

CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

ORDINANCE NO. 6903

AN ORDINANCE imposing an emergency Interim Official Control on Part 20.25A of the Land Use Code (LUC) to reinforce historical and cultural qualities in the Downtown-Old Bellevue (DT-OB) Land Use District, along Main Street between 100th Avenue and Bellevue Way, and require that new development is compatible with adjacent development, unique design features, and established small-scale and pedestrian-oriented street frontage in Old Bellevue; providing for severability; and establishing an effective date.

WHEREAS, the DT-OB Land Use District, particularly along Main Street between 100th Avenue and Bellevue Way, is a human-scaled neighborhood that functions like a traditional “Main Street USA,” with low traffic speeds, a pedestrian-friendly environment supporting small shops, and unique façades gracing some of Downtown’s oldest buildings; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Comprehensive Plan, at Policies S-DT-91 and S-DT-94, recognize and encourage preservation and retention of the unique design features and identity of Old Bellevue, including but not limited to the historic façade treatments of older buildings in the Land Use District; and

WHEREAS, LUC 20.25A.010.B.2.e explains that the purpose of the DT-OB Land Use District is to assure compatibility of new development with the scale and intensity of the area and preserve the social and historic qualities of Old Bellevue; and

WHEREAS, the City’s development regulations also recognize the high-degree of design detail inherent in the historic construction, storefronts, welcoming entrances, and sidewalk paving patterns in Old Bellevue along Main Street and the Grand Connection; and

WHEREAS, under current regulations in Part 20.25A LUC, the City has encouraged or required development in the DT-OB Land Use District to maintain the general appearance and identity of Old Bellevue along Main Street, while balancing growth, housing production, and mixed-use development in Downtown as a whole; and

WHEREAS, despite City code and policy recognizing the unique historic and cultural value of Old Bellevue, this Land Use District is not a designated local historic district, and the City has not completed any formal historic or cultural resources survey or inventory for Old Bellevue in almost thirty (30) years; and

WHEREAS, the most recent Historic and Cultural Resources Survey and inventory for Old Bellevue, completed in March 1993 and updated in July 1997, identified eight (8) properties in Old Bellevue, on Main Street between 100th Avenue and Bellevue Way, as having historic or cultural value; and

WHEREAS, subsequent to the City's completion and update of this Historic and Cultural Resources Survey for Old Bellevue, four (4) of the 8 properties identified as having historic or cultural value have been redeveloped or substantially altered; and

WHEREAS, the City is currently processing or anticipates processing legislative work items related to housing and affordable housing that could impact the compatibility of new development with the scale and intensity of existing development in Old Bellevue; and

WHEREAS, despite the historic and cultural value described and identified in the Comprehensive Plan and Part 20.25A LUC for Old Bellevue, the City's current regulations are not sufficient to reinforce the unique identity of this Land Use District and assure compatibility with adjacent development and the City Council's stated vision for this area in Downtown; and

WHEREAS, on December 2, 2025, the City Council considered a proposal for an emergency Interim Official Control for the stretch of Main Street in Old Bellevue—extending from 100th Avenue to Bellevue Way—to preserve and reinforce the scale and identity of the DT-OB Land Use District on this stretch of Main Street; and

WHEREAS, at the December 2, 2025 meeting, Council also discussed the unique nature and cultural value of the DT-OB Land Use District and requested more information about both the interim official control process and potential options to update City regulations for this area in Old Bellevue; and

WHEREAS, on February 10, 2026, Council found that an emergency Interim Official Control is necessary to reinforce the historic and cultural qualities within Old Bellevue, along Main Street between 100th Avenue and Bellevue Way, and require that new development is compatible with adjacent development, unique design features, and established small-scale and pedestrian-oriented street frontage in the DT-OB Land Use District; and

WHEREAS, on February 10, 2026, Council provided direction regarding the scope of the City workplan to update the City's development regulations for Old Bellevue while this Interim Official Control remains in effect; and

WHEREAS, this Interim Official Control will, for a six (6) month time period, provide an emergency and temporary measure to reinforce the historic and cultural

qualities in the DT-OB Land Use District and require that new development be compatible with adjacent development and unique design features in Old Bellevue; and

WHEREAS, this Interim Official Control will provide the City with additional time to review, study, and potentially revise its development regulations within the DT-OB Land Use District while requiring, during the period that the Interim Official Control is in effect, that new development is compatible with surrounding adjacent development, unique design features, and established small-scale and pedestrian-oriented street frontage in Old Bellevue; and

WHEREAS, this Interim Official Control is not intended to adversely affect the City Council's ability to adopt permanent regulations that differ from this Interim Official Control and is designed to be a temporary control for the area in Old Bellevue along Main Street, between 100th Avenue and Bellevue Way; and

WHEREAS, the Growth Management Act, at chapter 36.70A RCW (GMA), allows the City to establish and adopt interim regulations when a public hearing on the interim regulations is held within sixty (60) days of adoption and as long as such regulations are effective for no more than 6 months, unless further extended; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopts the foregoing as its findings of fact justifying adoption of this Interim Control Ordinance; now, therefore

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON, DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. General Provisions. An emergency and temporary Interim Official Control is hereby imposed on Part 20.25A LUC to reinforce historical and cultural qualities within the DT-OB Land Use District, along Main Street between 100th Avenue and Bellevue Way, and require that new development is compatible with adjacent development, unique design features, and established small-scale and pedestrian-oriented street frontage in Old Bellevue. In addition, this Interim Official Control is a temporary measure designed to provide the City with additional time to review, study, and potentially revise its development regulations related to the DT-OB Land Use District.

