

Nesse, Katherine

From: Joe A. Kunzler <growlernoise@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 11:42 PM
To: PlanningCommission
Cc: Nesse, Katherine; negin.khanloo@northwestu.edu; Khanloo, Negin; ServiceFirst
Subject: Fwd: Tsimerman at Planning Commission - Formal JAK Protest

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15 April 2026

Dear Bellevue Planning Commission;

I sincerely apologize that the below was not sent to this e-mail address to advise you of the ongoing crisis situation in your Commission. I hope the Commission will be clear with your Chair that Tsimerman needs to be no-trespassed from the Planning Commission for six months - if not Bellevue City Hall for a year.

Mayor Mo Malakoutlan deserves better than to be smeared for being Iranian-American. If this Mayor wanted to help the evil IRGC, he's had his chances... it's incumbent on the Chair of the Planning Commission to support her Mayor and stop these *unpatriotic* attacks on immigrants or resign in disgrace. Frankly Alex Tsimerman is worse than someone burning the American flag at this point, and appeasement is dangerous.

I quote Neville Chamberlain who thought after Munich 1938 and the partition of Czechoslovakia that, "Hitler has realised that he has now touched the limit and has decided to put the best face on it." Our damnable antisemite Hitler-wanna-be in our midst in Alex Tsimerman will never realize he's touched the limit until *the limit* is placed on him.

There you go.

Thoughtfully;

JOE A. KUNZLER
growlernoise@gmail.com

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Joe A. Kunzler** <growlernoise@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Apr 9, 2026 at 11:56 AM

Subject: Tsimerman at Planning Commission - Formal JAK Protest

To: <NKhanloo@bellevuewa.gov>

Cc: Tanus, Trisna <ttanus@bellevuewa.gov>, <mmcfarland@bellevuewa.gov>, <MChin@bellevuewa.gov>, <mmalakoutian@bellevuewa.gov>, Nesse, Katherine <knesse@bellevuewa.gov>, Robinson, Lynne <lrobinson@bellevuewa.gov>

9 April 2026

Dear Bellevue Leaders;

I would like to file a formal protest against Avrum (Alex) Tsimerman not speaking about planning commission items and hurling hate + mistruths at your Mayor. I hope soon the Bellevue Planning Commission will please exclude Avrum (Alex) Tsimerman for six months for failing repeatedly to speak on topic and disrupting Planning Commission meetings. It is worth noting that last fall after Redmond with the *Jewish* President at the time threw Tsimerman out for six months, a new dawn broke to show what is possible in the Middle Eastside, and Bellevue under Mayor Robinson found the hope and courage to follow to effect a rescue from some of Tsimerman's hate.

But has Bellevue lost her courage and will to fight so soon? Fair question.

If the Chair of the Planning Commission has forgotten how to wage the Tsimerman Wars and cannot file an exclusion - perhaps because of all the public records blacked out - then this Chair needs to tender her resignation with immediate effect. In any event: Appeasement will only make Tsimerman worse.

I quote Neville Chamberlain who thought after Munich 1938 and the partition of Czechoslovakia that, "Hitler has realised that he has now touched the limit and has decided to put the best face on it.". Our damnable antisemite Hitler-wanna-be in our midst in Alex Tsimerman will never realize he's touched the limit until *the limit* is placed on him.

The best solution here is to kick Tsimerman out from Bellevue City Hall again and keep Tsimerman out for a year at a time. Tsimerman knows the rules. Tsimerman keeps maliciously violating them not just in Bellevue but at Redmond, King County Housing Authority, Sound Transit, Puget Sound Regional Council, and other places.

Never again *means* never again. Keep the faith. *All of you.*

Very strategically;

Joe A. Kunzler
growlernoise@gmail.com

Nesse, Katherine

From: Charlie Bauman <charlie@gtcptl.com>
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2026 2:23 PM
To: PlanningCommission
Subject: April 22nd Planning Commission Meeting - Bel-Red LUCA
Attachments: April 22 - PC Comment Letter.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am providing these comments in advance of the April 22nd meeting focused on the Bel-Red street grid, as I regretfully cannot attend in person. I will, however, be present at both future Bel-Red LUCA PC meetings. I also understand that affordable housing and incentive systems will be discussed at the May meeting, so I will reserve my comments on those topics until then.

Attached is a detailed narrative regarding the remaining street grid issues. Because I know your time is valuable, I have included a brief executive summary of my key points below.

Summary:

- **A Commendable Start:** The current Bel-Red LUCA draft takes excellent steps toward removing historical barriers to housing, most notably by heavily reducing the prescriptive 2009 street grid map.
- **Mandatory Streets are Unnecessary:** Recent traffic studies confirm the existing arterial network can handle full sub-area build-out. The justifications for the remaining mapped streets (breaking up large blocks, preventing landlocked parcels, and managing intersections) can be fully addressed without burdening projects with expensive, feasibility-killing vehicular roads.
- **Alternative Solutions:** Relying on the new 1,200-foot maximum block lengths, standard neighbor access easements, and basic curb-cut design rules will achieve the city's goal of a hyper-connected, porous neighborhood while keeping development viable.

