

**CITY OF BELLEVUE
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday
February 13, 2024
6:00 p.m.

Via Hybrid

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Clark¹, Vice-Chair Clima²; Boardmembers Chou, Kronoff, Valverde³

BOARDMEMBER ABSENT: Boardmember Trescases

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Hamilton

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Kim Bui, Shelley McVein, Camron Parker, Karen Phu, Gwen Rousseau, Ryan Walker

OTHERS PRESENT: Tim Davies, Craig Spiezle, Alex Tsimerman

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:**

Vice-Chair Clima called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Chair Clark and second by Boardmember Chou to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Kronoff and second by Boardmember Chou to approve the January 9, 2024 meeting minutes as presented.

¹ Via remote participation

² Presiding Officer

³ Via remote participation. Per the bylaws, since remote participation notification was not requested in advance, votes were not counted for this Boardmember.

Motion by Boardmember Kronoff and second by Boardmember Chou to amend the January 9, 2024 meeting minutes as follows:

Page 2, Item 3:

At the question, motion carried unanimously (5-0, with Boardmember ~~Clima~~ Chou abstaining)...

At the question, motion carried unanimously (4-0) to approve the amendment to the main motion.

At the question, motion carried unanimously (4-0) to approve the January 9, 2024 meeting minutes as amended.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Vice-Chair Clima reviewed the guidelines for Oral Communications (Ordinance 6752).

Craig Spiezle

Craig Spiezle spoke about Eastrail and the Comprehensive Plan, expressing appreciation to the Board for their support of Eastrail. Policies supporting Eastrail in the Comprehensive Plan were noted including items PA-5, PA-6, PA-10, and PA-14.

While the Comprehensive Plan is very well grounded concerns were expressed about some elements, including the Community Engagement element, which seems overly skewed toward marginalized populations. Bellevue's great neighborhoods, homeowners, and taxpayers have created the vibrant city that is enjoyed today. The needs of the underserved should not be diminished, specifically in PA-18 and PA-31.

Finally, policies of the plan focus on expansion of parks and amenities in items PA-2, PA-3, and PA-17. Boardmembers were encouraged to consider density as a critical factor beyond geography. Despite having parks, Downtown may actually be more underserved due to density than the 'park desert' neighborhoods that are thought of today.

Tim Davies

Tim Davies reviewed the BelRed Plan, within the Comprehensive Plan, and said that the Plan calls for improving feeder streams that run north/south and terminate at Kelsey Creek. The proposed paths don't appear to go anywhere. It is a short spur into the creek. People typically like to walk loops to get exercise or walk along extended greenbelts (e.g., Larson Lake to Phantom Lake). Concern was expressed about the open stream beds because they may provide camping opportunities for the homeless, which is particularly concerning since this area does not get a lot of supervision. There is currently a significant number of homeless camping near Highland Park. In addition, there is a similar feeder stream that runs along 140th just to the west of Highland Park, that currently sees quite a bit of camping.

Alex Tsimmerman

Alex Tsimmerman spoke in disagreement to the proposed bylaw amendments regarding public participation in meetings. Personal opinions and views were shared regarding local government corruption and overall dissatisfaction with city government, members of the Parks & Community Services Board, and City Council.

At the conclusion of Oral Communications, Vice-Chair Clima reminded attendees that the Parks Board does not condone offensive or hateful speech. However, the Board does respect First Amendment rights.

5. **CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:**

Newly elected Councilmember and Parks Board Liaison Dave Hamilton reported on the following Council activities:

- Interviews are scheduled to appoint a new Parks Boardmember to fill the vacant position.
- A Commendation was recently read by the Mayor in memory of former Parks Boardmember Debra Kumar who lost her two year battle with ALS.
- Highlights from the upcoming March 4, 2024 Council agenda were provided.

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

On behalf of staff and the Parks Board, Camron Parker, Assistant Director, expressed appreciation to Councilmember Hamilton for his contributions to the Parks Board. Councilmember Hamilton was presented with tokens of appreciation and a Service Recognition Certificate.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmember Kronoff frequented the trails in Larson Lake and Phantom Lake. These visits acknowledge how much the community's participation and use of the parks drives park planning. Boardmember Kronoff also visited the pop-up dog park at Wilburton Hill Park. The soil was quite waterlogged, and it was a good reminder that dog parks take a tremendous amount of upkeep. If any of the pop-up dog parks become permanent, the city will need to make investments to maintain the dog parks. Lastly, Boardmember Kronoff rode a bike to the Parks Board meeting, via the Spring District. It was an awesome experience.

Boardmember Chou provided highlights from a personal goal to visit all of Bellevue's parks. To date, visits were made to 46 of the 87 parks.

Boardmember Valverde said that the city has embraced the Lunar New Year celebration. Community members were encouraged to contribute feedback for the Engaging Bellevue for 2044 future vision. Lastly, Boardmember Valverde discussed a volunteer opportunity through Bellevue Essentials at a local homeless shelter.

Chair Clark echoed the sentiments about the Lunar New Year celebration and encouraged the community to get out and experience the celebration.

