



# Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Peer Program

## City of Federal Way Peer Exchange

### *A TPCB Peer Exchange Event*

**Location:** Federal Way, Washington

**Date:** November 14-15, 2018

**Host Agency:** City of Federal Way, Washington

**National Peers:** Cyrus Abhar, City of Rancho Cordova, California  
Hans Friedel, AICP, City of Lone Tree, Colorado  
Steve Hebert, AICP, City of Lone Tree, Colorado  
Mark Thomas, City of Rancho Cordova, California

**Local Peers:** Emil King, AICP, City of Bellevue, Washington  
Miranda Redinger, AICP, City of Shoreline, Washington

**Federal Agencies:** Federal Highway Administration  
Federal Transit Administration



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration

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# Introduction

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This report highlights key recommendations and noteworthy practices identified at the “City of Federal Way Peer Exchange” held on November 14-15, 2018 in Federal Way, Washington. This event was sponsored by the Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Peer Program, which is jointly funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The goal of the peer exchange program is to facilitate knowledge transfer and capacity building by connecting peers from different states and/or agencies to exchange best practices and innovative solutions to transportation planning challenges.

## Peer Exchange Overview

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The Washington State Department of Transportation and Development (WSDOT), with support from the FHWA Washington Division, requested a peer exchange from the FHWA/FTA TPCB Program to assist the city of Federal Way as it develops from a suburban community into more of an urban community. Based on the results of a study concluded in 2009, Federal Way, a community just south of Seattle, requested access revisions at the existing South 320<sup>th</sup> Street-Interstate 5 interchange, which is already very congested during the morning and evening peak periods.

Federal Way is a suburban city and its city center is a designated regional growth center through the Puget Sound Regional Council’s centers planning process. The city has been working to grow and densify the city center around the planned Sound Transit light rail station, which has the potential to transform Federal Way into a denser, multimodal city. Federal Way was looking to peer communities for other possible solutions to improve mobility in ways other than adding more pavement or access to already congested regional streets and highways.

### Event Goals and Peer Selections

The City of Federal Way Peer Exchange was a 1.5-day event focused on exploring opportunities for the City of Federal Way to develop as a more urban community in light of planned transportation investments. By sharing the experiences of peers in other jurisdictions and discussing their applicability in Federal Way, the event provided an opportunity for city of Federal Way staff and their partners to consider their approach to partnerships with other entities, transportation investments, and funding mechanisms. The event was



*City of Federal Way staff lead the peers on a tour of downtown Federal Way (Courtesy of the Volpe Center)*

hosted by the city of Federal Way and sponsored by the FHWA/FTA's TPCB program, which assisted with planning and documentation of the event and funded the participation of two of the peer presenters. In addition to the two funded peers, the city of Rancho Cordova and the city of Lone Tree each self-funded a second peer presenter's travel, and the city of Bellevue and the city of Shoreline each self-funded one peer presenter's travel. The peer presenters were:

**Cyrus Abhar**, City Manager, City of Rancho Cordova, CA

Cyrus Abhar is Rancho Cordova's City Manager. In this role, Cyrus oversees all aspects of the City's functions, including policy recommendations and implementation, operations, finances and City staff.

Cyrus previously served as the City's Public Works Director and the Chief Building Official. He has 30+ years of experience in public administration and business management. An employee since the City incorporated on July 1, 2003, Cyrus has played a key role in growing Rancho Cordova into a vibrant and thriving community.

Cyrus is a registered Professional Engineer and a licensed Land Surveyor. He graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. He is also a graduate of the University of California Davis Executive Program and the Harvard Kennedy School Senior Executives and Local Government Program. He currently serves on the Folsom Lake College Foundation Board of Directors.

**Hans Friedel**, AICP, Senior Land Use Planner, City of Lone Tree, CO

Hans Friedel AICP is a Senior Land Use Planner with the City of Lone Tree, a thriving edge city in Colorado's South Denver Metro corridor. He brings creativity and an interdisciplinary approach to both current and long-range planning, coordinating large-scale commercial, residential, and mixed-use developments through the review and entitlements process. Current interests include healthy communities, park and recreational equity, affordable housing, complete streets, and continuous process improvement.

As an intern in Lockhart, Texas, he successfully managed a corridor improvement planning process and grant application that received \$13.4 million in Federal transportation funds and a Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association Long Range Planning award. He co-founded Imagine Lockhart, a volunteer community service, grassroots planning and tactical small-town urbanist organization that went on to organize community litter cleanups, a weekly farmers' market, and create a downtown pocket park.

Hans earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing and dual master's degrees in Applied Geography Land/Area Development and Management and Secondary Education from Texas State University. He received the John Wiley Outstanding Graduate Student award in 2011 for academic excellence and his research in mapping food accessibility in Austin's east neighborhoods. In addition to planning, he taught high school social studies and English.

**Steve Hebert**, AICP, Deputy City Manager, City of Lone Tree, CO

Steve Hebert is the deputy city manager for the City of Lone Tree, Colorado. In addition to managing multiple and diverse special projects, he leads the human resources, IT, city clerk, municipal court, risk management and facilities divisions. Prior to his appointment to his current

position, Mr. Hebert served as the community development director for the city from 2008 to 2014. He was responsible for the management of the planning, building and code enforcement divisions and presided over the transition from contract services to in-house staff.

From 2001 to 2008, Mr. Hebert was the planning manager for the City of Greenwood Village, CO where he was responsible for the management of the development review, long range planning, transportation planning; and code enforcement activities of the Village. He was actively involved in the management of two transit-oriented development projects – The Village Center at Arapahoe Station and redevelopment of the area around the Orchard Road light rail station.

Prior to Greenwood Village, Mr. Hebert was the vice president of Community Matters, Inc., a local planning firm, where he managed several comprehensive planning projects in Colorado and Wyoming. Between 1989 and 1996, Mr. Hebert was the director of special projects for the Anschutz Corporation and the Southern Pacific Real Estate Enterprises. While with Southern Pacific, he managed the redevelopment efforts of the Sacramento Railyards. The mixed-use transit oriented development was one of the first large-scale brownfield projects in the nation.

