Council Meeting Date: March 22, 2010 **Agenda Item: 8(c)**

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE:	Transportation Master Plan Update – Transit Plan and Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update
DEPARTMENT:	Public Works
PRESENTED BY:	Mark Relph, Public Works Director Kirk McKinley, Transportation Services Manager Alicia McIntire, Senior Transportation Planner

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

The purpose of this staff report and Council presentation is to provide a briefing on the status of the update process.

Beginning in spring 2009, staff has been in the process of updating the City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP). This process has several pieces, including:

- development of a traffic model to help predict how traffic will flow through the City as we continue to grow over the next twenty years;
- creation of a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and a Transit Plan;
- creation of a Master Street Plan that identifies the future right-of-way needs based upon functional classification;
- development of a prioritized project list for capital projects, including nonmotorized and transit related projects;
- creation of policies that will help guide selection of projects for inclusion in the City's Capital Improvement Plan and implementation strategies to put these policies into action;
- development of a funding strategy for capital projects; and
- update of the City's concurrency regulations.

Staff anticipates that the TMP will be completed in early 2011 and expects to return to council several times over the coming months to discuss significant policy issues to be included in the plan.

BACKGROUND

The City adopted its first TMP in 2005, in conjunction with the last major update to the Comprehensive Plan. Since then, there have been significant changes to the City's transportation facilities. The City finished the first mile of improvements to Aurora Avenue North, construction of the second mile is underway and design and right-of-way acquisition are in process for the third mile. Roadway improvements in North City were

completed. The Interurban Trail was completed and walkways have been constructed in neighborhoods throughout the City under the City's Priority Sidewalks Program.

New transit services are also in place or planned for Shoreline. Community Transit began bus rapid transit (BRT) service on Aurora/SR 99 in Snohomish County in fall 2009. This service runs from the Aurora Village Transit Center in Shoreline to Everett. As part of Metro's Transit Now program approved by voters in November 2006, BRT service is scheduled to begin in 2013 on Aurora from Shoreline to downtown Seattle, coinciding with the completion of improvements to all three miles of Aurora. As part of the Sound Transit Proposition 1 package, approved by voters in November 2008, light rail will be extended from Northgate to Lynnwood, with stops likely at NE 145th Street and NE 185th Street. Service is scheduled to begin in Shoreline in 2023. Although this service is several years away, planning for the transportation network around the stations needs to begin now to ensure the success of the system within Shoreline.

The TMP contains policies and projects that support the future land uses in the City's Comprehensive Plan. These policies affect choices for travel modes, such as car, bus, bicycle and on foot. By knowing how Shoreline will grow in the future, the City can plan the transportation system to accommodate that growth. The projects listed in the TMP help ensure that adequate transportation facilities are in place to support growth.

The current TMP includes an inventory of the existing transportation systems and traffic forecasts for the year 2022. The updated plan will use revised growth targets to plan through 2030.

Attachment A discusses the relationship of the TMP to other strategic documents in the City (Comprehensive Plan, the CIP, Sustainability Strategy) and provides a summary of the update status for the major components of the plan, including:

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Transit Plan
- Traffic modeling
- Master Street Plan
- Project list for capital projects
- Funding strategy
- Concurrency

RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation at this time. This report is for informational purposes only.

Approved By: City Manager ____ City Attorney ____

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Transportation Master Plan Update Topics

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Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

The current TMP has a brief discussion of nonmotorized transportation. In order to plan for and create a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the City, system plans that identify facility location and design are needed. Having bicycle and pedestrian system plans in place allows us to budget for future improvements, work with private development to construct improvements, coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions and make cycling and walking safe, convenient and appealing transportation options.