Proposed Actions:

- **Primary Request:** Eliminate the prescriptive local street map entirely to maximize housing delivery. Trust the proposed block length and design standards to foster an organic, active transportation network.
- **Alternative Request:** If mapped streets must remain, the code must include a straightforward, highly flexible "Local Street Waiver." This would allow developers to bypass mandatory alignments if they hinder project feasibility, disrupt cohesive site design, or are redundant for traffic capacity, provided the development still satisfies basic performance goals for pedestrian connectivity, safe site circulation, and emergency access.

Overall, this draft is a very good step forward and already solves many of the impediments to housing that have plagued Bel-Red for nearly 20 years. But we should not stop at a "good" code when we are so close to a "great" code!

For more detail on my specific suggestions and the context behind them, please reference the attached letter.

Thank you to this Planning Commission for your continuing dedication to bringing housing to Bel-Red!

Regards,

Charlie Bauman

GT Capital

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(425) 802-3352

www.gtcptl.com

April 17, 2026

To: Bellevue Planning Commission

Re: April 22nd PC Meeting: Bel-Red LUCA + Street Grid

Dear Planning Commissioners,

The current draft of the Bel-Red LUCA makes very good progress on fixing the major code issues which have been a significant constraint for the past 17 years. Simplifying the zoning designations, increasing base FAR, and improving numerous development standards will all go a very long way toward helping Bel-Red deliver housing. The ultimate affordable housing requirements and incentive systems are perhaps the largest and most impactful requirements left to discuss, but I will save my comments for the May meeting when that will be the central topic.

For this meeting, the street grid is the primary focus. As a very short recap, the prescriptive street grid map established in 2009, while well-intentioned, proved to be one of the largest impediments to housing development in the neighborhood. The fixed street locations, inflexible street typologies, numerous conflicts with parcel lines, huge costs, elimination of developable land, and unpredictable permitting processes combined to prevent thousands of housing units from being built.

Luckily, this unintended consequence of the old street grid is now well known and acknowledged, and Staff has embraced this issue and is taking admirable steps to fix it.

Steps taken in the current draft will be very impactful. Most important is the revised and greatly reduced “street grid map,” which eliminates over half of the previously required local streets, streets that just didn’t make sense. The addition of multiple new street typologies provides options for developments to comply with the block length requirements, offering ample discretion to break down blocks in a manner that works for the project. All of the current proposed street typologies should be supported.

The main issue left to discuss is the revised map: whether the mapped local streets are needed, and if so, under what conditions a development can apply to eliminate a mapped street, relocate it, or alter it into a different typology.

Are the local streets needed? It is still a bit unclear why the remaining mapped streets are needed. The TENW study that was circulated last summer shows that the local streets are not needed for vehicular capacity, as the existing arterial network is sufficient even assuming full projected Bel-Red build-out. The Transportation department has acknowledged this.

Given this, we have heard several reasons from Staff why the mapped streets are still required:

1. They are needed to break down the largest blocks and ensure the 2009 vision of the “grid” is fulfilled.
2. They are needed to ensure any “trapped” or “landlocked” parcels have access out to arterials.
3. They are needed to establish intersection alignment and safety per Transportation standards.

To respond to each of these in turn:

1. **Breaking Down Blocks:** The implementation of the block length standards (maximum 1,200 feet) accomplishes the breaking down of blocks and will fulfill the 2009 goal of a hyperconnected neighborhood. Rather than continuing to require vehicular-oriented streets that will make many parcels more difficult to develop (especially when the streets aren’t needed for vehicular capacity), simply eliminating the map and relying on the 1,200-foot block lengths and numerous street typologies will create an even more porous, organic, pedestrian friendly neighborhood, while allowing developments the flexibility they need.
2. **Trapped Parcels:** Trapped parcels should not be a guiding reason for maintaining mapped streets for several reasons:
 - The vast majority of “trapped” parcels already have access agreements in place with their neighbors, ensuring access is maintained even during redevelopment.
 - If there are any “trapped” parcels without easements (which is very unlikely), Staff would simply need to require that any development applications demonstrate they have access easements in place with their neighbors if a trapped condition could exist, making it a condition of approval.
 - The International Fire Code already has requirements for fire access easements to “trapped” parcels, which require a 20-foot lane. Another option would be to simply piggy-back on this requirement if a “trapped” parcel condition exists, rather than requiring a mapped street “just in case.”
3. **Intersection Alignments:** Any concerns from Transportation regarding the need for these mapped streets should be clearly articulated on a street-by-street basis. Any intersection alignment concerns can simply be managed via design rules, not prescribed locations. Safe intersections can be achieved without full street alignments by enforcing Right-In/Right-Out (RIRO) vehicular access and establishing minimum curb-cut spacing. These are basic design

standards that all new developments need to comply with, but they can do so in a manner that works for the site and doesn't hurt feasibility.

If, for whatever reason, any of these mapped local streets remain, there should be clear criteria for how a development can deviate from the map. Staff's proposed new section 20.25B.020.B.4 "Substituting Local Streets" is a good place to clearly outline how and when a local street can be eliminated or altered, both in location and typology. Suggested criteria should be broad, easy to demonstrate, and flexible. Possible criteria could be:

Application Criteria.