Section 2. Imposition of Interim Official Control. An emergency and temporary Interim Official Control is hereby imposed as follows:

- A. Applicability. This Interim Official Control applies to any property, lot, or parcel in the DT-OB Land Use District that is located along Main Street between 100th Avenue and Bellevue Way (hereinafter "the IOC area").
- B. Preservation of Main Street Facing Façades Within the IOC Area: Façades and the design features of façades of existing buildings in the IOC area shall be

preserved and protected, up to the second floor of the building, in connection with the redevelopment, alteration, and demolition of structures located in the IOC area.

1. In the event that the property owner or applicant establishes that the façade of an existing building in the IOC area is less than fifty (50) years old, then the façade may be demolished.
2. In the event that the property owner or applicant establishes through a report issued by a qualified professional, as defined in LUC 20.50.042, that the façade of an existing building in the IOC area is over 50 years old but has no historic or cultural value, then the façade may be demolished.
3. If any Main Street facing façade in the IOC area is demolished under Sections 2.B.1 or 2.B.2, then any redevelopment following demolition of the façade must comply with the design requirements in Section 2.C of this Ordinance.

C. Design Requirements for Main Street Facing Façade Redevelopment in the IOC Area:

1. Redevelopment of any demolished Main Street facing façade in the IOC area must incorporate the design features, approximate scale, pedestrian orientation, and composition of the demolished façade from the street level up to the second floor of the project.
2. From the street level up to the second floor of the project, façade building materials, construction methods, building proportions and architectural devices must incorporate and reflect the design of façades in the IOC area that are 50 years old or older.
3. New façades built between or among existing structures that are 50 years old or older shall comply with the following:
 - a. Proportions of the façade, from the street level up to the second floor of the project, shall be similar to those of adjacent façades;
 - b. All façades shall have a cornice or other distinct architectural element that terminates the top of the façade, up to the second floor of the project;
 - c. Existing cornice lines shall be continued in proportion to those of adjacent buildings;
 - d. Storefront entrances shall be aligned with adjacent buildings; and
 - e. Windows, storefronts and other openings shall be in the same proportions as those of adjacent buildings on the street and ground floor commercial levels.

Section 3. Effect of Interim Official Control on Part 20.25A LUC. Except as modified by this Interim Official Control, the underlying permanent development regulations in Part 20.25A LUC remain in full force and effect. However, the “Old Bellevue” column in Amenities Nos. 14 and 15 identified in LUC 20.25A.070.D.4, at Chart LUC 20.25A.070.D.4, are hereby superseded and replaced by the following façade preservation, protection, and design requirements:

14.A: Preservation and Protection of Façades Within IOC Area.	Old Bellevue
	40:1
	Forty bonus points per every \$1,000 of documented construction cost to preserve or protect historic façades or other historic design features in the IOC Area.
	PRESERVATION REQUIREMENT:
	1. Compliance with Section 2.B of the Interim Official Control.
15.A: Façade Redevelopment in the IOC Area.	Old Bellevue
	40:1
	Forty bonus points per every \$1,000 of documented construction cost to incorporate and reflect the design of historic façades or other historic design features in the IOC Area in connection with façade redevelopment following demolition.
	DESIGN REQUIREMENT:
	1. Compliance with Section 2.C of the Interim Official Control.

Section 4. Scope of Interim Official Control. This Interim Official Control is designed to be an emergency, temporary, and interim measure to provide the City with additional time to review, study, and potentially revise City development regulations related to Old Bellevue and the DT-OB Land Use District. If the provisions of this Interim Official Control are found to be inconsistent with any other provisions of the LUC or Bellevue City Code, the Interim Official Control Ordinance shall control. However, nothing in this Interim Official Control shall restrict the City Council’s ability to adopt permanent development regulations that differ from the Interim Official Control. Land use or building permit applications or permits that are deemed complete or have been approved by the City prior to the effect date of this Interim Official Control are not subject to the provisions of this Interim Official Control. This Interim Official Control is intended to be consistent with, and shall be administered consistent with, RCW 35A.21.450.

Section 5. Duration of Interim Official Control. Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.390, this Interim Official Control remains in effect for a period of 6 months. This Interim Official

Control may be renewed for one or more six-month periods if a subsequent public hearing is held and findings of fact are made prior to each renewal.

Section 6. Public Hearing. Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.390, the City Council shall hold a public hearing on this Interim Official Control within 60 days of its adoption, so as to hear and consider public comment and testimony regarding this Interim Official Control. Following such hearing, the City Council may adopt additional findings of fact, and may extend the Interim Official Control for a period up to an additional 6 months. The City Council may adopt additional 6 month extensions after any required public hearing, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.390.

Section 7. Severability. If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining parts of this Ordinance.

Section 8. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force five (5) days after adoption and legal publication.

Section 9. Findings of Fact. The findings contained in this Ordinance are hereby adopted as Findings of Fact to justify adoption of this Interim Official Control.

Passed by the City Council this 10th day of FEBRUARY, 2026 and signed in authentication of its passage this 10th day of FEBRUARY, 2026.

(SEAL)




Mo Malakoutian, Mayor

Approved as to form:
Trisna Tanus, City Attorney


Matthew McFarland, Supervising Civil Attorney

Attest:

Charmaine Arredondo, City Clerk

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