Objectives:

- To provide opportunities and incentives for Shoreline residents to utilize nonmotorized means of transportation in all aspects of their lives. Shoreline needs a plan that clearly shows how the City's goals and policies are supportive of nonmotorized transportation options. The plan will support other City plans: Comprehensive Plan, Sustainability Strategy, and Transit Plan.
- Develop an integrated approach to nonmotorized transportation planning that establishes policies and implementation strategies for all nonmotorized facilities in a single plan, while providing a clear understanding of the unique needs of individual types of facilities.
- Identify facilities needed to improve nonmotorized transportation options within the City of Shoreline. Establish a prioritization process for development of facilities.
- Develop maintenance standards for bicycle and pedestrian facilities to ensure they are kept in safe, operable condition.
- Develop a process to coordinate nonmotorized transportation facilities in conjunction with neighboring municipalities.
- Create a uniform method of signage and marking for nonmotorized transportation facilities throughout the City to improve ease of use and wayfinding abilities.
- To estimate nonmotorized transportation funding needs by more clearly identifying the City priorities for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Preliminarily Identified Issues:

- Funding options – The City has a limited budget for capital improvements, and outside sources – such as grants – are limited for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The City's current fee in-lieu program allows developers in some circumstances to pay a fee instead of constructing frontage improvements. These funds have historically gone to the City's Priority Sidewalks Program. This is a small and unreliable resource, as it fluctuates with development activity.
- Patchwork/"Sidewalks to nowhere" – The City requires construction of frontage improvements in conjunction with new development and significant redevelopment. This can create a patchwork of sidewalks, with gaps between facilities or sidewalks that connect to nothing. Policies are suggested to minimize

this condition, or perhaps more specifically, we need to consider policies to work with these improvements and "fill in the gaps".

- Design alternatives for walkways – The City typically uses concrete for construction of sidewalks as the standard and they are separated from travel lanes by a landscaped area. It may be appropriate in limited circumstances to use alternative materials, such as asphalt or porous concrete, in conjunction with other traffic calming facilities.
- Maintenance – The City needs clear policies regarding maintenance and repair of walkways and street trees/landscaping that outline the City's responsibility, as well as the responsibility of neighboring property owners. For example, our code currently states that property owners adjacent to walkways are required to keep them clear of snow and ice.
- Integration of bicycle facilities into the street network – Bicycle facilities and routes can be designated in a variety of ways, such as bicycle lanes, sharrows or signage. Through development of a bicycle system plan, the City can determine the appropriate routes and facilities for bicycles.
- The natural and built environment – The City's topography can be a challenge for nonmotorized transportation, especially in the east-west direction. Additionally, the presence of barriers like I-5 can hinder bicycle and pedestrian movement, either because there is no way to cross or the physical environment is unwelcoming to nonmotorized travel. The plan needs to address these challenges and develop solutions to alleviate them.
- Connectivity with neighboring jurisdictions – Many pedestrians and cyclists continue to neighboring jurisdictions as part of their travels. Our plan should be coordinated with those of neighboring cities in an effort to create a seamless transition between municipalities and to connect major facilities. For example, the City has been working with Lake Forest Park to develop established routes that connect the Interurban and Burke-Gilman Trails.
- The relationship of nonmotorized transportation to transit – Transit is an important part of the City's transportation system. Ensuring that residents can safely and conveniently access transit via walking or cycling will be a part of the plan.

Transit Plan

Transit is discussed very briefly in the existing TMP. Because the City does not provide its own transit system and is reliant on outside agencies for transit services, it is important for the City to have defined transit goals and objectives. This allows us to coordinate with transit providers in the most effective manner. Significant changes to transit service in Shoreline are underway or being planned, including bus rapid transit service on Aurora Avenue North and light rail service.

Objectives

- To provide opportunities and incentives for Shoreline residents to utilize transit for their mobility needs. Shoreline needs a transit plan that clearly shows how the City's goals and policies are supportive of transit. The plan will support other

City plans: Comprehensive Plan, Sustainability Strategy and Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

- To enable the City to be more proactive regarding the future of transit in Shoreline. We want to encourage transit services and programs work together in an integrated transit network that serves our City.
- To help the City work better with our partner transit agencies by identifying Shoreline's key transit corridors and needs.
- To link City transit strategies to specific visions for transit in the short, medium and long-range time frames.
- To estimate transit service funding needs by more clearly identifying the City transit priorities and corridor needs.