Vice-Chair Clima has been busy with the Bellevue Naturalist program pulling ivy at Wilburton Hill Park.

Boardmembers expressed enthusiasm to have Councilmember Hamilton appointed as the Parks Board Council Liaison.

8. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION & DISCUSSION:**

See above.

9. **BOARDMEMBER/COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:**

No report.

10. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Updates to the Parks and Community Services Board Bylaws**

Karen Phu, Assistant City Attorney, provided an overview of the proposed updates to the Board's Bylaws. The update would provide three key amendments:

- Amending the remote participation rules (Art. V Sec. G) as required to conform with Ordinance 6752;
- Amending the rules of decorum for public comment (Art. VII Sec. E) as required to conform with Ordinance 6752; and
- Amending the order of business (Art. VI Sec. D) to remove the second oral communications period as recommended to be consistent with the City Council's rules and other modifications to reflect the current operations of the Board.

Changing the Board's Bylaws is a two-step process that requires discussion, and then adoption.

Discussion:

- Is holding a sign prohibited in the Bylaws? *Response: No. However, affixing a sign is prohibited.*

- What happens if a Boardmember does not provide notice by noon of remote participation? *Response: The Boardmember either needs to participate in person or be counted as absent from the meeting if staff is not notified by noon that remote participation is necessary.*
- On pages 7-8 the Parks Board is referred to as a “Commission,” rather than a Board. *Response: The references will be consistent to “Board.”*
- What is “approved equipment” for remote participation? *Response: There is approved software through the city’s network that assists with alleviating any technical issues.*
- Does an extreme situation include one person attending the meeting in person, while three other people attend remotely? *Response: Yes. In this case, the presider would need to be the person attending in person.*

Boardmembers requested that action be taken at the next Board meeting to approve the recommended changes.

B. Comprehensive Plan Update: Parks, Recreation and Open Space Policies

At the January 9 Board meeting, Boardmembers recommended several changes. Below is a summary of the changes. Renumbering of the policies will follow in the complete draft for the Planning Commission.

- Emphasize density as one driver of urban parks and open space acquisition in PA-2.
Recommendation: Staff recommends the following change:

<p>PA-2. Obtain land throughout the community to meet present and future parks and open space needs, <u>with emphasis on providing park land concurrent with growth of urban neighborhoods, in alignment with the Parks and Open Space System Plan.</u></p>	<p>PA-2. Obtain land throughout the community to meet present and future parks and open space needs, with emphasis on providing park land concurrent with growth <u>and density</u> of urban neighborhoods, in alignment with the Parks and Open Space System Plan.</p>
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- Include the development of existing waterfront property, not just newly acquired property in PA-8.
Recommendation: Staff does not recommend changing this policy. The policy supports development of both newly acquired property and existing city-owned property, as written. For instance, this policy has supported the development of Meydenbauer Bay Park partially through developing property owned by the city as well as through the acquisition of neighboring property. It also continues to support the future development of public access to Lake Sammamish.

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<p>PA-8. Acquire and develop waterfront property to increase public access to Bellevue’s lakes.</p>	<p>No change recommended.</p>
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- Combine PA-16 & PA-13, but don't lose the concept of linking public and private recreation & facilities more generally.
Recommendation: Staff recommends combining the policies in the following way:

<p>PA-13. Encourage privately funded <u>recreational and managed facilities that serve or supplement recreation and cultural facilities needs</u> throughout the city, especially in major employment centers.</p>	<p>PA-X. Encourage a network throughout the city of privately funded and managed facilities that serve recreation and cultural needs and may supplement or link with facilities and programs in the public system.</p>
<p>PA-16. Encourage the linkage and access of private facilities with those in the public system.</p>	

- Use the word "safe" when referring to bicycle and pedestrian facilities (as in PA-5) if there are no unforeseen implications in doing so.
Response: PA-42 specifically addresses improving safety in city park facilities, however safety is also important in the linkages between facilities and other origins and destinations.
Response: There is one reference to bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Staff recommend adding the word “safe” after the word “Develop”.

PA-14. Develop pedestrian and bicycle linkages between neighborhoods and major natural areas, recreation facilities, schools and commercial centers.	PA-14. Develop <u>safe</u> pedestrian and bicycle linkages between neighborhoods and major natural areas, recreation facilities, schools and commercial centers.
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- Clarify PA-22 so it is consistent with the department planning documents, including the Parks & Community Services Strategic Plan, Recreation Program Plan, and Parks and Open Space System Plan.
Response: Staff recommends no further changes to PA-22. The Strategic Plan highlights that Bellevue’s park system must serve all sectors of the population equitably. This policy provides broad support for pursuing this and allowing for change as community recreation priorities evolve. Policies in the Recreation Program Plan provide more detail. The Strategic Plan places special emphasis on meeting the needs of youth, older adults, persons with disabilities, and those with limited opportunities for recreation. Other planning documents emphasize these groups and this Comprehensive Plan policy is consistent in highlighting the groups mentioned.

