

September 14, 2022

City of Bellevue
Planning Commission
450 110th Avenue NE
Bellevue, WA 98004

Re: Curb Management - Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Dear Chair Ferris and Planning Commission Members:

On behalf of the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA), I'm conveying input about the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments that would enable the Curb Management Plan to move forward.

On Work to date:

The BDA Transportation Committee has tracked the City's process to build each component of the Curb Management Plan since the work initiated earlier this year. The Committee is producing an advocacy package (*excerpts attached*) that reflect key points on the different development stages of the Curb Management Plan. Upcoming committee work includes finalizing a position on the proposed pricing components, reviewing curb typology, and adopting a position statement on the final draft plan.

On Curb Management Plan:

The BDA Transportation Committee supports the City's initiative to develop a Curb Management Plan that improves the movement of people and goods between places. We seek a plan that manages curb activity through a suite of tools and approaches that solve current issues, promote placemaking in areas where it makes sense, and monitor for changing realities with mechanisms that allow for adaptability.

On the Proposed Transportation Elements:

The following comments are based on the BDA Transportation Committee's April and May review of the transportation elements which were checked by the BDA Board of Directors in July.

- 1) Support timely adoption of the Comprehensive Plan amendments to ensure the Curb Management Plan is available to support Bellevue's growth. Amending the Comprehensive Plan is a major step in the process to advance work that started nine months ago. Stakeholder interviews were conducted in March to inform the City's direction, and the process to develop the plan has been structured in stages to build information upon itself and guide next steps. Timely adoption of the transportation elements keeps the built-upon information relevant, respects stakeholder engagement throughout the process, and maintains the momentum to complete the Curb Management Plan.

- 2) Advance the seven new elements to lay the groundwork for the Curb Management Plan. We acknowledge there are concerns about adopting Comprehensive Plan policies that allow the City to dedicate areas and create zones for specific uses, but we also acknowledge that the transportation elements only establish the policy basis to support future City work. That City work is the Curb Management Plan which will dictate where uses make sense and prohibit uses where it doesn't.
- 3) Re: TR-139 – update the policy language to clarify whether electric vehicle charging stations will be a requirement or incentive in the development review process. We recommend changing "add" to "incentivize" then including it on the list of [Green Building Incentives](#). The BDA has supported initiatives to expand EV stations in Downtown; however, we value curb adaptability over requiring permanent installations that serve a single use.
- 4) Add a transportation element that supports future public-private partnerships when managing curb space. As an example, The Spring District was developed with a mix of public and private right-of-way (ROW) which must split the management responsibilities between the public and private sectors. A public-private approach to managing this scenario will improve consistency and efficiency. It is worthwhile to note that the future buildout of Bel-Red and Wilburton may include privately-owned right-of-way. Adding this element would be a proactive step if future development creates more privately-owned ROW.
- 5) *As an administrative effort and not a policy update* – we encourage the City to review the current design review process for how curbside amenities are weighed and clarify how the Curb Management Plan will inform or update future design requirements. BDA members with development plans in the design phase seek clarity on how to include curb amenities for new uses that were not considered in the 2017 Downtown land use code update.

Cities around the country are exploring how to tackle curb challenges caused by the rise of competing uses during this period of rapid urban growth. We appreciate that the City of Bellevue took the charge to address the issue and support its ongoing work to implement a Curb Management Plan.

Thank you for your leadership, time, and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Jack", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Matt Jack
Director of Public Policy
BDA



BDA TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

ADVOCACY PACKAGE: CURB MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Experts Prepared for Bellevue Planning Commission Public Hearing
September 14, 2022**

ABOUT ADVOCACY PACKAGE

This living document reflects the committee’s review of the [Curb Management Plan](#) over the different stages of the plan’s development. Its purpose is to organize work, inform the BDA Board, and serve as the foundation for future advocacy efforts.

BDA Transportation Committee members last gathered on August 11 to review the pros and cons the proposed [curb pricing components](#) as an addition of the for the Curb Management Plan.

2022 BDA Transportation Committee Work on Curb Management Plan

Feb 16	City staff introduction to Curb Management Plan; member discussion
Mar 16	Identify message points to Bellevue curb workshop questions – <i>input collected</i>
Mar 18	BDA Leadership and staff voice message points at Bellevue workshop session
Mar 30	Grand Connection walking tour
Apr 20	City staff progress update on Curb Management Plan – <i>input collected</i>
May 25	City staff presentation of curb policy updates – <i>check consensus on work to date</i>
Jul 19	BDA Board check-in on committee progress and work
Jul 20	City staff presentation on curb pricing principles and strategies
Aug 11	Committee work session: curb pricing framework pros & cons

DRAFT BDA COMMITTEE POSITION

Contents reflect BDA Transportation Committee member input since February 16.

