



MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Commission

From: Kim Scrivner, Transportation Planner – Public Works
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Truc Dever, Interim Director of Public Works

Date: March 27, 2024

Subject: TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC PLAN (TSP) UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Transportation Commission provide feedback to staff on the draft projects list of the TSP.

BACKGROUND:

The Transportation Commission has dedicated a significant portion of its time and work program to this topic with eight briefings¹ beginning in July 2022 and two workshops May and June 2023. These briefings included topics ranging from scope, schedule and public engagement processes to guiding principles, updating the goals and policies and project prioritization.

City Council has also been engaged three times on this topic at their September 19th, 2023², November 21, 2023³, and March 19, 2024 study sessions. Council input has focused on goals and policies, prioritization criteria to be used in sorting the 20-year transportation capital project list, and the draft project list.

Recent discussions on the TSP have focused on goals and policies, project prioritization, the draft projects list, and performance monitoring. The main focus is currently on the draft projects list, but staff have also responded to questions on performance monitoring from the February 28, 2024 Commission meeting in Attachment E.

TSP PROJECTS

Project List Status:

¹ Transportation Commission materials: <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/Departments/Public-Works-Department/Commission-Transportation/TC-Meeting-Archive>

² Council materials, September 19, 2023 Study Session: https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2023/september-19-2023/3b_study-session.pdf

³ Council materials, November 21, 2023 Study Session: https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2023/november-21-2023/3a_study-session.pdf

Staff have prepared the first draft of the prioritized 20-year projects list with input from internal staff, the community, and the City Council (see Attachment A). The Commission has not had a chance to weigh in directly on the draft projects list until now. While the community has seen the projects via the City's [public engagement web map](#) (see Attachments B and C), there had not been a prioritized list until recently, following the closure of the public engagement web map on February 29, 2024. Staff are now seeking Commission input on the draft projects list which will be incorporated into future versions of the list as it continues to be refined and shared with the City Council.

Project Prioritization Within a Fiscally Constrained Environment:

Attachment A shows the objective first prioritization according to the prioritization framework in Attachment D. Prioritization is important due to the fiscally constrained environment in which project costs far exceed revenues available to spend on projects.

The 20-year financial projections to fund transportation projects is still being refined; however, it is projected that approximately \$317 million will be available for transportation projects over the next 20-years, or about \$15.85 million annually. These figures are for planning purposes and subject to change as the City works toward completion of the impact fee update and as other medium-term economic trends settle (i.e., real estate market & REET). However, these projections provide the starting point for discussions around what the City can afford to fund and how many projects can be included in the “funded” category of the final projects list.

High-level planning cost estimates for projects have been developed for most of the projects in the draft projects list. These include basic project elements with inflation factors for soft costs, stormwater implications, and general inflation. Right-of-way costs are not included due to the conceptual nature of many of the project scopes at this time.

Federal funds are not being included in the anticipated 20-year revenue projections, so costs related to implementing a federal project are also not included. It is estimated that for the roughly 450 projects that are currently identified, the costs would range from \$762 million to over \$1 billion dollars over the next 20-years. This far exceeds the estimated \$317 million expected in revenue, so the prioritization framework is critical to establishing which projects will become part of the Transportation Element of the 20-year fiscally constrained Capital Facilities Plan.

Prioritization will help to determine where the line is drawn between projects considered “funded” and projects considered “unfunded” over the 20-year timeframe. This decision will assist the City Council’s future decision making on the 6-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and the 2-year capital budgeting cycle to fund projects over the planning horizon of 2044.

Based upon input from the Transportation Commission at the February 28, 2024 meeting, the Commission felt it best to present the first draft project list to the Council using a top-to-bottom prioritization where the highest scoring projects, regardless of type or location, are shown at the top and then in a descending order from there. This approach was chosen in lieu of project packaging, where different priorities could be expressed by elevating certain types of projects regardless of their prioritization score. As noted below, the City Council, at the March 19, 2024 study session, indicated a preference to see project packaging so that they can compare project lists across priority categories.

Staff anticipate incorporating Council and Commission input on the order of the project list as further review and consideration is applied. These refinements will help develop the final draft 20-year project list.

Feedback from the City Council:

In the Study Session presentation at the March 19, 2024 City Council meeting, staff shared the first draft of the projects list for City Council input. The City Council had several areas of interest, summarized below:

Connected System

- The Council wants to see a fully connected transportation system over smaller dispersed segments to make sure people can connect to places. Small segments may be more manageable with the budget but it is important to have connective segments along full corridors (directional long corridors especially for protected bike lanes, the need for east/west connections).
- The Council wants to ensure staff take a holistic view to determine what we want Kirkland to look like 20 years from now, acknowledging that there are a lot of priorities to balance.

Transit

- Transit and K-line priority projects should be included (there seems to be few transit supportive projects compared to other categories).

Funding

- The budgeting process should anticipate planning for investing in the CKC Action Plan and outcomes. The City should preserve funds now knowing investment will be needed.
- A desire to show more detail around project costs relative to benefits would be helpful for Council review.

Project List Comments

- Council did not want intersection or traffic control projects to call out the specific type of improvements at this stage, as they could be roundabouts or signals (after an intersection control evaluation occurs).
- Studies are important to address some of the critical need to find the best solution and help implement the right projects.
- Support for the conceptual Juanita Public Pathway and the powerline corridor between 124th and Juanita high school.
- The list was difficult to digest so looking at projects through various packages is preferred.
- Council wanted a map to show the vision (functional classification systems we want to see, greenway system, bike lane and pedestrian systems, etc.) and geographic distribution of projects.
- Council supports new ideas such as high value and low-cost implementations in policies and project programs. Smaller projects that give us benefit to cost, easy wins, sidewalk and bike lane gaps, pilot different ideas such as pavement art, low hanging fruit should be considered as well.
- New National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) costs are driving increases in project costs. The Council wants staff to look at those projects that may be able to be designed prior to required dates for requirements.

NEXT STEPS:

The draft TSP and Transportation Element materials are being prepared for the June 27th public hearing with the Transportation Commission. In addition, a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) is being developed to evaluate potential transportation impacts of the land use alternatives and potential mitigation measures. Staff will continue briefings with the Transportation Commission each month through that time and are tentatively scheduled to return to the City Council on May 21, 2024. Anticipated adoption of the TSP is scheduled for October, prior to final adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in December 2024.

Commission input received during this presentation will be incorporated into future versions of the projects list.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Prioritized Projects List

Attachment B: TSP Project Engagement Map Comments

Attachment C: TSP Project Engagement Map Summary

Attachment D: Project Prioritization Framework

Attachment E: Staff Response to Questions on Performance Monitoring