To be eligible to apply for a Local Street Waiver, the applicant must demonstrate that strictly adhering to the prescribed Local Street map meets at least one of the following conditions:

- **Project Feasibility & Yield:** Accommodating the full public right-of-way would reduce the site's developable footprint, negatively impact the financial feasibility of the project, or hinder the ability to achieve the zoning code's intended FAR and housing density.
- **Design Flexibility:** The fixed street alignment bisects the parcel in a manner that prevents a cohesive site design, such as disrupting an efficient parking layout, limiting open space, or creating illogical remnant lots.
- **Site Constraints:** The alignment conflicts with existing topography, critical areas, legacy utility infrastructure, or terminates at a physical barrier offering no logical future vehicular connection.
- **Multiple Parcel Coordination:** The full build out of the local street will require the long-term coordination and redevelopment of numerous parcel owners, making it highly unlikely that the street will be built out for decades.

Waiver Approval Criteria.

An application shall be approved when the applicant demonstrates that the proposed alternative design satisfies the following basic performance goals:

- **Pedestrian Connectivity & Block Length:** The alternative design successfully breaks up the development into walkable segments, utilizing other allowed typologies such as flexible access corridors, active transportation access or shared -use paths to ensure block lengths do not exceed 1,200 feet.
- **Site Access & Circulation:** Vehicular demand is safely managed on-site via private driveways or consolidated entrances without degrading the surrounding arterial network.

Where necessary, new arterial connections use standard access controls like minimum curb-cut spacing or Right-In/Right-Out (RIRO) channelization.

- **Prevention of Trapped Parcels:** The site layout does not intentionally landlock adjacent parcels. If a neighboring parcel requires access to the arterial network through the subject site, the applicant agrees to provide a standard Access Easement.
- **Emergency Access:** The project maintains adequate emergency vehicle access through adjacent arterials, private driveways, or fire lanes, satisfying the International Fire Code without requiring a dedicated public local street.

Conclusion.

Overall, this draft is very positive despite the logic for the remaining mapped local streets still being unclear. Unless there is a very valid rationale to keep a mapped street, the elimination of the map altogether should be the goal. Simply relying on the block length and design standards will accomplish the intended pedestrian focused, hyper-connectivity in Bel-Red. Short of this, a very clear, flexible waiver process needs to accompany the remaining mapped local streets.

Thank you for considering these comments and for recognizing that Bel-Red offers the greatest potential for transit-oriented housing development anywhere in the State.

Sincerely,



Charlie Bauman

Nesse, Katherine

From: Ben Mickle <benmickle@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2026 8:06 PM
To: PlanningCommission
Subject: BelRed!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Bellevue Planning Commission and Staff,

This BelRed LUCA is very exciting! Unfortunately, I cannot attend your Wednesday meeting, but I've made a list of my thoughts about the latest draft that I hope you will find useful.

20.10.445.B.5.b.ii.1 on page 8: "Outdoor storage or display of automobiles or motorcycles is prohibited between the building and any public right-of-way."

"Public right-of-way" does not include flexible access corridors, which may constitute many of the streets in BelRed (and Wilburton). I suggest following the example of section 20.25B.040.C.5.a.ii, which uses the language "public right-of-way or flexible access."

20.25B.020.B.2.f on page 32: "Unobstructed Travel Path. Within the width of a sidewalk, at least six feet of unobstructed travel path shall be maintained for safe pedestrian access in new development."

Why is this rule restricted to "new development"? Once a development reaches some unspecified age, its sidewalks suddenly become obstructable? Also, this rule should include examples of common obstructions, including signs, tables, and chairs.

20.25B.030.C.2.e on page 36: The Green score. I'm surprised this table doesn't include any points for daylighting streams or preserving streams.

20.25C.020.C.2 on page 62: Eastrail Access. A large section of Eastrail runs through the BelRed Overlay, and I think these requirements about Eastrail access should be lifted into the common 20.25B section. Either that, or copy them into 20.25D. Also, in part d, concerning prohibiting new vehicular travel lanes crossing Eastrail, a similar rule should apply in the BelRed Overlay between NE 12th St and SR 520.

20.25D.020.B.1 on page 94: the BelRed street map. I have a few things to say about this map:

- The street labeled 128 PL NE appears to cross the light rail tracks. I understand this crossing is part of the City's Spring Boulevard plans. But Spring Boulevard isn't a local street. It's an arterial. It shouldn't be on the local street map. A complex light rail crossing should not be a cost imposed on housing developers.
- The map applies block limits to Sound Transit's light rail Operations and Maintenance Facility. What is the purpose of making the OMF a non-conforming property?

- The map fails to require any streets, or even block limits, in a large street-free area being upzoned, adjacently west of 148th Ave, between NE 20th St and NE 24th St.
- Similarly, block limits should apply between 136th PL NE and 148th Ave, between BelRed Rd and NE 20th St.
- The area around the BelRed Link Station needs a circulation plan. Which streets are meant for through-traffic? Which streets are meant for local access only? And how will you keep cut-through traffic off the local access streets? The proposed layout is inviting tons of unwanted cut-through traffic through this neighborhood, imposing an unnecessary burden of pollution, noise, and unsafe streets. I cannot support the proposed street locations, when they appear to be designed to facilitate vehicle cut-through traffic at the expense of neighborhood livability.
- Where's the plan for protected bike routes through the neighborhood? That's a top community priority. How will bikes get safely to and from the bike facilities on Eastrail, Spring Blvd, and 130th Ave?