Mr. Hebert received his master's degree in city planning from the University of Tennessee, while working at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

**Mark Thomas**, Senior Engineer, City of Rancho Cordova, CA

Mark Thomas is a Senior Engineer at the City of Rancho Cordova. After working in Cincinnati, Denver and Chicago, Mark moved to Rancho Cordova, CA to prepare planning elements of the City's General Plan including the Bicycle, Pedestrian, ITS, and Transit Master Plans. Mark's career focus centered on multi-modal planning, Intelligent Transportation Systems, congestion management, traffic engineering and preliminary highway design. With a Civil and Environmental Engineering degree from the University of Cincinnati, Mark obtained professional engineering licenses in Illinois and California.

Mark is the Vice Chair on the One Community Health Board and is a director on the CARES Foundation Board.

**Emil King**, AICP, Strategic Planning Manager, City of Bellevue, WA

Emil King leads the strategic planning group at the City of Bellevue. Emil joined the City's Community Development Department in 2000. Prior to that, he worked in the private sector for 7 years, consulting cities and counties across Washington State on growth management and planning issues. Emil's responsibilities at Bellevue include focused work on integrating land use and transportation planning throughout the City, developing urban design solutions for the built environment and transportation projects, demographic and economic trends analysis, and strategic development initiatives. Emil holds a master's in urban planning from the University of Washington and bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Hawaii.

**Miranda Redinger**, AICP, Senior Planner, City of Shoreline, WA

Miranda grew up in the mountains of Virginia and attended the University of Virginia's School of Architecture under Dean William McDonough, who inspired her with "waste-equals-food" and "cradle-to-cradle" sustainable design principles. She joined the City of Shoreline in 2007 and is currently a Senior Planner, specializing in long-range strategic plans such as the 2012 major

update to the Comprehensive Plan. From 2013-2016, she managed subarea planning for two light rail stations coming to Shoreline in 2024. As co-chair of the City's Green Team, she also worked on the Environmental Sustainability Strategy, sustainability indicator tracking website, Climate Action Plan, Carbon Wedge Analysis, and Deep Green Incentive Program, and represents the City through the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration.

A list of key peer exchange contacts is included in Appendix A.

## Peer Exchange Sessions

The Peer Exchange took place over 1.5 days, November 14-15, 2018 in Federal Way, WA. The following is an overview of the presentations, activities, and discussions held during the peer exchange:

- **The City of Federal Way: Current Trends and Anticipated Impacts:** Representatives from the city of Federal Way gave presentations about Federal Way and its current and planned transportation system.
- **Peer Perspectives: Transforming a City – Promoting Multi-modalism and Building Consensus:** Representatives from the city of Lone Tree and the city of Rancho Cordova gave presentations on their respective communities' efforts to build consensus among stakeholders for a multimodal transportation system.
- **Full Group Discussion: Transforming a City, and Reflections on Morning Discussions:** James Garland from FHWA facilitated a full group discussion on the themes of the earlier presentations.
- **Peer Perspectives: Focusing on Outcomes – Policies and Strategies for Implementation and Lessons Learned:** Representatives from the city of Lone Tree and the city of Rancho Cordova gave presentations on the policies and strategies that helped them successfully transform their communities, and the lessons that they learned along the way.
- **Peer Perspectives: Focusing on Outcomes – Tales of Transformation from Local Cities in Washington:** Representatives from the city of Bellevue and the city of Shoreline presented on their cities' experiences with development in light of transit expansion.
- **Break-out Group Discussions: Focusing on Outcomes, and Reflections on the Day:** Participants split into four groups to discuss their key takeaways from the day's sessions and to identify some challenges that Federal Way faces for its future as a more urban community.
- **Round Table Discussion #1: Opportunities, Challenges, and Lessons Learned:** Jared Fijalkowski from the Volpe Center led a group discussion how the communities have adapted their plans to reality, and the challenges they faces and lessons they learned in the process.
- **Round Table Discussion #2: Funding Mechanisms and Financial Commitments:** James Garland led a group discussion on their cities' transformations through managing its financial commitments and capital investments.

The peer exchange agenda is included in Appendix B.



# The City of Federal Way: Current Trends and Anticipated Impacts

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## Background

Federal Way was established as a logging settlement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Today, the city's population is around 100,000 people and covers 22 square miles. Largely a suburban community, 58 percent of the housing stock is single family and 42 percent is multi family. The median household income is \$59,000, compared to the median household income of King County of \$79,000.

Federal Way was incorporated as a city in 1990 in response to concerns that the community was not in control of the rapid growth in its part of King County. The community had poor land use, no center, and it lacked a distinct image. As a part of its incorporation as a city, Federal Way created a police department, took over control from the county for maintaining some roads and for waste management, and created a parks department. Later, the city changed its form of government from council-manager to strong-mayor.

The city was hard-hit by the recession in the last decade. Weyerhaeuser, which had 5,000 to 6,000 employees at its Federal Way headquarters at its height, closed and relocated its headquarters in winter 2016. That departure, coupled with the loss of 500,000 square feet of retail space, reduced the number of jobs in Federal Way significantly.

## Vision

To address these challenges, the city of Federal Way has embarked on four initiatives as part of an economic development strategy approved in 2014:

- Reuse of the Weyerhaeuser property,
- Establishing a university,
- Creating a center, and
- Branding.

To achieve the goal of creating a center for Federal Way, the city built a performing arts center, built Town Square Park, and acquired several parcels for development, including a closed shopping center. The city also signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Washington, Highline



*This roundabout services an on-ramp to I-5 on the northern end of downtown Federal Way (Courtesy of the Volpe Center)*

College, and the Federal Way public schools department to establish a university in Federal Way. The city has also recruited several businesses to locate offices in Federal Way. By incorporating the light rail station and young people in the vision for Federal Way, the city hopes to grow more diverse and sustainable.

Federal Way leadership sees the city changing in several ways in the near future. First, leaders anticipate an increase in lower income professional populations. Second, they expect the median age of the population to increase while median income also increases. They see

Federal Way becoming an interim destination between Tacoma and Seattle. They want to see an increased professional economic base, and expect higher density development to occur, particularly in the downtown area.



*The Federal Way Transit Center in downtown Federal Way (Courtesy of the Volpe Center)*

## **Transportation Planning in Federal Way**

Federal Way has access to the regional transportation system through three existing corridors: I-5, State Route 99, and State Route 18. Most home-based trips in Federal Way travel through commercial areas to get to those routes, creating significant congestion. This limits the options for dispersing trips adequately across the city's street network.

