation of the City's aspirations for non-motorized facilities, programs, and policies. As such, this initiative should not revisit the overall construct of the existing plan but should instead focus on advancing the projects and programs identified by that effort and continue tracking progress implementing that Plan.</p>
<p>2. Undertake an action-oriented initiative that advances projects and programs to help realize the City's vision.</p>	<p>This action-oriented initiative should undertake assessments and pre-design analyses to advance the projects and programs identified by the 2009 Plan from concept to final design and, where possible, implementation. The initiative should also develop a scenario-based strategic plan to implement non-motorized improvements in the coming years that reflects the City's existing and anticipated financial situations and considers potential funding opportunities to help the City realize both its short-term goals and its long-term vision.</p>
<p>3. Provide a safe pedestrian and bicycle environment, which is a prerequisite to making non-motorized travel a viable, attractive option in Bellevue.</p>	<p>The provision of a safe street environment for all users is a top priority for the City. Without safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the viability of relying on these modes for some or all of one's transportation needs is greatly diminished, thereby limiting the effectiveness of the City's efforts to encourage travel alternatives to driving alone and leaving some individuals (e.g. children, elderly, those with personal mobility limitations) without a means to move about their community. Safety should therefore be a focus of this initiative, including consideration of where safety issues currently exist, how new facilities can be designed to make walking and cycling safe for people of all ages and abilities, and how education and enforcement programs can support safe facilities.</p>
<p>4. Advance the implementation of Bellevue's planned Bicycle Priority Corridors to facilitate continuous bicycle travel along a connected grid of safe facilities throughout the city and the region.</p>	<p>The <i>2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan</i> identifies eleven cross-city Bicycle Priority Corridors that promote connections to surrounding jurisdictions and create links among communities within Bellevue. Consistent with its goal to complete two north-south and two east-west Priority Bicycle Corridors by 2019 (see Policy PB-2), this initiative should complete pre-design work for one or more of the corridors so that this goal is met expeditiously whether or not construction can be completed by 2019.</p>
<p>5. Research pedestrian and bicycle count technologies to improve the City's data driven decision-making.</p>	<p>This initiative should leverage available data to inform its recommendations while recognizing that existing pedestrian and bicycle data is limited in comparison to that available for other travel modes. Where currently available local data is inadequate to effectively assess recommended alternatives, best practices from other communities should be employed to provide a basis for analysis. This initiative should also identify means by which information about local non-motorized travel and demand can be improved to facilitate more rigorous analysis in the future.</p>

<p>6. Determine where pedestrian and bicycle investments can improve the connectivity of the multi-modal transportation system.</p>	<p>The City of Bellevue recognizes that as its transit network evolves with the implementation of light rail and ridership continues to grow, it will be increasingly important to enhance the pedestrian and bicycle environment so that transit can enable more people to reach more destinations in less time. Consistent with work begun as part of the Transit Master Plan, this initiative should assess where investments in high-priority walkways and bicycle facilities can significantly improve access to bus transit and help attract even more riders.</p>
<p>7. Coordinate with other efforts underway in Bellevue related to pedestrian and bicycle issues.</p>	<p>Several ongoing City initiatives address pedestrian and bicycle concerns, including the East Link Station Area Access study, the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail project, early planning work for the Eastside Rail Corridor, the Grand Connection envisioned in the Downtown Livability Initiative, and bike share planning taking place through the Downtown Transportation Plan, among other ongoing efforts. The Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative should incorporate and inform the work done by these efforts where appropriate.</p>
<p>8. Identify partnership opportunities to advance the implementation of non-motorized projects and programs.</p>	<p>Most non-motorized facilities are funded either through the Capital Investment Program, such as new or reconstructed roadways, or by property-owners through the development review process. Recognizing that the City is currently falling short of its targets for investments in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, this initiative should coordinate with community stakeholders to identify opportunities where collaboration can help to expedite the realization of non-motorized facilities and support programs identified by the 2009 Plan.</p>
<p>9. Engage community stakeholders in setting the priorities for investment in non-motorized facilities.</p>	<p>A targeted yet robust public engagement strategy should provide input on non-motorized priorities from a range of stakeholders including residents, businesses, major institutions, “under-represented” communities, neighboring cities, transportation agencies, and other organizations. Outreach participants should help to identify shortcomings in existing facilities and evaluate trade-offs among competing investment decisions.</p>
<p>10. Refine existing metrics to track plan progress and engage other departments as needed to foster a One City commitment to active transportation.</p>	<p>The <i>2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan</i> directs the City to “work towards specific short- and mid-term implementation objectives” and identifies five measurable targets (see Policy PB-2). This initiative should review progress toward these established targets, define additional metrics deemed beneficial to achieving the City’s goals, and leverage these insights to inform how existing goals can more readily be realized. Additionally, this initiative should recognize the broader context within which Bellevue can promote walking and cycling through “the Five E’s”—engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation. To that end, reflecting Bellevue’s commitment to its One City initiative, this initiative should facilitate coordination across City departments to measure and manage progress toward the 2009 Plan’s goals.</p>



Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative

Scope of Work

This Scope of Work for the Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative was developed following a scoping workshop with the Transportation Commission on October 9, 2014 and internal scoping meetings conducted throughout September 2014 with staff in various divisions in the Transportation Department, the Parks and Community Services Department, and the Planning and Community Development Department. This document provides an overview of the various components that are proposed for this initiative. Each of the seven tasks will ultimately require its own discrete scope of work—to be completed after this overall scope of work is approved by the Transportation Commission and City Council—to more thoroughly elaborate on the intended assessments and outcomes of this initiative.

Task 1 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Assessment and Awareness Report: The provision of a safe street environment for all users is a top priority for the City. Without safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the effectiveness of the City’s efforts to encourage alternatives to driving alone will be limited and some individuals will be unable to reach employment, education, health care, transit services, parks, or other public facilities. This task involves several discrete efforts related to ensuring safe conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists, including an analysis of where and why reported pedestrian and bicycle collisions have taken place in Bellevue since 2007 and public outreach seeking to identify specific locations where users experience or perceive safety issues that may have resulted in unreported incidents or “near-misses.” The task will also conduct an analysis of the existing non-motorized networks in Bellevue to identify the degree of safety/comfort that is provided to users—and which types of users are accommodated (e.g. enthusiasts, most riders, all ages and abilities)—by considering such characteristics as the presence of motor vehicle traffic (e.g. how much traffic and traveling at what speed), the amount of physical separation therefrom, and the presence of adequate street/trail lighting.

The findings from these efforts will help to (1) identify opportunities to advance any “quick wins” that could help improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, (2) offer suggestions about how to improve safety when designing new facilities and redesigning existing roadways to best accommodate the context-appropriate group of anticipated users, and (3) develop and implement education programs and enforcement campaigns that will help pedestrians and bicyclists travel safely in Bellevue and raise awareness on the appropriate way for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians to share the road safely.

Task 2 – Lake Washington Loop Pre-Design Analysis Report: Consistent with the *2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan’s* goal of completing two north-south and two east-west Priority Bicycle Corridors by 2019 (see Policy PB-2), this effort will undertake a pre-design analysis for the gap at the north end of Priority Bicycle Corridor NS-2 (Lake Washington Loop) which, upon construction, would complete this north-south corridor. This task will assess the range of possible bicycle treatment types that could be applied along this segment of the Lake Washington Loop, including best practice treatments like buffered and raised bicycle lanes, and it will consider the pros and cons and the associated maintenance needs of each alternative. This corridor analysis will serve as a model for planning along other Bicycle Priority Corridors in the future, help to inform the cost estimates presented

in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Strategy (see Task 4), and be incorporated into the next round of updates to the City's Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) and Capital Investment Program (CIP).

Task 3 – Transit Master Plan Integration Report: For people traveling on foot and by bicycle, the primary consideration other than safety is whether one's destinations can be accessed reasonably directly within a reasonable distance. As the Bellevue Transit Master Plan recognizes, all transit users are pedestrians for some part of their trip—and if potential transit users are unable to reach a bus stop quickly and reasonably directly, they are more likely to consider alternative travel modes if any are available to them—thus the provision of an accessible pedestrian network is an essential component of a useful transit system. As the City's transit network evolves with the implementation of light rail and ridership continues to grow, it will be increasingly important to enhance the pedestrian and bicycle environment so that transit can enable more people to reach more destinations in less time.