20.25D.020.B.3.a on page 96: Local streets. Please make the sidewalks 10 ft, in compliance with NACTO standards. Section ii refers to Subsection C about on-street parking, but Subsection C simply says that on-street parking is always required for local streets. Just put the requirement here. And you need to specify if parking is required on both sides of the street, or just one side. It's misleading to say the width is 47 ft, when it's really more with the always-required parking.

20.25D.020.B.3.b on page 96: Green streets. It says these are important streets for bicyclists, but there's nothing in these streets to accommodate bicyclists. If you don't have curbs, you need bollards to keep cars off the sidewalks. Please consider making these streets 10 mph Shared Streets (established by [SB 5595](#) last year) so that they will actually accommodate bikes.

20.25D.020.B.3.c on page 97: Flexible Access. It says the travel lanes will serve "active transportation modes." How? You can't just pretend that your car lanes are for bikes, and pat yourself on the back for it! This language is a cruel joke.

20.25D.020.B.3.d on page 97: Active Transportation Access. You should require the amenity zone to be split into two zones, with at least 2 ft unobstructed buffers on each side of the path, in accordance with [NACTO guidelines](#). The requirement for lighting is redundant with 20.25B.030.D.3.c on page 40. You should also separate bikes and pedestrians. According to [NACTO](#), "Separation is typically preferred in urban contexts, as this provides the best user experience for everyone." And, "To separate bike riders from pedestrians, create a detectable edge that contrasts visually with the surface treatment of the path. Separation can be achieved with a tactile warning delineator, curb, raised median, or planted area."

20.25D.020.B.3.e on page 98: Enhanced Shared-Use Paths. Ditto my comments above on buffers, separation, and lighting. You should also allow the amenity zones to be smaller than 12 ft, as long as the total width is at least 26 feet.

20.25D.020.C.1 on page 99: Spring Boulevard. You need to specify a minimum width for sidewalks and amenity zones here. Please make it 10 ft for sidewalks. The map in this section is just wrong. On the eastern-most section, the line on the map follows 136th PL NE, not Spring Boulevard (which continues along its east-west alignment to intersect with BelRed Rd). You should probably rename the section to "Spring Boulevard and 136th PL NE."

20.25D.020.C.4 on page 102: Arterials. The list of arterials in section a is missing 124th Ave, 132nd Ave, 140th Ave, Northup Way, NE 20th St, NE 24 St, and BelRed Rd west of 124th Ave. You should either include these in the list, or specify their requirements elsewhere. In subsection b.iii, these requirements are already specified in 20.25B.030.C.4.a on page 33.

20.25D.020.C.5 on page 103: On-street parking. This section is ambiguous about whether parking is required on both sides of the street, or just one side.

20.25D.020.C.6 on page 103: Restricted driveways. I like the idea here, but "restricted" doesn't mean "prohibited." Section a uses the term "generally prohibited," which I interpret to mean "not quite prohibited." The wording hints that driveways can be allowed, but it doesn't say under what circumstances they're allowed. It needs to be clarified. It would also be nice if the restrictions would extend to parts of BelRed Rd (because driveways would mess up the nice 20-ft amenity zones). Also, this section mistakes 136th PL NE for Spring Blvd again.

20.25D.050.B.4.a.vii.(2) on page 113: Linear Event Plaza. There should be a requirement to protect the plaza from the Green Street with retractable bollards (if you don't add the bollard requirement for Green Streets generally).

20.25D.060.B.1.b on page 121: Natural environment standards. The language here is really vague. What does it mean to "orient a gathering place"? What does it mean for buildings to "turn their back on open space amenities"? Are we talking about fancy entrances? Lighting? Signage? This needs to be clarified. (This section also supports my feedback about requiring Eastrail access)

20.25D.060.B.3 on page 122: Gateways. I like this idea, and I think it would be useful street safety, too. When a driver turns off an arterial, and onto a Local/Green Street, they should have a sense of "entering" a slow-speed community area. You should consider having these streets paved with different materials, and consider requiring raised crosswalks at unsignaled intersections between arterials and non-arterials.

That's all I have for now! You guys are doing some great work here! I hope you have a productive meeting.

Ben Mickle
(Downtown Bellevue resident)

Nesse, Katherine

From: Derek Bottles <derekbottles@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2026 3:56 PM
To: PlanningCommission; Kim Bottles; Dawn & Tom Ambrey; Jessica Clawson
Subject: Study Session on BelRed Look Forward LUCA April 22, 2026 Memo
Attachments: 26-701_260323_Proposed Site Impact Analysis-FINAL.pdf

You don't often get email from derekbottles@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I am writing on behalf of my parents and their partners who are the owners of the Evergreen Building at 1721 132bd Ave NE Bellevue, WA 98005. We reviewed the memo for the April 22nd meeting and we met with Mr. Whipple and Ms. Gallant about two weeks ago. We appreciate the effort that has gone into the LUCA and the attempts to balance complicated issues.

The April 22nd Memo, starting on page 6, does a good job of identifying some of the issues around developing a new street grid on the existing properties layout. The fragmented ownership, different redevelopment timelines, and differing grades (elevations) in the proposed street alignments are brought up. However a workable and predictable solution to these problems was not presented. In addition to the issues in the memo we think more work is needed to consider fire lanes and in our case the significant percentage of developable land that will be impacted by proposed streets.