The BDA supports the City’s initiative to develop a Curb Management Plan that establishes new policies and guidelines on how curb areas should be designed, maintained, and operated over time.

Implementing a plan that increases accessibility and efficiency to deliver of goods and movement of people through curbside management is consistent with the [BDA Downtown Access Strategy](#).

Endorsed Management Tools:

BDA members have identified procedures, resources, and investments to implement and maintain a functional curb management plan, including:



Enforcement and administrative personnel and private sector protocols on how to intervene. A successful management plan that prioritizes uses based on curb typologies requires day-to-day monitoring for swiftly resolving issues.



Regular feedback loop between the public and private sectors for adjusting management needs. The management plan needs to be nimble to be relevant, as demonstrated by the recent increase in new curb uses driven by emerging technology.



Playbook for how to manage and activate curb spaces. This tool would include a map of curb uses, guide for resolving issues, and steps to support public-private collaboration to activate spaces.



Support approaches for enforcing privately-owned street curb spaces. Assist private properties with clear and consistent protocols and resources for how to interact with infractions.



Connect with businesses operating curbside deliveries and pick ups. Communicate with operators to establish expectations with drivers.



Curbside zones for types of uses. Dedicate areas for curbside uses to ensure reliability and reduce disruption caused by competition.



Publish right-of-way map and information. Sharing details about the curbside right-of-way area will reduce time and costs for project planning and support stronger public-private partnerships to activate spaces and improve accessibility through placemaking.



Schedule recurring audits of curb spaces and uses. Maintaining an accurate inventory of the curb spaces and uses allows public and private sectors proactively prepare for changes or address emerging issues. Annual analysis preferred if resources allow.

Objectives for a Successful Curb Management Plan:

The list reflects BDA member input regarding desired outcomes when reviewing the City's ongoing work to develop a curb management plan.

1. Safe and efficient movement of people to and from the curbside with special care to protect pedestrians and other vulnerable users.
2. Better walking experience with improved connectivity to places and amenities that increase comfort.
3. Biophilic urban design to separate pedestrians from vehicles and other curb conflicts.
4. Quicker vehicle curbside turnover time to reduce the queue lengths and congestion impacts.
5. Increase visits to street-level commercial businesses by reducing on-street parking times.
6. Space for all modes to interact with the curbside without impeding throughput.
7. Partnership and alignment between the City, property managers, and tenants.
8. More vibrant and appealing access experience to restaurants, retail, and open spaces.

9. Enforcement personnel, resources, and infrastructure to resolve issues and deter infractions.
10. Resources and permitting support to activate underutilized public spaces.
11. Maintains schedules for transit, private shuttles, and school buses.
12. Serves the demand for TNCs, freight and e-commerce without disrupting traffic.
13. Dedicated curb spaces for single-ordered delivery and pick ups.
14. Clear wayfinding for all modes, including dedicated spaces for special curb uses.
15. Trash, recycle, and compost receptacles regularly maintained to avoid waste spillover.

Support Guidelines Based on Curb Typology & Prioritization:

BDA Staff Note: The City’s draft curb typology & prioritization framework will be released in Oct 2022.

Guidelines should be consistently applied for each class of curb typology across the management areas to ensure broad participation. Urban elements to be factored into the curb typology include:

- Sidewalks and pedestrian corridors
- Street level commercial and open spaces
- Residential garages
- Streetside parking
- Emergency – fire stations, hospitals
- Transit and shuttle stops
- Bike facilities
- Peak and off-period traffic
- Private and public open spaces
- Parking garages
- Street dining
- Valet parking

Curb typology should account for use predictability to help inform space management and dedication of resources. Predictable uses rely on scheduling, semi-predictable uses can be tracked via data or work off unreliable schedules, and difficult to predict uses by single-ordered deliveries or pick ups.