Transportation and land use planning are closely tied through the State of Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA is a series of State statutes, first adopted in 1990, that requires fast-growing cities and counties (including Federal Way and King County) to develop comprehensive plans to manage population growth. Under the GMA, development that exceeds the city's or county's transportation capacity is prohibited. So, development typically occurs with concurrent improvements to transportation infrastructure. Communities establish their own adequate levels of service. Federal Way's level of service is E with a volume to capacity ratio of 1.00 (though it has since climbed to 1.20). In essence, this means that the city was allowing development to consume all available road capacity, and has since changed this to allow development that would have the potential to exceed that road capacity by 20 percent.

Despite existing low population densities, Federal Way has some of the highest suburban transit route ridership in King County. While 71 percent of residents use single-occupant vehicles for commute trips, 14 percent carpool, 8 percent use transit, 4 percent work from home, 2 percent walk, and 1 percent use a bicycle. Table 1 provides a comparison of the commute to work more shares of Federal Way and Washington State.

Table 1: Comparison of Commute to Work Mode Share for Federal Way and Washington State

	Federal Way	Washington State
Single-Occupant Vehicle	71%	73%
Carpool	14%	10%
Public Transportation	8%	6%
Walk	2%	4%
Bicycle	1%	2%
Work from Home	4%	5%

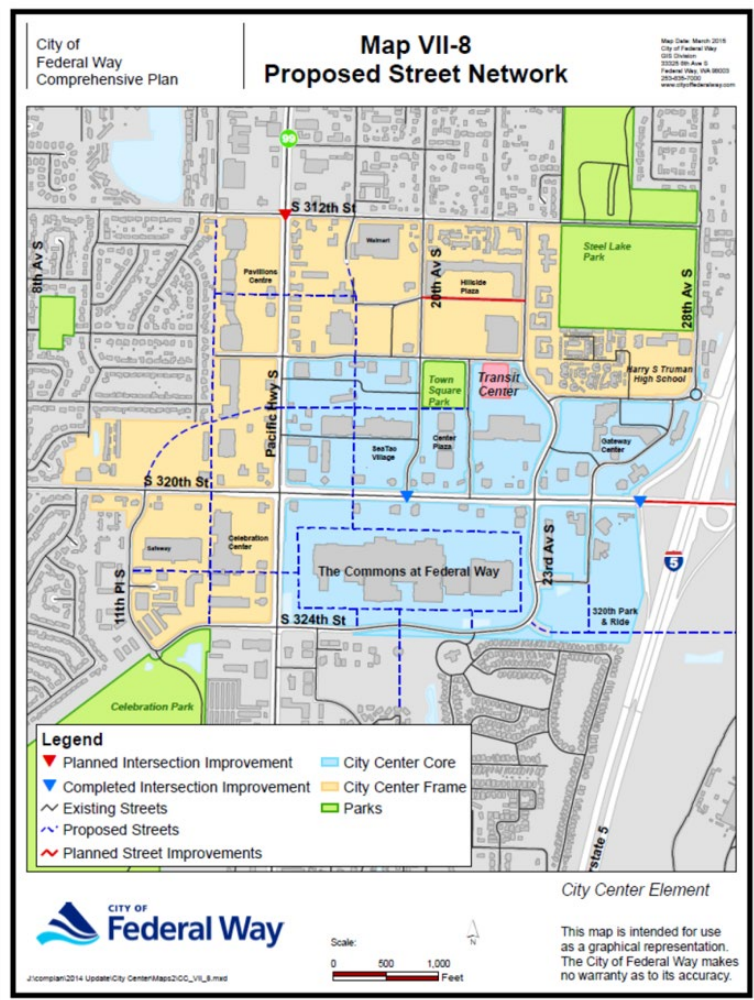
Source: U.S. Census

The transportation element of Federal Way’s comprehensive plan for its city center involves establishing new streets to break up the existing quarter-mile mega-blocks. The plan also includes establishing a “ring road” to divert through traffic from the commercial center of the city. Finally, it includes modifying I-5 access at South 320<sup>th</sup> Street to disperse traffic through multiple east-west corridors (possibly South 324<sup>th</sup> Street), which will divert traffic from South 320<sup>th</sup> Street and will improve access to the city center.

The Comprehensive Plan also includes enhanced bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. It involves making better connections among Celebration Park, Town Square Park, Steel Lake Park, and the Federal Way Transit Center. It also includes grade-separated crossings across State Route 99 and South 320<sup>th</sup> Street. Finally, it includes extending the BPA Trail across I-5.

In an effort to support development and reduce congestion, Federal Way first evaluated alternatives for improving access to I-5 in 2001. The city advanced two alternatives for environmental review, but following the analysis, the City Council chose the no-action alternative due to public opposition to both evaluated alternatives. However, in 2014, as congestion worsened, the city reinitiated the analysis.

Federal Way is anticipating changes in traffic patterns, in part because of WSDOT’s Connecting Washington program, and as housing affordability drives residential development further from job centers. In 2015, the governor and State legislature approved a \$16 billion funding package



The proposed street network in the city of Federal Way’s Comprehensive Plan (Courtesy of the city of Federal Way)

to enhance the statewide transportation system and maintain critical infrastructure. Connecting Washington is a 16-year program, funded primarily by an 11.9-cent gas tax increase that was fully phased-in on July 1, 2016. The Gateway Project, funded through Connecting Washington, will complete gaps in the freeway system both north and south of Federal Way, potentially increasing volumes on I-5.

Due to changes in freeway traffic forecasts generated in part by the Gateway Project, WSDOT raised concerns about the city of Federal Way’s plans and policies regarding development and transportation improvements in the city center. The hope is that Federal Way can take full advantage of the multimodal opportunities presented with the extension of the light rail to Federal Way in 2024, and avoid impacting I-5 with additional access.

## Transforming a City – Promoting Multi-modalism and Building Consensus

### Lone Tree, CO

Incorporated in 1995, Lone Tree is an edge city of about 14,000 residents on the southern side of the Denver metropolitan area. The city is located at the busy Colorado 470/E-470/I-25 interchange. Lone Tree has a large regional shopping mall, a regional hospital, small and large employers, and housing within its 10 square miles. The city’s population doubles during the daytime due to a relatively large employment base. The Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD) has two light rail stations in or near Lone Tree, and three more stations are nearing completion with service expected in 2019.

