

## **Commute Trip Reduction Board**

Meeting Summary

August 28, 2009

City of Bellevue  
City Hall, first level, Room 1E-113  
450 110th Ave. NE  
Bellevue, WA 98009

**Board Members Present:** Ted Horobiowski, Aurora Crooks, Kim Becklund, Bill Roach, Marilyn Young Skogland, Peter Hurley, Joyce Phillips (via teleconference), Charlie Howard, Matt Hansen, Robin Rettew, Lynn Frosch, Liz Warman, and Matt Ransom.

**Board Members Not Present:** Brian Lagerberg, Mike Harbour, and Page Scott.

**WSDOT Staff:** Keith Cotton, Kathy Johnston, Casey Kanzler, and Jef Lucero.

**Audience:** Kevin O’Neill, City of Bellevue; Kate Johnson, City of Bellevue; Michael Ingram, City of Bellevue; Amol Brahme, iCarpool.com; Erika Vandenbrande, City of Redmond; Nathan Jones, City of Renton; Dixie Crockford, Washburn Communication; Maggi Lubov, City of Tukwila; Jamie Cheney, Commute Seattle; Jessica Szlag, Commute Seattle; Monica Babine, WSU; Cathy Blumenthal, King County Metro; Clare Cronin, King County Metro; Jane Finch, King County Metro; Anne Wardlyan, King County Metro; Debbie Jaksich, King County; Liz Kaster, City of Tacoma; Julia Peterson, Tacoma Chamber of Commerce; Patty Vandenburg, ZymoGenetics; and Sarah Vega, TransManage.

### **Introductions and July meeting summary**

**Motion:** A motion was entertained to approve the July meeting summary. The motion carried, with two minor changes.

### **Public Comment**

Nathan Jones and Patty Vandenburg—CTR implementers for the City of Renton and ZymoGenetics, respectively—expressed concerns about the delays to (and accuracy of) the reporting of this year’s CTR survey data. Without timely and accurate reporting, they contend that they are not able to chart their progress toward their goals, nor are they able to identify what adjustments, if any, need to be made to them. Patty added that, without this survey data, it is more difficult for employers to allocate their CTR budgets.

Keith explained that WSDOT has been working with the State’s Office of Information Technology (OIT) to develop a new reporting system, but it’s taken much longer than anticipated to complete it. WSDOT has pulled staff from other projects to continue to work through the backlog of surveys. Keith noted that and the goal is to get the rest of the reports out by mid-September. He added that a second phase of the reporting process will be completed by early October, which will provide jurisdictions and employers with broader, more in-depth analyses of the data.

Ted asked if it would be possible to provide weekly updates on the survey reporting process. Keith replied that staff have been in regular contact with the TAG, and continue to communicate with the jurisdictions that contact WSDOT inquiring about the progress of the reports. Matt Hansen suggested providing one-page summaries until the full reports are completed.

Bill asked if WSDOT could follow up with the Board within the next two months with a progress report. Keith replied that not only should the surveys be completed by then but that the RTPO progress report and the draft of the legislative report should be available by then as well, both of which will include data compiled through this year's survey process. Ted noted that WSDOT staff will follow up with the jurisdictions and employers that voiced their concerns this morning.

### **Bellevue GTEC report**

Kim introduced Kevin O'Neill, Kate Johnson, and Mike Ingram from the City, all of whom help manage the Bellevue GTEC. Kevin offered an overview of Bellevue's expected growth targets and the corresponding long-term vision of its growth management plan. He noted that by the year 2030, the City forecasts there will be roughly 80,000 jobs in the downtown area, about eight times what it had in 1980. Downtown Bellevue is fast becoming one of the largest neighborhoods in the city. There are currently 5,500 residents in downtown, but by 2030 it is expected there will be 19,000 people living downtown.

Kate then went over some of the details of the Bellevue GTEC. Having lived in Bellevue most of her life, she has had the opportunity to witness the city's growth firsthand. About 30 percent of workers in the downtown area are employed at affected worksites. The plans of Bellevue's GTEC—known locally as Connect Downtown—include a goal of shifting 5,000 SOV trips by 2011. The plans also call for goal of a 50 percent drive-alone reduction rate by 2020.

Kate talked about the City's partnerships with King County Metro and TransManage, Bellevue's TMA. She also talked about the Choose Your Way Bellevue website and employer programs such as Commute Advantage and the Hospitality Outreach program, which is tailored for hotel, restaurant, and retail workers. She mentioned that the City has hired a consultant to talk to employers to promote its telework program, Telework Bellevue. Kate also mentioned the Commuter Connection storefront in downtown Bellevue, which provides onsite, walkup commuter assistance. She added that the GTEC effort has extended into residential programs as well. Robin asked about the amount of traffic the website sees. Kate replied that it has increased thanks to the City's marketing efforts.

Mike went over the requirements of the City's Transportation Management Programs (TMP's). The TMP's are established conditions that apply to large-scale real estate developments, with the aim of reducing their ongoing impact on transportation systems. The City has recently updated the requirements for these plans, based in part on the development and progress of its GTEC program.

Robin asked about how the requirements work, and whether there is a trigger for large developers as part of the building and permitting process. Mike replied that these developers are required to implement some kind of CTR program, and once the building is occupied, the City works with them to develop their programs. Program elements and guidelines are contingent on the specifics of each building, some of which may include mandatory incentive offers, surveying, and reporting. Lynn asked whether Bellevue is pursuing any types of biking or walking promotions. Mike replied that the City's bike-pedestrian plan has recently been updated, and that they have developed a comprehensive bike map. He added that the length of the average bicycle commute is about four miles.