This task will complete an analysis that began as part of the Transit Master Plan. It will first provide a quantitative assessment of how easily people beginning at any property in the city can reach their nearest transit stop using existing non-motorized networks. It will then identify which high-priority non-motorized projects would significantly improve access to transit and assess how much additional transit ridership such improvements can be expected to attract. This analysis will help to inform where the Implementation Strategy (see Task 4) should target investments to realize the greatest degree of benefit to the connectivity of Bellevue's multi-modal transportation network and advance partnership opportunities with transit agencies to obtain grants and other funds in support of transit operations.

Task 4 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Strategy Report: This is the primary task of the Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative—to develop a scenario-based, financially-constrained strategy by which the City can actively pursue the vision established by the *2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan* through targeted investments in its non-motorized networks. To increase the likelihood that the strategy is implemented, it will include planning-level cost estimates for recommended projects; estimates of the expected level of funding available for pedestrian and bicycle improvements given the City's current and forthcoming budgeted projects and programs; short-, medium-, and long-term phasing of recommended improvements; and consideration of the most promising sources of external project funding.

To develop an action-oriented plan, a clear understanding of the financial resources that will be available to implement the proposals is necessary. Because there is considerable uncertainty about how much funding might be available in the future, the establishment of funding scenarios (i.e. Stable Resources, Moderate Growth, Aspirational Growth) provides a means to plan for this uncertainty and develop alternative implementation strategies that apply the City's vision and goals to different potential financial situations. Coordination with the Pavement Overlay Program will help inform short-term investment opportunities, while consideration of potential funding strategies that could contribute to the implementation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and programs in the medium- and long-term (e.g. grant eligibility, CIP competitiveness, public-private partnership and sponsorship opportunities, bond measures, crowdfunding) will lend credibility to the two growth-based scenarios.

Task 5 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Count Assessment Report: Explore available pedestrian and bicycle count technologies and emerging trends and practices that can help to establish a more complete and more reliable citywide baseline for non-motorized travel patterns. The primary goal of this task is to recommend a range of potential technologies for further study by the forthcoming ITS Master Plan update that can improve the City’s data-driven decision making. It will also investigate new methods and low-cost tools (e.g. testing prototypes developed by area universities) that could potentially be implemented in the short-term to expand the City’s capacity to conduct counts, whether at additional locations or more frequently throughout the year. Finally, the task will consider demand in two forms: (1) expressed demand through the installation of digital bicycle counters that help raise awareness about bicycle use along select corridors and (2) latent demand through the use of surveys and other public engagement strategies.

Task 6 – Bike Share Feasibility Analysis Report: The Downtown Transportation Plan (DTP) has begun to consider the potential for introducing bike share to Bellevue through an expansion of the Pronto! Emerald City Cycle Share system, the first phase of which was launched in Fall 2014 in Seattle. This task will expand the efforts of the DTP by completing a feasibility analysis that assesses the cost and potential for funding the program through a public/private partnership. The task will also identify a list of potential sites that would be suitable for bike-share docking stations. The findings of this report will inform an implementation strategy and business plan.

Task 7 – 2009 Plan Progress Measurement and Management Report: The *2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan* defines specific short- and mid-term implementation objectives and identifies five measurable targets (see Policy PB-2). This task will review progress toward these established targets, define additional metrics as deemed beneficial to achieving the City’s goals, and guide coordination between various City departments—consistent with Bellevue’s *One City* High Performing Organization initiative—to manage implementation progress through consideration of “the Five E’s” (engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation) and promote walking and cycling. Programs should reflect the feedback that the City obtained from the Walk Friendly Communities Program administered by the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center and anticipate the likely feedback the City will obtain after it applies for the Bicycle Friendly Communities program administered by the League of American Bicyclists in 2015.