The Denver region has 3.1 million residents and experienced a population growth of 13.5 percent between 2010 and 2017.<sup>1</sup> The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), the metropolitan planning organization for the Denver region, adopted Metro Vision, which promotes



Infographic and map of Lincoln Station in Lone Tree, CO (Courtesy of the city of Lone Tree).

<sup>1</sup> This is high compared to the national average population growth of 5.3 percent between 2010 and 2017 (Source: U.S. Census).

regional cooperation among jurisdictions and encourages new development in urban centers instead of through suburban sprawl.

The Southeast Corridor, of which Lone Tree is a part, is designated as an urban center, and is the most successful business district in the region outside of downtown Denver. It has 35 million square feet of office space and 130,000 employees. Since the two existing light rail stations opened in 2006, development has accelerated, particularly near the light rail stations. 4.1 million square feet of office space were built since 2006, 66 percent of which was within 0.5 miles of a light rail station. Similarly, 4,000 new housing units were built, 80 percent of which were within 0.5 miles of a light rail station.

One of the stations in Lone Tree, Lincoln Station, is currently serving as the terminus (last) station for the light rail line. It opened in 2006 and has a 1,300-space parking garage. The area around the station has flexible mixed-use zoning and has developed organically.

RTD's Southeast Rail Extension project includes the construction of three new light rail stations extending south from Lincoln Station. All three stations will be in the city of Lone Tree. The project was funded in 2014 through a combination of Federal, private, and local funds. A local match of 14 percent of the \$233 million project was funded from private businesses and local governments in the Southeast Corridor. Partnerships like the ones that enabled the funding of the light rail extension have been critical in Lone Tree's urban development process.

## Rancho Cordova, CA

Rancho Cordova is a small city of about 75,000 residents about 14 miles east of downtown Sacramento. There are 60,000 jobs in Rancho Cordova, but 90 percent of those jobs are filled by people who live outside of Rancho Cordova. The city is served by four Sacramento Regional Transit light rail stations, one of which opened in 1998, and the remaining three opened in 2004.



*Light Rail station in Rancho Cordova, CA (Courtesy of the city of Rancho Cordova).*

Rancho Cordova began as a suburban community and has been urbanizing over the last few decades. The city has faced challenges in its efforts to develop and urbanize; a large employer relocated out of the region, the local Air Force Base closed, and the community lacked a downtown center. Additionally, there were limited transportation options for people to access the light rail for the first or last mile of their trips.

To address these issues, the city of Rancho Cordova took a multi-pronged approach. It implemented a land use plan for Folsom Boulevard, the main roadway that parallels the light rail line, to promote high-

density housing and to discourage strip commercial development. The city also conducted transit-oriented development studies for the areas around its light rail stations and has implemented some new housing near transit as a result. Finally, the city has implemented a complete streets program, which has included projects totaling \$25 million to build sidewalks, bicycle lanes, medians/access control, and landscaping.

## Full Group Discussion

The national peer agency representatives were impressed with the large investment in transit that voters approved in Washington State. Paul Bennett from Sound Transit noted that work on ballot initiatives for transit began in 1998. While an earlier roads and transit ballot failed, an initiative that included transit for suburban communities passed in 2004. Since then, people across the region and State have seen the benefits of Sound Transit. Due to the popularity of Sound Transit, the agency decided to be bold with the most recent ballot initiative. The \$53 billion package, which includes extending the Link light rail to Federal Way by 2024, passed.

Participants from Federal Way liked that Lone Tree has more jobs than residents, and expressed that Federal Way also seeks to increase its employment base. Steve Hebert from Lone Tree noted that the relationship between the public and private sectors was the key to having high concentrations of jobs in the southeast corridor. Many employers sought to locate in the corridor after a large employer opened. They were attracted to the access to the transit network that the light rail provides.

The group noted that it takes a lot of work to have a suburban community undergo urban development. Steve Hebert noted that, when bringing light rail into a built-out community, you need to make sure that development is transit-oriented, not just transit-adjacent. Pedestrian bridges over interstate highways can help connect transit users to residential and commercial properties, but they must be part of an extensive pedestrian network.



*Discussions during the peer exchange (Courtesy of the Volpe Center).*

# Focusing on Outcomes – Policies and Strategies for Implementation and Lessons Learned

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## Lone Tree, CO

While the Denver region has been expanding its light rail system over the last few decades, the percentage of workers taking public transit has continued to decline. In 2010, 3.8 percent of workers took public transit to work, down from 5.8 percent in 1980. This is likely due to land use patterns that have been increasingly suburban, until recently. While the percentage of workers who live in Lone Tree using public transportation (3.6 percent) is below that of the city of Denver (7.1 percent), it is higher than Parker (2.2 percent), another suburban community in the region that does not have light rail service.

The representatives from Lone Tree offered the following three lessons learned:

**Transit-adjacent doesn't mean transit-oriented:** *Why the built environment in the last mile is so important.* Locating development near transit stations isn't enough. The development should be built so that it facilitates access to and from transit. The typical suburban environment prioritizes cars, not people or transit. Large parking structures are common at suburban light rail stations, but they generate more traffic. Suburban cities that are looking to urbanize around new light rail stations should take advantage of the companies and developers that want to be close to transit and work with them to design their properties to encourage transit use. The developments should preserve existing transportation connections, break down existing barriers, and create new connections. Lone Tree is planning for Lone Tree Center Station to have more transit-oriented development to increase the city's transit mode share.



*Aerial view of the Southeast Corridor in Lone Tree, CO (Courtesy of the city of Lone Tree).*

**Density dilemma:** *The market wants density, but many suburban residents don't.* In a suburban community, transit access is a necessity for some, but an amenity for most. There are often concerns among residents that light rail will lead to denser development, which is often true. It is important to carefully plan a comfortable transition between dense transit-oriented developments and more

traditional suburban developments along the “vulnerable edge.” Some ways to determine how to do this is through sub-area plans, station area plans, design guidelines, and framework plans.