Peter asked about the funding situation, its impact on Bellevue's GTEC efforts, and whether there are opportunities for the Board to provide support. Kate replied that continued guidance is valuable but that sustained funding is what will keep the program flourishing. Mike added that technical assistance from WSDOT is also very helpful. Peter asked about the Urban Vitality Grants offered through the Department of Commerce. Kevin replied that they've looked into them but that some of the CMAQ funds fit the City's needs better at this time. He added that several Eastside cities have collectively applied for a CMAQ grant for an East King County bicycle way-finding signage system.

Mike then introduced Sarah Vega, who works with small employers for TransManage. She introduced Dixie Crockford, a small business owner in downtown Bellevue. Dixie related the success of her company's CTR/GTEC program, which has seen participation jump from 50 percent to 90 percent. Sarah then talked briefly about the growth of small-employer CTR programs in Bellevue, noting that the focused, concerted efforts of all involved have contributed to the overall success and support of those programs. Ted noted three common themes in the GTEC presentations thus far: commitment, dedication, and creativity.

### **RideshareOnline Demo**

Casey began by noting the RideshareOnline (RSO) upgrade project is still on time and on budget, with the beta launch still scheduled in October. He added that today's presentation will cover a few of the full breadth of the features envisioned for the end product. Casey noted that this version of RSO will ultimately serve as a national model, and that five states are now currently on board. End users will have maximum flexibility to tailor, administer, and maintain features for their individual CTR programs and promotional campaigns. Robin asked how the upgrade is funded. Keith replied that the development and upgrade of the system is federally funded. It is currently managed by King County Metro, and many transit agencies pay into the system through local agreements. Upon the upgrade's completion, it will be a state/local partnership.

Casey then introduced Amol Brahme, who is overseeing the upgrade project for iCarpool.com, the contracted vendor. Amol then chalked out a relationship matrix of various end users, adding that the goal here is to build a solution that scales to a wide geography but can be easily administered locally. Some of the features built into the new system include real time ridematching for regular work-related commutes, one-time trips to events and games, school pooling, and other commute services.

Bill asked about the definition of commute services. Amol cited bicycle facilities and the emergency ride home program as two examples. Casey mentioned that one of the things local jurisdictions have mentioned is how this will integrate with existing web-based programs, because many of them have already made significant investments in their web presence. He added that RSO will work with, not against, existing ridesharing networks already built and currently operating in the local jurisdictions.

Peter asked whether the new RSO will be able to recreate the survey process. Casey replied the new system will have the capability to collect CTR-related data, so the possibility will be there. Peter asked whether business-related trips between worksites can be tracked in the new system. Amol replied that any employer that wishes to track those types of trips can tailor their system to include them. Liz mentioned that the City of Seattle has a program that helps employers determine their carbon footprint.

Lynn noted that she sees a potential for concern in asking employees to track trips in duplicate efforts. Bill expressed concern that the expanded scope might translate into delays in getting the product out the door. He added that a good point of focus should be on long-term maintenance of the new system. Casey replied that the project has done a good job of holding the line with the timeline and the budget, both of which are still being met.

Aurora asked about the status of Washington Commuter and whether it is tied to the new RSO. Casey replied that Washington Commuter and RSO are essentially the same thing, providing the same source data, but with two interfaces. He added that this provides an elegant solution that utilizes all investments and lessons learned but is also accessible outside of ridematching. Aurora asked about the future of trip calendars already developed by local jurisdictions around the state. Casey replied that locals are still welcome to use the systems in which they've invested, but that the hope for the future is that everyone will migrate to this system. Aurora asked if they can talk to each other or share data. Keith replied that there is no way to build one that can talk to five different calendars, but that this can provide a path that provides a standard export to which data can be dumped.

Casey explained that, given the new system's technical capabilities, there are very compelling reasons for locals to make the switch from their current trip calendars to this one. He added that existing calendars can easily be incorporated into the new RSO through unique interfaces tailored to each employer, jurisdiction, or other end user. Keith noted in many cases statewide, the local transit system uses one calendar while the jurisdictions are using another. The main goal here is to establish one system that everyone can use.

Aurora asked about where the funding for maintenance will come from once the upgrade is complete. Casey replied that King County Metro is working on that. Matt Hansen suggested that a punch-list be created to stick with the timelines for the launch. Bill asked about where in the process Wyoming and Montana came to be included. Cathy Blumenthal explained that their inclusion translates into expanded leveraging of funds. Bill noted that it would be good to have an overview prepared that speaks more to budget, scope, size, and maintenance over time. Casey will follow up with both the punch-list and the overview in time for the next board meeting.

### **Meeting wrap-up and board business**

Kathy mentioned that Matt Hansen and Kim's terms have expired, but that the Governor's office has relayed that everything should be okay so long as both are in good standing. She added that details on the Spokane trip for next month's meeting will be made available as soon as possible.

### **Action item review**

- Staff will report back on survey issues next month, and Kathy will follow up with Nathan Jones
- Keith & Kathy will set up a GTEC networking session & report back next month
- RideshareOnline will be included in work plan, with Casey to follow up next month

### **Adjourn/Committee Meeting Breakout Sessions**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.