We encourage the commission to carefully consider how fire access will function as the sites are redeveloped and to ensure it is compatible with the street grid.

We also ask the commission to consider if any street is needed N-S across our site. Both our site and the site to the west are small sites that will lose significant developable area to any street alignment. In our site's case the area available for redevelopment is being cut down to half or less of the total site area, squeezed between the proposed street and the critical areas associated with Golf Creek. This makes it unlikely market driven redevelopment of our building and site will occur as the existing structure will retain a higher value as is even under the new code.

See the attached study, showing the 50,528 SF site may only retain 11,300 to 24,500 SF of usable area before addressing fire access.

In short, we think the plan for the proposed 131st Street needs to be developed in much more detail so that is feasible from an engineering

standpoint and economically possible. One option to consider is having 131st terminate to the south of our site.

Staff have made progress on this issue but more work needs to be done. We wish we could provide the answer to these problems but it is a complicated problem for the reasons outlined in the memo and this letter. That said we will continue to work with staff to find a way forward.

Thank you,

Derek Bottles
Evergreen Building LLC.

Site Impact Analysis; ECA and Proposed Roadways

Site Area 50,560 SF / 1.16 Ac

ECA Impacts:

Goff Creek Buffer at 50' 17,500 SF (35% of site area)

50' buffer incl. unusable NE corner 22,335 SF (44% of Site Area)

Goff Creek Buffer @ 100' 31,900 SF (63% of Site Area)

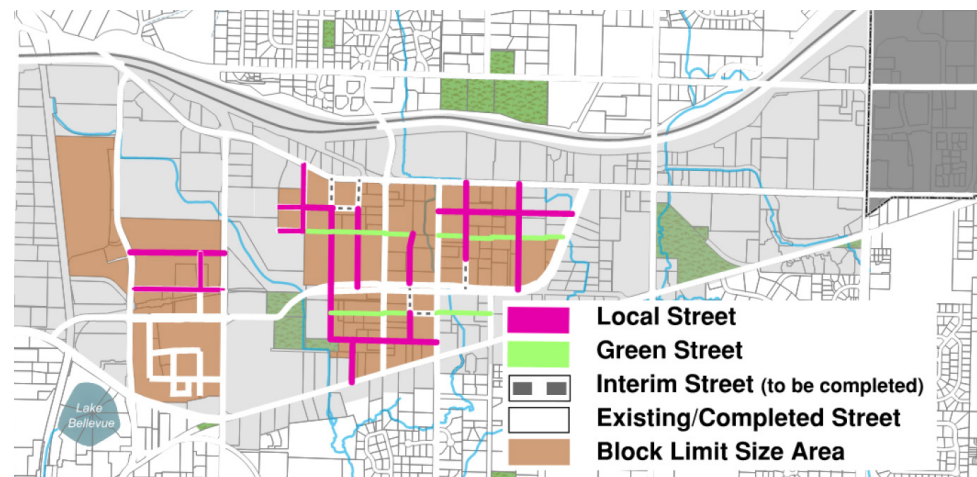
Roadway Impacts:

46' Local Street (50% on site)..... 3,680 SF (7.3% of site area)

Combined impacts Up to 70% of developable area lost

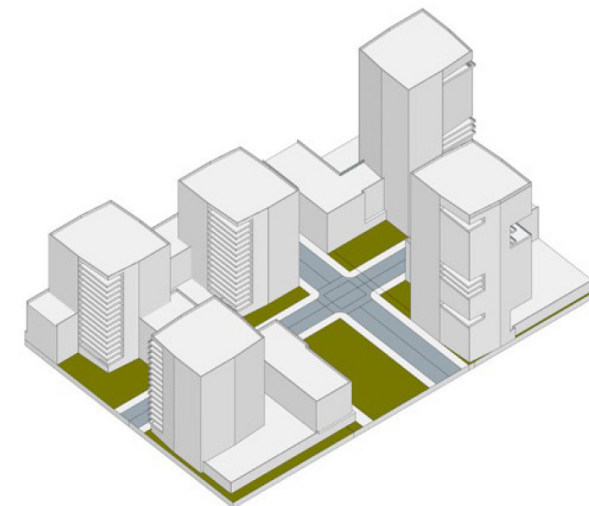
Remaining Developable Area: Approximately 11,300 SF to 24,545 SF

BelRed Street Network Map



Highrise Residential Mixed Use

The purpose is to provide primarily housing with a mix of retail, service, office and uses that complement with a focus on housing at a high scale and density.



Nesse, Katherine

From: Brady Nordstrom <brady@housingconsortium.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2026 5:54 PM
To: PlanningCommission
Cc: Chris Buchanan; Allen Dauterman; Patience Malaba; Jesse Simpson; Whipple, Nicholas; Gallant, Kristina
Subject: EAHC and HDC Comment On BelRed (4/22 Study Session)
Attachments: HDC&EAHC_BelRed_4-22-2026.pdf

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Bellevue Planning Commission,

I am writing to share written comment from the Housing Development Consortium (HDC) and the Eastside Affordable Housing Coalition (EAHC) in advance of your April 22nd Study Session focused on BelRed land use districts, mixed-use land use district standards, and street network.