**More transit likely means more cars:** *Know your message.* Increased growth and density in suburban areas will likely lead to more vehicle trips, given current behavior patterns. Lone Tree has a set of micro transit services to solve the first-mile/last-mile connection issue for some commuters through a public-private partnership. There is one circulator that uses three shuttle buses and an on-demand shuttle that is operated by Uber. Combined, the services provide about 400 rides per weekday. In addition to micro transit, Lone Tree is working on implementing adaptive traffic signals and encourages employers to offer transportation demand management services for their employees.

## Rancho Cordova, CA

When the light rail was being expanded to Rancho Cordova, it was sold to the community as the solution to all of their problems. However, transit is not a panacea. It does, however, provide residents with another choice for transportation, and entices good, dense growth. With density comes traffic.

Rancho Cordova has a City Council that is very supportive of transit. In particular, the members support improving access to transit, are enthusiastic about new service ideas, and have led the city in developing a visionary general plan for transportation, development, and related issues. However, the city will soon update its plan to reflect the current realities; a planned streetcar may need to be removed, but the proliferation of ridesharing and bike sharing will be incorporated.



*The Rancho CordoVan in Rancho Cordova (Courtesy of the city of Rancho Cordova).*

In California, the Transportation Development Act allocates funding for transportation to cities based on population. Rancho Cordova receives about \$3 million annually for transit operations, which the city passes through to the Sacramento Regional Transit District for the light rail. The city also assesses a transit tax on new residential and commercial developments. While Rancho Cordova provides funding to the transit district for light rail service, the transit district pays Rancho Cordova to maintain the stations.

Like Lone Tree, Rancho Cordova has been working to address the first-mile/last mile connection to transit issue. The Rancho CordoVan currently operates three routes that serve the Zinfandel, Anatolia, Kavala Ranch, and Sunridge Park neighborhoods. These routes operate Monday through Friday in the mornings and evenings to provide access to light rail at the Zinfandel Regional Transit Light Rail Station. Due to low ridership and high operating costs, the city is considering micro transit opportunities for low-density areas and is working with the transportation network company Lyft on a first-mile/last-mile project.



# Peer Perspectives: Focusing on Outcomes – Tales of Transformation from Local Cities in Washington

## Shoreline, WA

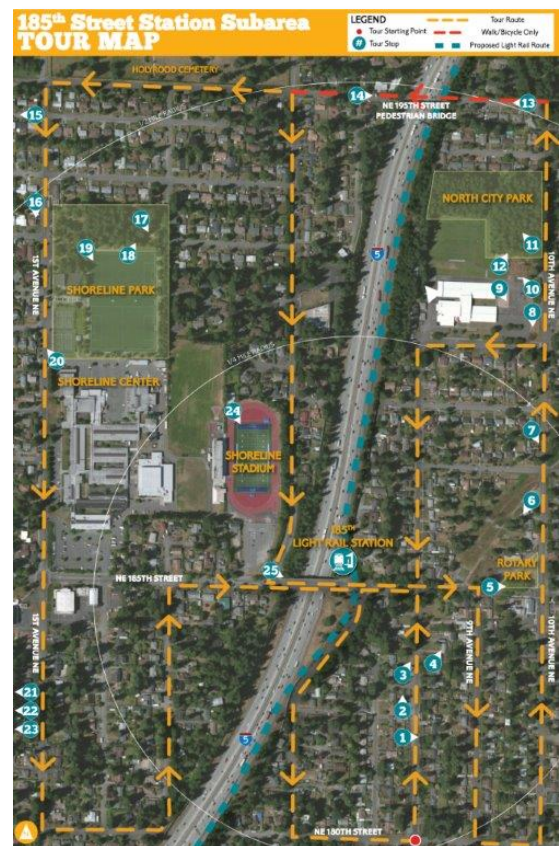
The city of Shoreline is a small city of about 55,000 residents located just north of Seattle. It will have two new light rail stations by 2024. In anticipation of light rail service, the city conducted visioning sessions with the community, making a special effort to reach out to lower-income residents and Korean-American populations. The city also conducted “walk-shops” to bring together residents that have more of a local view of the communities with decisionmakers who typically have a broader, longer-term view of the community. Based on this extensive outreach, the city developed design concepts for each station. The city does not have funding to improve the roadways that serve the transit stations, and is therefore relying on fees from future development to fund these improvements.

The current land use around the planned stations is primarily single-family homes. Shoreline has implemented new, phased zoning designations in anticipation of the light rail extension. The zoning calls for higher densities but is relatively flexible on what is built; buildings can be all commercial, all residential, or a mix of both. Shoreline has requirements and incentives for building green and affordable housing. The new zoning is attracting Seattle developers who are accustomed to building to similar standards. Shoreline decided to zone for the long-range vision so that developers would build more densely closer to the stations.

Because of the presence of single-family homes, it is likely to take a long time for transit-oriented development to build out around the stations. However, denser development is happening faster than expected. Some property owners are banding together to sell multiple lots to developers at once so that they can get higher prices for their properties while the developers can build larger buildings.

## Bellevue, WA

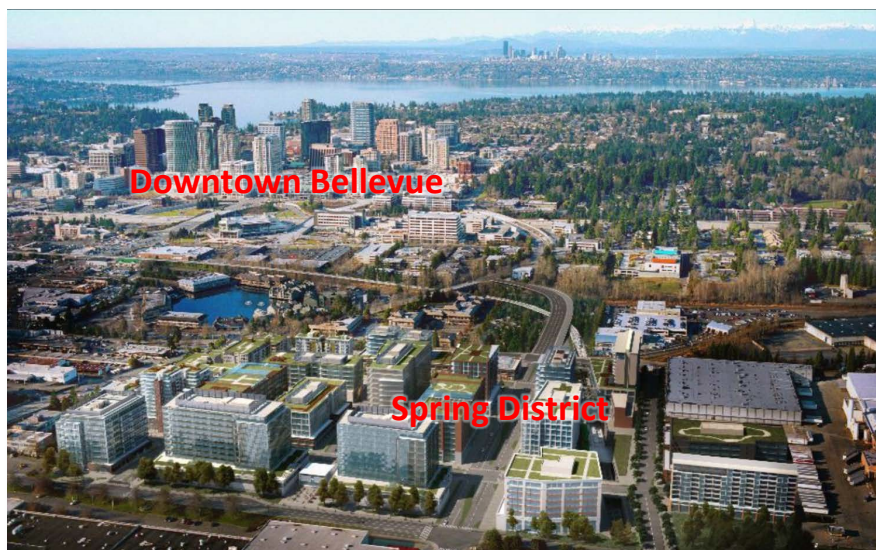
Bellevue, WA is the third-largest city in the Seattle metropolitan region with a population of about 144,000 people. Bellevue was incorporated in 1953 and emerged as a bedroom community to Seattle in the 1960s. Downtown Bellevue’s street grid was originally designed to prioritize cars. Over the past few



Map of one of the “walk-shop” tour routes (Courtesy of the city of Shoreline).

decades, it has become a major jobs center in the Seattle region, and the city has strived to improve pedestrian and transit access.

