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| RE:  | **REQUEST TO RETAIN CURRENT CONGESTION RELIEF, CONCURRENCY AND IMPROVE**  |

**MOBILITY AS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES**

The Eastside Transportation Association (ETA) urges the Planning Commission to reject the proposed change to the long-standing Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element Policy TR 2 that would remove congestion relief as a fundamental City of Bellevue Policy.

The current TR 2 policy is**: TR 2 Strive to reduce congestion and improve mobility**.

The citizens of Bellevue deserve more, not less, emphasis on congestion relief and reduced travel times. Our dissatisfaction with the growing levels of neighborhood cut-through traffic, reduction in lane capacity for motor vehicles, traffic back-ups and overall increases in congestion is well known to the City of Bellevue as reflected in the biannual Budget Survey. Traffic, trips from new development and congestion have consistently been the biggest concerns voiced to the City Council over the last several years.

Yet, the Planning Commission has before it the most radical transportation policy change in the City of Bellevue’s history. This change would lower Bellevue’s standard for mobility, enable even worse congestion than is currently allowed and increase the time it takes to travel throughout Bellevue.

 The intent of the Growth Management Act’s concurrency requirement is that Bellevue have adequate capacity in the City’s transportation system to accommodate growth in accordance with Bellevue’s concurrency standard.

**The Eastside Transportation Association strongly encourages the Planning Commission to make sure the Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element Goal and Policy change would reduce, not increase, congestion.**

 A good place to start would be to revise the existing Comprehensive Plan Concurrency Policy TR-2 to read:

**“Strive to reduce congestion and improve mobility with proportional distribution of resources to motor vehicle facilities, transit operations, pedestrian facilities and bicycle facilities”.**

Overall, ETA believes the City of Bellevue has the responsibility to objectively address the current and future demands on the City’s transportation system. Furthermore, in order to meet the voters demands, Bellevue needs to increase its efforts to meet the existing Comprehensive Plane goal of striving to reduce congestion and improving mobility.

To do this, the City must resist the temptation to give preferential treatment to any particular mode of travel. Instead, ETA requests that Bellevue equitably and proportionately address the needs of all users of the transportation system.

ETA recommends the City uses a data-driven approach to implement any transportation policy, operation and spending action. This balanced approach would lead to maximizing the overall throughput of people and goods on our limited system, most effectively limit congestion and improve our overall quality of life.