Please see the attached document as our full comment. We look forward to working with you and staff as the BelRed Look Forward LUCA advances.

Best Regards,
Brady Nordstrom

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Brady Nordstrom (*he/him*)
Associate Director of Government Relations and Policy
[Housing Development Consortium of Seattle-King County](#)
1326 5th Avenue, Suite 230 | Seattle, WA 98101
C: (253) 886-2099



HOUSING
DEVELOPMENT
consortium



April 22, 2026
Bellevue Planning Commission
450 110th Avenue NE
Bellevue, WA 98004

Subject: Comment on BelRed Look Forward LUCA for April 22, 2026 study session pertaining to land use districts, mixed-use land use district standards, and street network

Dear Bellevue Planning Commission,

The Housing Development Consortium (HDC) and the Eastside Affordable Housing Coalition (EAHC) are grateful for the opportunity to comment on the BelRed land use code amendment being discussed at your April 22, 2026 study session. We thank the Planning Commission for your early engagement and discussions about BelRed. We also thank city staff for their thorough engagement with affordable housing and advocate stakeholders through both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the BelRed outreach process. Our group submitted nearly 11 pages of code comments based on the initial BelRed code draft released on December 31, 2025. **We look forward to additional engagement and partnership through this next phase of work to help realize the neighborhood vision for BelRed, which includes affordable housing.**

The BelRed Look Forward represents a major housing opportunity for Bellevue and the entire Eastside region. BelRed is expected to meet around 23% of Bellevue's total residential growth targets through 2044. By extension, this neighborhood represents a significant opportunity for Bellevue to meet its updated Affordable Housing Strategy goal to create or preserve 5,700 new units of affordable housing by 2036. **We continue to urge staff and Planning Commissioners to keep affordable housing in focus as a core neighborhood goal and central to the future neighborhood's success.**

Central to the vision of BelRed is a thriving arts and creative community in the BelRed Arts District near light rail. The goal of supporting a vibrant arts district is intrinsically linked to the need for affordable housing. This includes affordable artist housing (i.e. housing designed large and flexible enough for both living and creating) and general affordable housing near art studios and commercial workspaces. According to the Artspace Consultant "[Creative Space Needs Survey](#)" report from Bellevue in 2022, 68% of respondents qualify for 60% AMI housing and 81% qualify for 80% AMI housing. This shows a deep overlap between those interested in creative/arts space and the need for affordable housing. Additionally, many who currently participate in the BelRed arts community don't live in Bellevue. Of the survey responses, only 27% currently live in Bellevue and only 19% live in BelRed. Of respondents who currently live in Bellevue and are also interested in artist housing, 91% have considered leaving Bellevue. "Housing cost" is the most cited reason for those who have considered leaving Bellevue. **The BelRed Look Forward is a chance for Bellevue to shift**

Housing Development Consortium
of Seattle-King County

1326 5th Avenue, Suite 230, Seattle, WA 98101
206.682.9541 | www.housingconsortium.org

these patterns by creating an environment for affordable housing to scale, both through an expanded mandatory affordable housing requirement and other code incentives and benefits that remove barriers to development.

Below, we will share our comments on BelRed land use districts, mixed-use land use district standards, and street network which are specific to the April 22nd Planning Commission Study Session:

- We greatly appreciate aspects of the Wilburton code being brought into BelRed to create greater consistency across land use districts. We specifically thank staff for:
 - **Allowing mid-rise typologies to go up to 100’.** This avoids inadvertent height restrictions to mid-rise construction which is most commonly used to support income-restricted affordable housing projects.
 - **Removing floorplate restrictions for buildings less than 100’ tall.** This avoids structural constraints on mid-rise construction that can increase per-unit construction costs by unnecessarily reducing the developable area.
- We also thank you for supporting:
 - **Street grid changes** that support residential development and pedestrian/bike transit. We look forward to additional discussion in this area.
 - **Including exemptions from façade modulation requirements for affordable housing, modular construction, and passive house construction.**
 - **Uses being permitted unless specifically prohibited or conditioned** (expanded from [HOMA code](#))
 - **Broader allowances for departures compared to the existing BelRed code.**
 - **Please consider further reductions to parking standards or removing parking requirements altogether,** even in advance of state-mandated parking reforms. Parking adds significant costs to development and sites will provide parking based on site-specific parking analysis regardless of what the city requires.

Thank you for centering affordable housing in this discussion. We look forward to ongoing engagement with you over the coming weeks and months.

Sincerely,
Eastside Affordable Housing Coalition & HDC

Nesse, Katherine

From: Diana Leo <diana@bellevuechamber.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2026 8:35 PM
To: Villaveces, Andres; Ferris,Carolynn; Goeppelle, Craighton; Khanloo, Negin; Lu, Jonny; Kennedy, Mariah; Nilchian, Arshia; PlanningCommission
Cc: Joe Fain; Jessica Clawson; Nikki Stuck
Subject: BelRed Street Grid Concerns

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Some people who received this message don't often get email from diana@bellevuechamber.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Planning Commission Chair Khanloo and Members:

On behalf of the Bellevue Chamber's PLUSH Committee, please find our comments on the proposed BelRed subarea code update linked [here](#). We appreciate the collaborative process with City staff to date and wanted to offer recommendations focused on transportation, street grid standards, and development feasibility. Our PLUSH Committee remains committed to working constructively with the City as this effort moves forward.