Reflective of its growth and potential for future development, six new light rail stations are under construction in Bellevue; they are slated to open in June 2023. The Downtown Bellevue station will be located next to Bellevue City Hall. Three other stations were intentionally located in the middle of existing low-density commercial or industrial area with redevelopment potential instead of locating them in freeway right-of-way. The expectation is that these stations will create three new, distinct neighborhoods.



*Rendering of planned development around the future Spring District station (Courtesy of the city of Bellevue).*

The city of Bellevue received a \$100 million Federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan to develop transportation infrastructure to facilitate development around the new light rail stations. One large area employer, REI, is relocating 1,000+ employees to a new headquarters in Bellevue adjacent to the future Spring District light rail station. The city has set a goal to double the non-single-occupant-vehicle mode split in the designated growth areas around the light rail stations from 20 percent to 40 percent.

## Discussion Topics

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### Focusing on Outcomes

On the afternoon of the first day, the participants were divided into four small groups to discuss their key takeaways from the day's sessions, and to identify some challenges that Federal Way faces for its future as a more urban community.

#### Takeaways

- Increasing access to transit accelerates development, which will eventually lead to more traffic.
- It is important to focus on first-mile/last-mile connections to and from transit. Micro transit may be something to explore.
- Transit is only one piece of the puzzle in the future of Federal Way's transportation system.
- It will be important to plan for the people who will be either displaced from their homes or priced out of the housing market as a result of the station opening.
- Federal Way should ensure that future development around the planned station is high-density.
- It is important to keep the focus on multimodal transportation solutions for Federal Way.

## **Challenges**

- The light rail station in Federal Way will serve as a terminus station (the end of the line) for six years while the extension to Tacoma is built. Traffic may be temporarily increased as a result of transit users driving north to access the station in Federal Way.
- It will be a challenge to manage the expectations of stakeholders and the public throughout the process.
- Federal Way needs to determine what kind of community it wants to become. Look to others for examples but implement the right vision for Federal Way.
- Leverage public-private partnerships to develop subarea economic plans.
- Working with the public to implement large-scale change is a challenge.
- Capacity may be a bigger challenge for Federal Way than for Rancho Cordova or Lone Tree.

## **Opportunities, Challenges, and Lessons Learned**

On the morning of the second day, Jared Fijalkowski facilitated a discussion among the attendees about how the communities have had to adapt their plans to reality, the challenges they faced, and lessons they learned in the process.

The representatives from Lone Tree noted that their Master Plan was developed with expected changes in mind, but they did not anticipate a large financial services employer locating a facility nearby. That

change required the city to modify the location of a planned arts center. Additionally, Lone Tree faced unanticipated traffic issues related to parking and school buses. One lesson learned was that it can require flexibility to stay on track with plans. Also, it is important to have land owners on-board with the vision.

The representatives from Rancho Cordova said that things are prone to happen that are outside of the city's control, including businesses closing or relocating. Developers may not be interested in conforming their plans to the city's vision, and will try to circumvent them by appealing directly to the City Council. The city has also had challenges getting the school board to agree to the city's vision of fewer travel lanes and narrower roadway widths.

The representative from Bellevue said that it is important to be flexible with what is built now. For example, the first floor of a new building may not support the ultimate land use that you would like it to have long-term, but the building should be constructed to accommodate the use that you desire should conditions change in the future. Also, consider the long-term use of parking structures and the impact they may have on the public realm.

The representative from Shoreline noted that the city's design standards have traditionally been more aimed at apartment buildings, but that townhomes are more common in the current economic climate.



*Participants broke into small groups to discuss key takeaways and challenges (Courtesy of FHWA).*

It is important to plan projects with plenty of flexibility in timing and budget to allow for a successful implementation if things change.

Desiree Winkler from Federal Way noted that the city has struggled with property owners who do not agree with the city's planned changes. She asked how other communities have handled this issue. Lone Tree faced a similar issue with their Entertainment District. The city worked with them to implement legislation that addressed their concerns and a business improvement district to promote the area. The property owners then agreed to tax themselves to fund the business improvement district because they believed in the vision. They recommended identifying champions in the private sector who can encourage other property owners to support the vision.

Paul Bennett from Sound Transit suggested that Sound Transit and Federal Way partner to address the access issues that the new station will face. By planning early and together, the two entities can consider and address issues related to parking, bicycle and pedestrian access, and bus access to the station.

## **Funding Mechanisms and Financial Commitments**

Later in the morning on the second day, James Garland facilitated the final roundtable discussion on funding mechanisms and financial commitments. The peers discussed their experience in facilitating their cities' transformations through managing its financial commitments and capital investments.

The representatives from Lone Tree discussed a variety of funding mechanisms in Colorado, including funds from the city (including sales tax revenues), developer fees, county funds, and metropolitan district funds. They stressed that the partnerships and intergovernmental agreements the city has with these entities are crucial to funding the various projects. For example, Lone Tree has a micro transit service for first-mile/last-mile connections to the light rail. The service costs \$650,000 per year to operate but is free to users. The city pays \$250,000 annually for the service, and the rest of the cost is borne by private partners.

The representatives from Rancho Cordova described a few of their unique funding mechanisms. There is the Community Enhancement fund, which is a county-wide half-cent sales tax; one third of which goes to the State, one third to the local community, and one third to transit. This funding has allowed Rancho Cordova to spend \$1 million to perform operations and maintenance activities and to implement some capital projects. Rancho Cordova also implements development agreements with developers, many of which include transportation impact fees and transit fees.

