

# CITY OF BURIEN, WASHINGTON

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** September 7, 2011

**TO:** Burien Planning Commission

**FROM:** Scott Greenberg, AICP, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:** Presentation on Transportation Master Plan

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Our Consultant (Fehr & Peers) has completed an existing conditions analysis of the city's transportation system. Currently work is focusing on development of a travel demand model looking out to the year 2030. Various transportation policies have also been reviewed and will be brought to the Planning Commission over the next two months. The City has been working with a Transportation Master Plan Advisory Committee (TMPAC), which has held three meetings to provide insights into citywide transportation needs and priorities.

The Consultant has brought forward two new transportation planning concepts for the city to consider in developing the TMP—(1) Layered Networks, and (2) Multimodal Level of Service. These two fundamental concepts are described below and will be discussed further at the Commission's meeting on September 13. No action is required. We are simply looking for Commission feedback on the concepts and presentation.

### **1. Layered Networks**

There is a strong national movement around “complete streets,” where roadway rights-of-way should accommodate all modes. It is often a challenge for a single roadway to meet all the demands and expectations of the different, diverse roles of roadways.

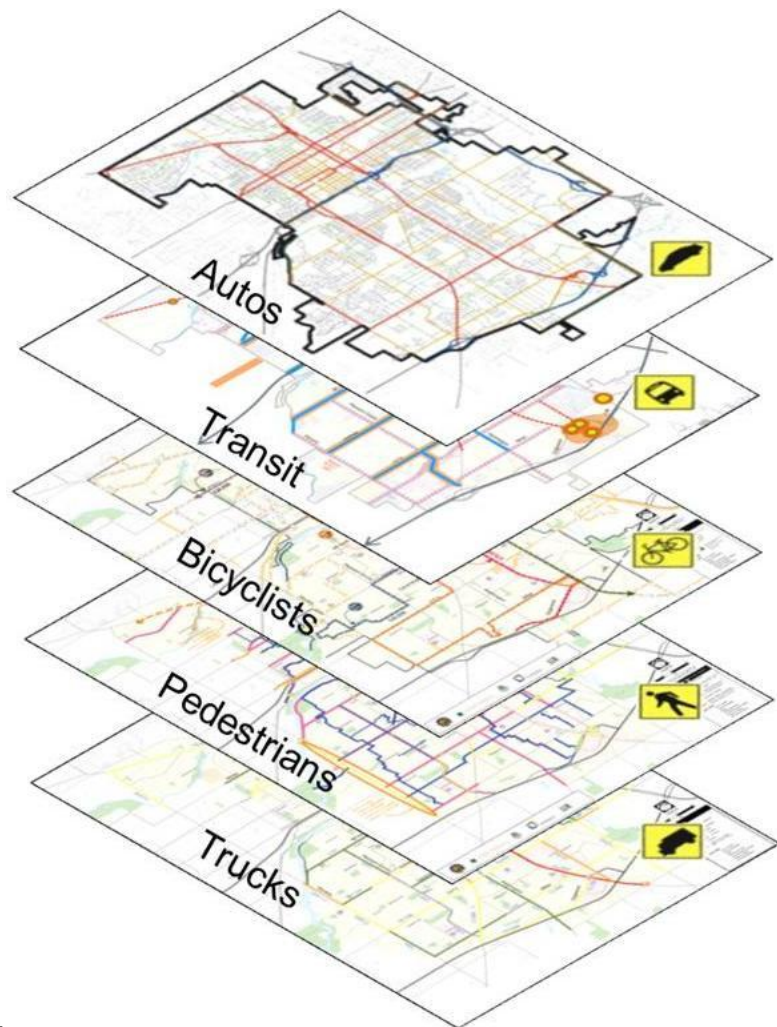
There are many situations where the needs of one mode can affect other modes:

- Increased automobile speeds reduce pedestrian safety
- Expanded automobile capacity can result in wider and less pedestrian-friendly roadways
- Creation of bicycle facilities may create conflicts with buses
- Pedestrian-priority treatments can increase delays for vehicles
- Roadway designs that accommodate trucks can result in large intersections that increase pedestrian crossing times and reduce automobile levels of service

Because of these inherent conflicts on many streets, we are suggesting that the City of Burien consider creating a ‘layered’ roadway network. A layered network, illustrated in **Figure 1**, considers the roadway functionality for each mode separately and also in consideration of the other modes.

One of the advantages of more dense, highly-connected urban roadway networks and redundancy of travel routes is that it provides flexibility in accommodating different travel modes on different roadways. A denser, high connectivity roadway network allows jurisdictions to designate priority functions for specific roadways. Figure 1 shows how various modal layers can be overlaid to create a roadway network that can accommodate all modes.

Earlier on September 13, city staff and the Consultant will be taking a first cut at a layered roadway network for Burien. These preliminary results will be presented to the Commission on Tuesday night.



**Figure 1- Layered Roadway Concept**

## **2. Multi-Modal Level of Service**

*Multi-Modal Level-of-Service* refers to a rating system used to evaluate various transportation modes and impacts. *Level of Service (LOS)* refers to the speed, convenience, comfort and security of transportation facilities and services as experienced by users. Level-Of-Service (LOS) ratings, typically from *A* (best) to *F* (worst), are widely used in transportation planning and traffic engineering to evaluate roadway congestion levels. In recent years, there has been a movement to expand traditional LOS to other modes of travel, including transit, pedestrians, and bicycles.

The City of Burien Comprehensive Plan has set a transportation LOS policy for signalized intersections throughout the city. This approach measures congestion levels during the PM peak hour on city streets, but it does not consider the quality of service for other modes.

The TMP is recommending the city expand the definition of transportation LOS to include separate measures for transit, pedestrians, and bicycles. A multimodal LOS would provide guidance to the city for prioritizing modal investments and making sure that all modes are treated fairly within the planning process. The specific measures and thresholds are being discussed at the Tuesday workshop and with the TMPAC on Wednesday night, September 14. The initial suggestions will be brought to the Commission on Tuesday night.