Predictable	Semi-predictable	Difficult to predict
Transit	Pedestrian activity	Transportation Network Companies (TNC)
Shuttles	Vehicular activity	Food delivery
Events	Bicycle Activity	Ecommerce delivery
School buses	Construction	Freight delivery
Dumpster pickup		

Support Dedicated Curbside Zones for Difficult to Predict Uses:

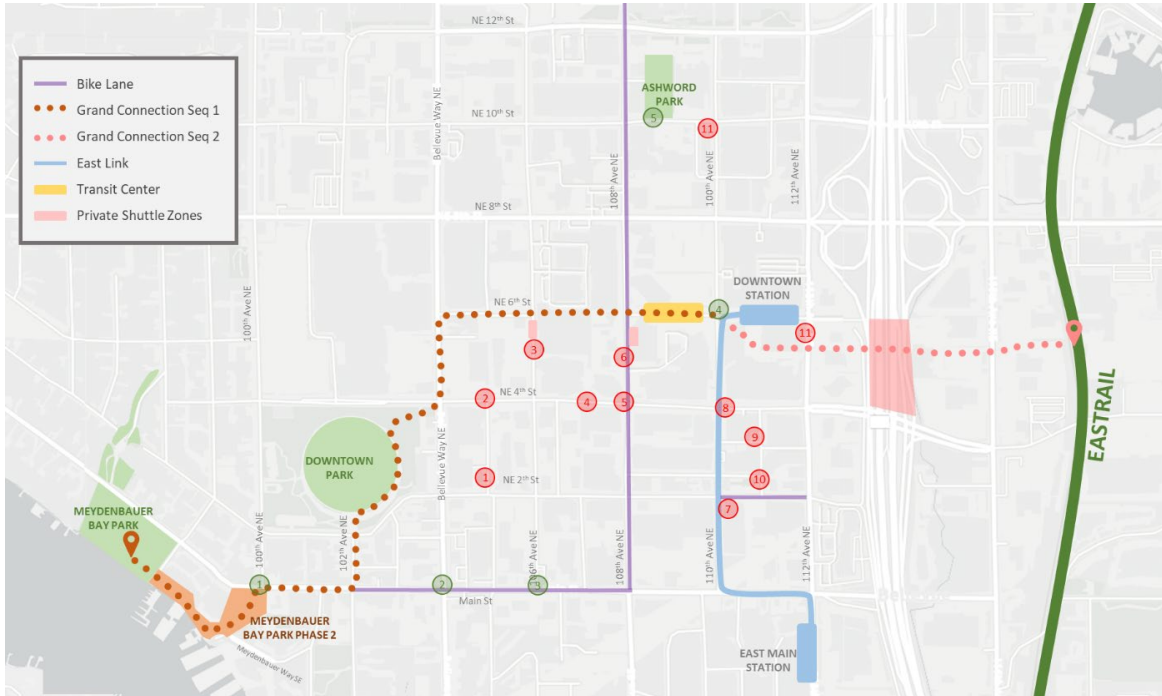
Dedicating areas for difficult to predict uses creates reliability and helps channel those uses away from competitive areas. For dedicated zones to work, business operators need to communicate expectations with their employees or contractors. Wayfinding will be necessary to guide drivers and enforcement will be needed to correct normalized misbehaviors.

Support Adaptability:

A management plan needs to be adaptable to serve future curb use demands and trends. Including a review process for updating curb typology and guidelines to accommodate viable new uses will keep Bellevue competitive and proactive in managing disruption. Micromobility, automated vehicles trips/services, and autonomous delivery bots have been identified as possible future uses.

Map Markup – Curb Issues and Opportunities

Real examples provided by BDA members to reference when needed.



Curb Issues

1. No sidewalk on west side of NE 2nd St – pedestrian safety issue.
2. Busy throughput with parking access and freight deliveries
3. Crowded shuttle stop; waste spillover
4. Narrow/limited alleyway capacity
5. Northeast curb corner discomfort
6. Freight unloading in medium of 106th Ave NE; bus area with shuttle stop, transit, Grand Connection, and bike facilities
7. Bike share ends, disconnected and only serves two blocks
8. Access issues to parking garages from NE 4th to Transit Station, including City Hall; walkability impacted
9. No sidewalk on west side of 111th Ave NE; little separation for the on-street parking
10. Sidewalk on west side of 111th Ave NE distinguished by pylons only
11. School bus pick up / drop off zone – no signage or protection
12. Permit issue for developing street-level space to support outdoor café design

Curb Opportunities

1. Meydenbauer Bay Park grand entrance
2. Main Street grand entrance; extend Main Street pedestrian design -improve westbound bike facility experience with other competing uses
3. Extend Main Street bike facility eastbound bike facility experience with other competing uses
4. Intersection between Transit Center and Downtown Station
5. Ashwood Park grand entrance, greater potential for activation and connectivity