The representative from Bellevue established a cost-sharing agreement with Sound Transit which involved Bellevue providing property to the transit agency as part of its share of the costs of the planned transit expansion. In addition, the city received a Federal TIFIA loan to build out the roadway infrastructure necessary for the transit expansion. The city also has an Enterprise fund that can be used for certain projects, including stormwater projects, but cannot be used for property acquisition.

The representative from Shoreline noted that interdepartmental partnerships have been helpful. For example, developers pay a park impact fee that funds the purchase or expansion of parks in the area. These kinds of partnerships are more easily developed if you bring the players to the table early in the process. She noted that the metropolitan planning organization in their area is a helpful resource for information about funding mechanisms.

Representatives from Federal Way noted that they have fewer funding options than some of the peer agencies. Establishing a transit benefit district is an option, but the public is not likely to have an appetite for increased taxes for transit after having already approved the measure that is funding the transit expansion. Additionally, city leadership is hesitant to raise taxes.



*Discussions during the peer exchange (Courtesy of the Volpe Center).*

Participants suggested a few approaches for Federal Way to consider. They suggested that Federal Way come up with a standard format for engaging with partners to help them understand the city's vision and to determine how their mutual desires can be met. Another suggestion was for similar communities (i.e., the communities in Washington that will be receiving new light rail stations in the coming years) to meet regularly to coordinate and share experiences.

## Conclusion

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The City of Federal Way Peer Exchange featured two national peers and two local peers with experience in preparing their communities to develop and improve their transportation networks as light rail was (or will be) extended into them. Communication and engagement were central to the success of these communities' effort. Through this TPCB Peer Exchange, the city of Federal Way learned the following lessons from the peers.

### Planning Considerations

- It will be important to plan for the people who will be either displaced from their homes or priced out of the housing market as a result of the introduction of light rail service.
- The light rail station in Federal Way will serve as a terminus station for six years while the extension to Tacoma is built, which may temporarily lead to increased traffic. Plan for both the medium term (while Federal Way is the terminus) as well as the long term (when Federal Way is no longer the terminus).
- Federal Way should clearly define what kind of community it wants to become, share that vision broadly, and work to bring stakeholders on board. Look to other communities for examples, but choose the right vision for Federal Way.
- Plan projects with plenty of flexibility in timing and budget to allow for a successful implementation if things change.
- It can require flexibility to stay on track with your plans.

## Multimodal Transportation Considerations

- Transit alone will not solve all of a community's problems. It provides residents with another choice for transportation, and entices good, dense growth.
- Consider the long-term use of parking structures and the impact that they may have on the public realm.
- Transit is only one piece of the puzzle in the future of Federal Way's transportation system. Keep the focus on multimodal transportation solutions.

## Access to Transit

- Sound Transit and Federal Way should partner to address the access issues that the new station will face. By planning early and together, the two entities can consider and address issues related to parking, bicycle and pedestrian access, and bus access to the station.
- Micro transit is an emerging option to solving first-mile/last mile issues. Consider partnering with transportation network companies to implement micro transit, in conjunction with Sound Transit.

## Development and Density

- When bringing light rail into a built-out community, it is important to make sure that development is transit-oriented, not just transit-adjacent. Locating development near transit stations isn't enough. The development should be built so that it facilitates access to and from transit. It should preserve existing transportation connections, break down existing barriers, and create new connections.
- It is important to carefully plan a comfortable transition between dense transit-oriented developments and more traditional suburban developments along the "vulnerable edge." Some ways to determine how to do this are through sub-area plans, station area plans, design guidelines, and framework plans.
- With density, comes traffic. Increasing access to transit accelerates development, which will eventually lead to more traffic.
- It is important to be flexible with what is built now. For example, the first floor of new buildings may not have the use that you would like them to have, but the building should be built to accommodate the use that you desire should conditions change in the future.

## Public and Private Sector Coordination

- The relationship between the public and private sectors can be the key to having high concentrations of jobs locate near transit.
- Leverage public-private partnerships to develop subarea economic plans.
- Develop a standard format for engaging with partners to help get them on board with the city's vision and to determine how their mutual desires can be met. Identify champions in the private sector that can help get other property owners on board with the vision.
- Work closely with city leadership to get them on board with the vision and the objectives to achieve the vision.
- Interdepartmental partnerships can be helpful in implementing the vision. These kinds of partnerships are more easily developed if you get the players to the table early in the process.

- Engage the metropolitan planning organization in the project. They can be a helpful resource for information about funding mechanisms and for intercity coordination.
- The communities in Washington that will be receiving new light rail stations in the coming years should meet regularly to coordinate and share experiences.

## **Public Outreach**

- Conduct experiential public engagement like “walk-shops” to bring together residents that have more of a local view of the communities with decisionmakers who typically have a broader, longer-term view of the community.
- Carefully manage the expectations of stakeholders and the public throughout the process.
- Working with the public to implement large-scale change is challenging. Stay focused on the vision and be persistent.

# Appendices

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## Appendix A: Key Contacts

**Cyrus Abhar, City Manager**  
City of Rancho Cordova, California  
916-496-6657  
[cabhar@cityofranhocordova.org](mailto:cabhar@cityofranhocordova.org)

**Mike Barry, GIS Specialist/Transportation Planner**  
FHWA Office of Planning  
202-380-7413  
[Michael.Barry@dot.gov](mailto:Michael.Barry@dot.gov)

**Naveen Chandra, Street Systems Project Engineer**  
City of Federal Way, Washington  
253-797-6820  
[Naveen.Chandra@cityoffederalway.com](mailto:Naveen.Chandra@cityoffederalway.com)

**Anna Corniel, Community Planner**  
FTA Office of Planning  
202-366-2888  
[Anna.Corniel@dot.gov](mailto:Anna.Corniel@dot.gov)

**Hans Friedel, AICP, Senior Planner**  
City of Lone Tree, Colorado  
303-242-0429  
[hans.friedel@cityoflonetree.com](mailto:hans.friedel@cityoflonetree.com)

**James Garland, Lead, Planning Capacity Building Team**  
FHWA Office of Planning  
202-309-6470  
[James.Garland@dot.gov](mailto:James.Garland@dot.gov)

**Steve Hebert, AICP, Deputy City Manager**  
City of Lone Tree, Colorado  
303-718-3318  
[Steve.Hebert@cityoflonetree.com](mailto:Steve.Hebert@cityoflonetree.com)