Thank you for your consideration, and please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,
Diana

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PLUSH COMMITTEE

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April 22, 2026

Bellevue Planning Commission
City of Bellevue
450 110th Ave NE
Bellevue, WA 98004

Re: Bel-Red Subarea Code Update — Transportation and Street Grid Concerns

Dear Chair Khanloo and Members of the Bellevue Planning Commission,

The Planning, Land Use, and Sustainable Housing (PLUSH) Committee of the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce respectfully submits these comments ahead of the Commission's April 23 work session on the Bel-Red subarea code update. We thank City staff for their responsiveness throughout this process and for publishing a comment tracker. We do, however, have significant concerns about the proposed street grid, "green street" typologies, and enhanced shared use path requirements — elements that together risk rendering portions of the Bel-Red TOD area undevelopable and undermining the code's connectivity and housing goals.

1. The Street Grid Is Not Necessary to Achieve Connectivity in a TOD Area

Bel-Red is a transit-oriented development area served by light rail. As the Commission is aware, the City's own transportation staff have testified that the proposed street grid is not required to meet transportation needs. Yet the current draft perpetuates a rigid street grid first conceived in 2009 — a grid that, in the intervening years, has produced minimal development precisely because of the burdens it imposes. It is important to remember that the City is asking private property owners to construct large roads that the City itself states are unnecessary—these roads are expensive to construct and eat away at land that could be utilized for office or housing—much better uses than roads that are unneeded.

We urge the Commission to ask staff directly: what specific transportation purpose does the street grid serve that cannot be achieved through pedestrian and bicycle connectivity alone? In a TOD context, connectivity goals are far better served by flexible pedestrian access standards — the same approach already applied in the Wilburton subarea — than by a mandatory network of 50- to 60-foot roadways. If the answer from staff is that the grid is primarily about walkability and block-breaking, then the code should say so explicitly, and the tools used should be scaled accordingly. 26- or 30-foot-wide walkways are not necessary to accommodate pedestrians and bikes.

Moreover, to the extent the City believes curb cut restrictions along NE 130th Street necessitate a secondary street network to serve adjacent properties, we would note that this concern is largely self-

created. Very few Bel-Red properties are genuinely landlocked. Requiring an elaborate grid to solve a problem created by another policy decision is not sound planning.

We also call the Commission's attention to specific locations where the street grid alignment as currently mapped would run through environmentally constrained areas (steep slopes, streams, critical areas), are not feasible due to existing access easements, or would bisect small parcels to the point of making them entirely undevelopable. Requiring property owners to build roads that physically cannot be constructed — or that terminate directly into a light rail station — is not a reasonable standard. These examples were previously presented to the City; they remain unresolved in the current draft. We have attached the map showing locations where these constraints are present.

2. Align Standards with Wilburton

Bel-Red and Wilburton share the same fundamental characteristics: both are TOD subareas near light rail stations, both are targeted for high-density mixed-use development, and both have relied on the same general planning framework. Wilburton is a higher density zone than is Bel-Red's, with taller buildings and higher FARs. Wilburton's code — developed through extensive stakeholder engagement — reflects a workable balance that has led to active development interest. We ask: why should Bel-Red be held to a more burdensome standard by requiring the street grid and wider road widths?

We request that the Commission direct staff to identify every material difference between the Bel-Red draft and the Wilburton code and provide a policy justification for each divergence. Absent a compelling reason for differentiation, the Bel-Red standards should be aligned with Wilburton.

3. The Enhanced Shared Use Path Width Is Excessive and Creates Perverse Incentives

We were encouraged that the City added the enhanced shared use path to the access corridor typology list. However, the proposed standard — a 14-foot path flanked by 12-foot amenity strips, totaling 26 feet of required corridor width with no ability to build over it — is significantly more burdensome than the 14-foot shared use path standard established in Wilburton.

The amenity strip requirement is particularly difficult to justify in a pedestrian environment free of vehicle traffic. Where there are no vehicles to buffer pedestrians from, a mandatory 12-foot landscaping strip adds cost and consumes land without a commensurate benefit. We recommend aligning the enhanced shared use path width with the Wilburton standard of 14 feet.

We also note a significant structural problem: as currently drafted, the enhanced shared use path cannot be used for emergency vehicle access, which pushes property owners toward the "flexible access corridor" or the 20-foot service/alley typology instead. The practical effect is that the enhanced shared use path — a typology intended to promote active transportation — is more expensive and less flexible than an alley. This is precisely the wrong incentive structure for a TOD area. The code should be revised to allow a shared use path of adequate width to also qualify as an emergency access route, at the property owner's discretion.

4. "Green Streets": Width Reduction and Elimination of On-Street Parking

The two proposed “green streets” remain nearly as wide in the current draft (60 feet) as in the prior version (61 feet). We urge the Commission to reconsider both the width and the continued inclusion of on-street parking on these corridors.