Preliminarily Identified Issues

- Light rail alignment through Shoreline – Sound Transit will be extending light rail from Northgate to Lynnwood, with two stops planned in Shoreline. Sound Transit's current long-range plan identifies the alignment for this extension as running up the east side of I-5, with stops at NE 145th Street and NE 185th Street. Sound Transit will undergo an alignment alternatives review process from 2010-2011 to determine if there is a more appropriate location for the light rail line. By having a transit plan that identifies the City's preferred alignment, we can more effectively work with Sound Transit to influence the decision.
- Light rail station area planning – The light rail stations in Shoreline will be significant facilities. The type of facilities constructed will have transportation impacts to the surrounding areas, and the surrounding land uses will influence the design for the stations. The stations may be designed with large, structured parking garages, acting as park-and-ride lots. If denser, transit-oriented development is located near the stations, fewer people would need to drive to the stations. Station area planning will help the City determine what type of facilities we would like to see. The City would like to seek funding from Sound Transit to pay for station area work.
- Define transit priorities – Shoreline is a suburban community, served by three transit providers. Our location at the beginning/terminus of many transit routes, as well as our various transit needs (all day service, peak commuter service) present many challenges. In addition to our current needs, we will have new needs associated with growth, the beginning of bus rapid transit (BRT) service and the opening of light rail service, both at Northgate and in Shoreline. For example, the City should have policies explaining how bus service will be modified to serve the light rail stations in order to encourage residents to ride the bus rather than drive to the stations.
- Improved transit provider coordination – Metro, Community Transit and Sound Transit all have defined service boundaries. Because of these boundaries, there is often overlap of service, termination of service at illogical locations or service that passes through Shoreline without stopping. Shoreline would like to see improved coordination between transit providers that would result in more efficient service, "one seat rides" across the county line and a single bus rapid transit service on Aurora from Everett to downtown Seattle.

- Redevelopment of the N 192nd Street Park and Ride – Metro has identified the N 192nd Street Park and Ride as a location for Transit Oriented Development (TOD). As part of that redevelopment, transit efficiency improvements may be possible by relocating all or part of the the Aurora Village Transit Center function to this site. The two BRT lines in operation by Metro and Community Transit, as well as many other routes, could intersect on Aurora or at a new transit center at N 192nd Street, rather than continuing to enter Aurora Village and dealing with the congestion. Construction of housing and business space as part of the redevelopment would make it a true TOD.
- Metro policies regarding subarea equity – Metro's policies, regarding distribution of new service hours and elimination of service hours, are based upon a subarea formula and impact Shoreline in a negative fashion. Shoreline is located in the west subarea, along with Seattle and Lake Forest Park. Metro's existing service allocation policy requires new service hours to be allocated according to the following formula: 40 percent of new hours are allocated to the south subarea, 40 percent of new hours are allocated to the east subarea and 20 percent of new hours are allocated to the west subarea. This policy was adopted as a means to correct a perceived imbalance in service, as representatives of the east and south subareas felt they were not receiving a fair share of transit service. The intent of the policy is that as service continues to grow, distribution in accordance with this formula will help correct this imbalance.

  Similarly, Metro Transit has a service reduction policy that is implemented when the system must be decreased. This policy states that service is reduced in proportion to the amount of service in each subarea. Currently, approximately 62 percent of Metro Transit's service was in the west subarea, with 21 percent and 17 percent in the south and east subareas, respectively. Again, this is a policy designed to correct a perceived imbalance in service distribution.

  Clearly these formulas are in direct conflict with Shoreline's (and Seattle's) transit needs. As part of a task force recently created by King County to examine these issues, Shoreline will be advocating for policies that distribute transit service in accordance with principles such as residential density, demand for service and efficiency of service. The TMP will clearly identify the City's position regarding these issues.

Traffic Modeling

In order to understand the impacts of future growth on the City's transportation system, we need to know where growth will be located. The City must plan for future residential and jobs growth, and that growth could be distributed throughout the City in a variety of ways. Different growth scenarios will result in transportation impacts to different areas of the City.

The City has hired DKS Associates to assist with development of a traffic model that will predict transportation impacts in the City based upon several future growth scenarios. These results can help the City make future land use decisions, as the traffic impacts associated with growth will be known. Additionally, the City will know what type of

problems will need to be fixed as growth occurs, allowing us to plan and budget for the appropriate capital improvements or require improvements from private development.