**Emil King, AICP, Strategic Planning Manager**  
City of Bellevue, Washington  
425-452-7223  
[EAKing@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:EAKing@bellevuewa.gov)

**Robin Mayhew, Management of Mobility Director**  
Washington State Department of Transportation  
206-464-8383  
[MayhewR@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:MayhewR@wsdot.wa.gov)

**Rick Perez, City Traffic Engineer**  
City of Federal Way, Washington  
253-261-3784  
[Rick.Perez@cityoffederalway.com](mailto:Rick.Perez@cityoffederalway.com)

**Miranda Redinger, AICP, Senior Planner**  
City of Shoreline, Washington  
206-801-2513  
[mredinger@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:mredinger@shorelinewa.gov)

**Mark Thomas, Senior Engineer**  
City of Rancho Cordova, California  
312-391-0211  
[mthomas@cityofranhocordova.org](mailto:mthomas@cityofranhocordova.org)



## Appendix B: Peer Exchange Agenda

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2018

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
8:30 – 9:00 am	Registration and Check-in	
9:00 – 9:05	Opening and Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>James Garland</b> Team Lead, Planning Capacity Building, FHWA Office of Planning</li> <li>• <b>EJ Walsh</b> Director, Public Works, City of Federal Way</li> </ul>
9:05 – 9:25	Welcome and Remarks from Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jeanne Burbidge</b> Former Councilwoman, Deputy Mayor, and Mayor, City of Federal Way</li> <li>• <b>Patty Rubstello</b> Assistant Secretary, Urban Mobility &amp; Access, Washington State Department of Transportation</li> <li>• <b>Daniel Mathis</b> Division Administrator, FHWA Washington Division</li> </ul>
9:25 – 9:30	Overview of and Goals for Peer Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Michael Barry</b> GIS Specialist/Transportation Planner, FHWA Office of Planning</li> </ul>
9:30 – 10:15	The City of Federal Way: <i>Current Trends and Anticipated Impacts</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tim Johnson</b> Economic Development Director, City of Federal Way</li> <li>• <b>Doc Hansen</b> Planning Manager, City of Federal Way</li> <li>• <b>Rick Perez</b> City Traffic Engineer, City of Federal Way</li> </ul>
10:15 – 10:30	<i>Break</i>	
10:30 – 11:30	Peer Perspectives: <i>Transforming a City – Promoting Multi-modalism and Building Consensus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hans Friedel, AICP</b> Senior Planner, City of Lone Tree, CO</li> <li>• <b>Steve Hebert, AICP</b> Deputy City Manager, City of Lone Tree, CO</li> <li>• <b>Cyrus Abhar</b> City Manager, City of Rancho Cordova, CA</li> <li>• <b>Mark Thomas</b> Senior Engineer, City of Rancho Cordova, CA</li> </ul>

<b>Time</b>	<b>Session</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>
<b>11:30 am – 12:00 pm</b>	<b>Full Group Discussion: <i>Transforming a City, and Reflections on Morning Discussions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peer Exchange Participants</b></li> <li>• <b>Facilitator: James Garland</b> Team Lead, Planning Capacity Building, FHWA Office of Planning</li> </ul>
<b>12:00 – 12:45</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>12:45 – 1:00</b>	<b>Recap of Morning and Overview of Afternoon Sessions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jared Fijalkowski</b> Community Planner, U.S. DOT Volpe National Transportation Systems Center</li> </ul>
<b>1:00 – 2:00</b>	<b>Peer Perspectives: <i>Focusing on Outcomes – Policies and Strategies for Implementation and Lessons Learned</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hans Friedel, AICP</b> Senior Planner, City of Lone Tree, CO</li> <li>• <b>Steve Hebert, AICP</b> Deputy City Manager, City of Lone Tree, CO</li> <li>• <b>Cyrus Abhar</b> City Manager, City of Rancho Cordova, CA</li> <li>• <b>Mark Thomas</b> Senior Engineer, City of Rancho Cordova, CA</li> </ul>
<b>2:00 – 2:15</b>	<b>Break</b>	
<b>2:15 – 3:15</b>	<b>Peer Perspectives: <i>Focusing on Outcomes – Tales of Transformation from Local Cities in Washington</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Miranda Redinger, AICP</b> Senior Planner, City of Shoreline, WA</li> <li>• <b>Emil King, AICP</b> Strategic Planning Manager, City of Bellevue, WA</li> <li>• <b>Moderator: Robin Mayhew, AICP</b> Director, Management of Mobility, Washington State Department of Transportation</li> </ul>
<b>3:15 – 4:15</b>	<b>Break-out Group Discussions: <i>Focusing on Outcomes, and Reflections on the Day</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peer Exchange Participants</b></li> </ul>
<b>4:15 – 4:30</b>	<b>Wrap-up and Concluding Remarks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Anna Corniel</b> Community Planner, FTA Office of Planning and Environment</li> <li>• <b>Desiree Winkler</b> Deputy Public Works Director/Street Systems Manager, City of Federal Way</li> </ul>
<b>4:30 pm</b>	<b>Adjourn</b>	

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2018**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Session</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>
<b>8:30 – 9:00 am</b>	<b>Registration and Check-in</b>	
<b>9:00 – 9:30</b>	<b>Review of Day One / Debrief</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Michael Barry</b> GIS Specialist/Transportation Planner, FHWA Office of Planning</li> </ul>
<b>9:30 – 10:30</b>	<b>Round Table Discussion #1: Opportunities, Challenges, and Lessons Learned</b> <i>Session facilitated by: Jared Fijalkowski, U.S. DOT Volpe Center</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peer Exchange Participants</b></li> </ul>
<b>10:30 – 10:45</b>	<b>Break</b>	
<b>10:45 – 11:45</b>	<b>Round Table Discussion #2: Funding Mechanisms and Financial Commitments</b> <i>Session facilitated by: James Garland, FHWA Office of Planning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peer Exchange Participants</b></li> </ul>
<b>11:45 am – 12:00 pm</b>	<b>Wrap-up and Conclusions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Michael Barry</b> GIS Specialist/Transportation Planner, FHWA Office of Planning</li> <li>• <b>Desiree Winkler</b> Deputy Public Works Director/Street Systems Manager, City of Federal Way</li> </ul>
<b>12:00 pm</b>	<b>Adjourn</b>	