



# Bellevue Planning Commission

May 8, 2024

## PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

### SUBJECT

BelRed Look Forward Comprehensive Plan Amendment: Review of Full Draft

### STAFF CONTACTS

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### POLICY ISSUES

The BelRed Subarea Plan provides policy direction for achieving the vision for the BelRed Subarea. As part of Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, the BelRed Look Forward planning initiative is amending Subarea Plan policies and Comprehensive Plan land use designations within BelRed. This memo and attachments address questions and direction given by the Planning Commission during their review of the draft policies over the past three months as well as comments made by the community on the public review draft of the policy updates.

### DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

#### ACTION



#### DIRECTION



#### INFORMATION ONLY



At this meeting, staff will present an overview of the Full Draft Subarea Plan describing how key policy issues were addressed, including land use designations in the Future Land Use Map. Staff will be looking for confirmation from Planning Commission on the Future Land Use designations and any feedback in preparation for further discussion of policy changes at the May 22 meeting.

### BACKGROUND

The Planning Commission is directed by city code to review, consider amendments, and make recommendations to the City Council on the Comprehensive Plan (Bellevue City Code 3.64.070).

The Planning Commission has been reviewing proposed policy amendments in each of the Subarea Plan sections over the past three months. These reviews included summaries of public comment related to each policy section as well as recommendations transmitted by other boards and commissions for the following sections:

- Arts, Culture, and Creativity (Arts Commission)
- Environment (Environmental Services Commission)
- Parks and Open Space (Parks and Community Services Board)
- Transportation (Transportation Commission)

Verbatim public comments on Land Use policy moves is included in Attachment A as comments had not yet been compiled for inclusion in the Planning Commission February 28 meeting packet when proposed Land Use policies were first reviewed.

Over the past three months, the Planning Commission has given extensive feedback on draft policies in the Plan. Attachment B summarizes that feedback, provides additional information and/or considerations where needed, and finally presents staff recommendations on policy modifications.

Attachment C includes tables of the recommended policy amendments in strike underline format.

Attachment D includes the complete draft BelRed Subarea Plan laid out in publication format, including narratives, recommended policies, and figures.

Attachment E includes a map of future land use designations recommended for the BelRed Subarea. Please note, this map will not be included within the Subarea Plan itself. Instead, it will be incorporated into Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **KEY POLICY ISSUES**

The major policy updates to the BelRed Subarea Plan include changes to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). To accommodate the city's projected housing and job growth, staff propose increasing capacity for development, especially capacity for residential development, in three different ways:

1. Extend areas designated for high intensity development i.e. station area nodes,
2. Increase allowed height and FAR within the station area nodes, and
3. Expand area designated for residential mixed use development.

During Commission's review of the proposed FLUM, Commissioners posed the following policy questions:

- How much capacity for development has been added to the BelRed Subarea and how does that compare with other areas in the city?
- Is all of the area designated for Medical Office Mixed Use needed for medical office use, or could some of that area be designated for residential mixed use?
- Why not expand the Highrise Residential Mixed Use future land use designation further east to 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE?
- Why is the area near the Overlake Village station designated for Highrise Office Mixed Use and not Highrise Residential Mixed Use?

- In general, what spatial information did staff consider when developing their recommended FLUM proposals?

A summary of key considerations related to these questions is provided below, and more detailed explanations are provided in Attachment B.

#### *Capacity for Growth*

- Proposed changes to the FLUM would increase capacity for housing development in the new BelRed subarea by about 24,800 housing units and by about 12.1 M square feet of commercial space.
- These equate to approximately 16 and 20 percent of overall citywide housing and commercial square footage growth respectively.
- However, these figures are estimates of full buildout capacity, not the amount of growth expected to occur by 2044.
- Also, market factors limiting how much capacity would become available by 2044 are believed to be much higher for Bellevue's existing single-family areas than for BelRed's multifamily residential areas. This is due to fewer single-family units being expected to turn over and become available for redevelopment, and those that do become available are not expected to maximize their development potential. Therefore, the percentage of housing growth within BelRed by 2044 is expected to be significantly higher than 16 percent of total citywide housing growth.

#### *Medical Office Mixed Use Along 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE*

- Recognizing the benefits of having some residential uses along 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, the Preferred Land Use Alternative studied a land use classification, Medical Office Residential Mixed Use, that anticipated over a third of its capacity being residential, which amounted to a capacity for over 600 units.
- One of the City's economic goals is to strengthen economic resilience by diversifying the city's economy. A key strategy for diversification is to grow the city's life science sector. By incorporating life science uses under the Medical Office Mixed Use land use designation, the City anticipates needing a large area designated for Medical Office Mixed Use to ensure an adequate supply of land exists to absorb future demand for life science space in addition to demand for medical office space.
- Along with expanding the permitted uses allowed within the Medical Office Mixed Use designation, staff are proposing significant increases to development capacity under this designation to help catalyze redevelopment. Today, the area has a maximum allowed FAR of 1.0 and a maximum allowed height of 70 feet. Staff are recommending increasing the maximum allowed FAR up to between 4 to 6 and increasing the maximum heights allowed up to between 160 to 250 feet.

### *Highrise Residential Mixed Use in the BelRed Station Area Node*

- To meet the diverse housing needs of all household types, sizes, and incomes Policy S-BR-63 calls upon the city to, “encourage a diversity of housing types, including:
  - highrise housing in transit nodes,
  - midrise housing outside nodes,
  - lowrise housing in transition areas, and
  - other innovative housing forms, such as live/work and work/live units.
- The area currently designated for Midrise Mixed Use falls outside of the ½ mile walkshed to a light rail station and therefore, it is located outside of a station area node.
- Construction of midrise buildings is often more efficient than construction of highrise buildings allowing greater opportunity for provision of affordable housing.

### *Highrise Office Mixed Use in the Overlake Village Station Area Node*

- Parcels adjacent to freeways and high frequency transit are excellent locations for highrise office uses since:
  - these locations minimize traffic impacts associated with high density employment, and
  - office uses are better equipped to filter air and noise pollution from freeways due to their centralized HVAC systems whose large motors can handle high rated filters and can be serviced routinely.
- Today, the Oakhurst Center, an office complex built in 1985 with an estimated 400 workers, occupies a large portion of the area designated for High Rise Office Mixed Use. This concentration of office jobs makes the Highrise Office Mixed Use designation appropriate for this area.

### *Spatial Layers Informing FLUM Recommendation – Suitability Analyses*

- Existing BelRed Vision, Goals, Policies and FLUM
- Infrastructure - Light Rail Station walksheds +
- Property lines and property owner requests, including publicly owned property
- Environmental layers – critical areas
- Existing uses / economic clusters
- Redevelopment potential

### **NEXT STEPS**

At the Planning Commission’s May 22 meeting, staff will discuss responses to feedback (as detailed in Attachment B) and follow up on any remaining questions regarding the Future Land Use Map.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Land Use and Urban Form Questionnaire Responses related to Land Use Policy Moves
- B. Policy Changes from Planning Commission Review
- C. BelRed Subarea Plan: Recommended Policy Amendments
- D. BelRed Subarea Plan: Complete Draft
- E. Future Land Use Recommended for the BelRed Subarea
- F. Comprehensive Plan Glossary