As the Commission may be aware, a “green street” in established planning practice refers to an existing street retrofitted with additional landscaping and stormwater features to improve the pedestrian experience — not a newly required 60-foot road with a parking lane. The proposed green streets, as mapped, are not continuous (one is interrupted by a stream corridor and does not pass through certain properties), which further undermines any argument for their utility as major pedestrian or commercial corridors.

On-street parking in a transit-served TOD area is inconsistent with the policy goals of reducing vehicle dependence. If the goal is to support a vibrant ground-floor retail environment, the evidence from comparable transit corridors suggests that walkability and density — not curb-side parking — drive retail success. We ask the Commission to direct staff to eliminate the on-street parking lane requirement from the green street cross-sections and to reduce the overall width to a standard more appropriate for a pedestrian-priority corridor.

5. Development Cost and Feasibility Impacts

The Commission should understand that the street grid requirements impose costs on property owners that go well beyond construction of the road surface itself. Grade changes required to construct new roads through sloped terrain have already proven extraordinarily expensive for the first movers in Bel-Red. Perpetuating a mandatory grid will make additional parcels either more costly to develop or, in some cases, infeasible to develop at all. This is the opposite of what an upzoned TOD area should accomplish.

The Council’s own prior direction on this subarea was clear: the goal was walkable connectivity, not a conventional street network with two-lane roads and parking lanes. We respectfully ask the Commission to hold the code to that standard and provide staff with direction to simplify and narrow the transportation requirements accordingly.

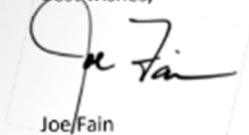
Conclusion and Requested Direction

We respectfully request the Planning Commission provide direction to staff on the following:

- Eliminate or substantially reduce the mandatory street grid and replace it with a flexible pedestrian and bicycle connectivity standard consistent with Wilburton.
- Align the enhanced shared use path width with the Wilburton standard (14 feet) and allow it to serve as an emergency access route where width is sufficient.
- Reduce green street widths and remove the on-street parking lane requirement.
- Direct staff to identify and justify all material differences between the Bel-Red draft and the Wilburton code.
- Address the specific locations where the street grid as mapped would render parcels undevelopable due to physical or environmental constraints.

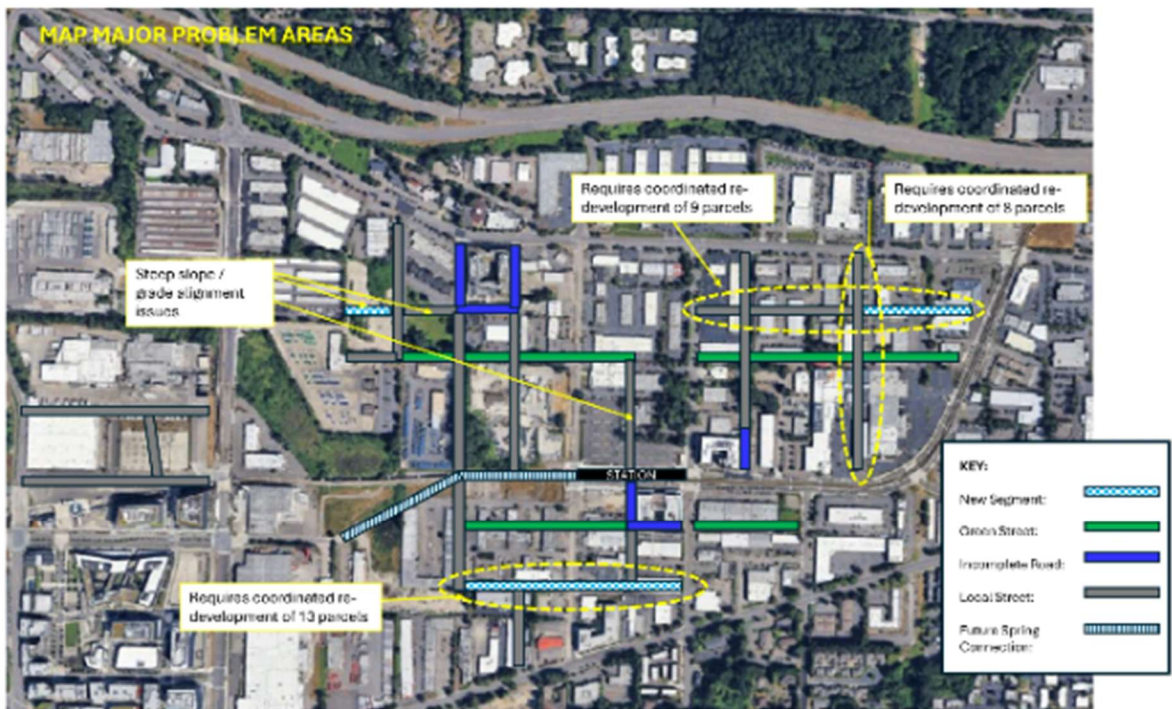
We appreciate the Commission's time and attention to these issues. The Bel-Red subarea has tremendous potential as a transit-oriented community, and we remain committed to working constructively with the City to achieve a code that enables that vision. We look forward to the discussion on Wednesday.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Fain", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Joe Fain
President & CEO
Bellevue Chamber of Commerce
On behalf of the PLUSH Committee





The examples above illustrate just a few of the locations where the proposed street grid creates significant feasibility challenges, driven by extreme grade changes, parcel size, and configuration