Master Street Plan

The City currently has a street classification system that describes street types, the function of each type and the development standards associated with each type. The development standards identify the maximum right-of-way width, pavement width, and sidewalk width for each classification. However, not all streets that are classified the same function in the same way. For example, Aurora Avenue, 175th Street and 15th Avenue NE are all classified as Principal Arterials, but they function very differently and are differently sized and designed.

The updated TMP will include a master street plan for all arterials and collectors in the City. Staff will look at each of these streets individually and determine what the appropriate cross-section and design is for each one based upon future demands as shown in the traffic model. All modes of transportation – motor vehicles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians – will be considered as part of each street design. In some cases, individual segments of a street will be analyzed separately. For instance, the design of a street may need to be wider at an intersection to accommodate a turn lane or transit queue jump lane. Other features and functions can be reviewed and included, such as types of drainage, landscaping, treescapes and even setbacks.

By developing this master street plan, the City can ensure that private development constructs right-of-way improvements in accordance with our planned design and in the appropriate locations. And by considering all modes of transportation, we will be able to construct complete bicycle and pedestrian systems, as well as assist transit in performing with greater speed and reliability.

Project List for Capital Projects

The traffic modeling and subsequent development of the master street plan will identify capital improvements needed in the City's transportation system, including motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Once the City knows what improvements are needed, we can prioritize those improvements using criteria established as part of this plan update. This prioritized list will be used to generate the list of transportation capital improvements for inclusion in the City's six-year Capital Improvement Plan. It will also be used to select projects that are eligible for grant funding.

Funding Strategy

By having a known list of needed projects, the City will be able to better predict the transportation costs associated with growth. That knowledge helps the City develop a funding strategy to pay for the needed improvements. Existing revenue sources, such as sales and property taxes, can fund some of these improvements. Outside revenue sources, including grant funding and contributions from private development, can also be used for these improvements. Other potential funding resources include fees placed on developments to help pay for the impacts of growth to the transportation system, Local Improvement Districts (perhaps subsidized by the City) and voter approved increases to the Transportation Benefit District (a.k.a. vehicle licensing fee).

Grants are available for different types of projects and have various funding cycles. For example, some grants are available for projects that improve air quality, such as construction of non-motorized or transit facilities. Grants are often competitive and the applications have criteria against which projects are judged. This allows the City to have a general idea of how well a project will compete against other applications and plan accordingly. Once secured, grant funds are non-transferable between projects.

Concurrency

State law requires the City to have adopted levels of service (LOS) for arterials and transit. Level of service measures how well a transportation facility operates. The Growth Management Act requires the City's Comprehensive Plan to identify actions or requirements to bring into compliance any facilities or systems that are below the adopted levels of service. Transportation system expansion needs must also be identified.

If funding is not available to meet the identified transportation needs, the City must either 1) raise additional funding, 2) reassess land use assumptions or 3) modify the adopted LOS standards. The relationship between funding, land use assumptions and LOS standards is known as concurrency. In summary, concurrency says a city must have transportation infrastructure in place to support growth that ensures the adopted levels of service are maintained or have a financial plan in place to do so. If a development would result in impacts to facilities and the impacts cannot be mitigated, the development application must be denied or modified to produce fewer impacts. Highways of Statewide Significance are exempt from concurrency requirements. In Shoreline, there are three Highways of Statewide Significance – SR 99, Interstate 5 and SR 104 (NE 205th Street between SR 99 and Interstate 5).

The City has adopted LOS for our arterials and transit. Level of service can be measured in a variety of ways, and our LOS standards measure congestion at signalized intersections. We have adopted LOS E, which accepts a high level of congestion at signals. As a result, it is difficult for development to cause our intersections to fall below the adopted LOS standards and development will not be denied for this reason. Our adopted LOS for transit is based upon headways (how frequently a bus arrives on a given route). Development is not measured for concurrency with transit service because the City does not control transit service.

As part of the TMP update, the City will be reevaluating our concurrency standards. Our traffic model will identify the future traffic improvements needed to support our projected growth. We will then determine the acceptable LOS standards for Shoreline and the TMP will recommend these changes for the next Comprehensive Plan update.