PA-22. Provide a variety of services and programs accessible to all throughout the city with special emphasis on servicing those with limited opportunities <u>underserved groups</u> including low-income households, youth, individuals with disabilities and older adults.	No further changes recommended.
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- In PA-24, do not remove "resources" from the policy.
Recommendation: Staff recommends the following change.

PA-24. Offer programs that utilize <u>are tailored to</u> the unique resources <u>land</u> and variety of indoor and outdoor facilities within the park <u>city's parks and open space</u> system.	PA-24. Offer programs that are tailored to the unique <u>resources</u> , land and facilities within the city's parks and open space system.
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- Ensure that PA-25 addresses local history.
Recommendation: Staff recommends the following change.

PA-25. Use parks to celebrate, <u>promote</u> and preserve Bellevue’s the full history, cultural arts and local heritage when consistent with the park’s <u>of the region through park design and, signage, programming, and cultural landscape conservation.</u>	PA-25. Use parks to celebrate and preserve the full <u>local history, of the region</u> through park design, signage, programming, and cultural landscape conservation.
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- Meeting the needs of a diverse population is important. Streamline language and make sure that PA-32 retains reference to culturally-specific needs as well as intercultural needs.

Recommendation: Staff recommends the following change.

<p>PA-32. Monitor <u>Based upon data trends and inclusive outreach, monitor</u> and respond to the community’s evolving recreation and community service needs to ensure a diverse mix of relevant and effective facilities and programs <u>that are culturally specific and meet the needs of a diverse population.</u></p>	<p>PA-32. Based upon data trends and inclusive outreach, monitor and respond to the community’s evolving recreation and community service needs to ensure a mix of relevant and effective facilities <u>that meet the needs of a diverse population, and including programs that are culturally specific or promote intercultural exchange.</u></p>
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- Clarify the reference to green certification or performance standards in PA-43. *Recommendation: Staff recommends the following change. In addition, green building certification has been added to the glossary.*

<p>PA-43. <u>When feasible, install, renovate, or replace facilities using materials, construction, and operation methods that meet or exceed green certification or performance standards and are known to be weather-resistant and longer lasting.</u></p>	<p>PA-43. When feasible, install, renovate, or replace facilities using materials, construction, and operation methods that meet or exceed green <u>building</u> certification or <u>other</u> performance standards and are known to be weather-resistant and longer lasting.</p>
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- PA-46. Concern that "non-park" is too limiting. Consensus that it should be clarified. *Recommendation: Staff recommends the following change.*

<p>PA-46. Require a public review process for the conversion to <u>Eliminate and prevent non-recreational use of park uses of lands and facilities.</u></p>	<p>PA-46. Eliminate and prevent non-recreational use of park <u>uses of park lands and facilities that impact or are not in alignment with the intended use or plan for them.</u></p>
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Discussion:

- How often did respondents express safety as a concern? *Response: There were approximately 35 respondents. Approximately 4-5 expressed safety concerns. A written comment was also received. Safety is addressed in PA-42.*
- What is PA-X? *Response: the items haven’t been renumbered. This PA will ultimately be given a number.*
- Should “natural” be added to the glossary? PA-1 has natural systems so it seems inclusive. *Response: PA-1 seems to cover natural elements and conservation.*
- What is meant by “inclusion?” *Response: Inclusion means including everyone. All of the language around inclusiveness means the entire city. The language captures inclusion for all.*
- In PA-46, suggest rewording to “Eliminate and prevent ~~non-recreational use of park~~ uses of park lands and facilities that negatively impact or are not in

alignment with the intended use or plan for them. *Response: This is a valid consideration, though reasons were given as to why this isn't recommended, such as interpretation of what is negative.*

- When will the community feedback be provided? *Response: The feedback will be released after February 16. Once released, the report can be forwarded to the Parks Board.*
- Add “green building” to the list of definitions; long-term also needs a hyphen added. *Response: these will both be added. The glossary will also take a few months to finalize.*

Motion by Boardmember Kronoff and second by Boardmember Chou to approve the amendments to the Parks, Recreation and Open Space element policies, substantially in the form presented in the Board packet, to the Planning Commission as part of the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

C. Comprehensive Plan Update: BelRed Subarea Plan Policies

Ryan Walker and Gwen Rousseau, Senior Planners, discussed proposed park, trail, and open space policy amendments to the BelRed Subarea Plan. The BelRed Subarea Plan is one of Bellevue’s 14 Subarea Plans part of Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan. It contains policies that highlight unique aspects of the BelRed Subarea and was adopted in 2009. The purpose of the update is to transform a declining industrial area into a model of smart growth and sustainability; anticipate light rail investment; and accommodate new housing and job growth.

The goal of the Parks Board review of the Park and Open Space policies is to make a recommendation to the Planning Commission with the Planning Commission making a recommendation to the City Council. Adoption of the BelRed Subarea Plan Comprehensive Plan Amendment is anticipated in September 2024. Proposed Parks and Open Space policy amendments were included in the Board packet. In summary, updates include the following:

- Updates to streamline policies, use contemporary language, and clarify objectives to provide for a diverse and functional collection of parks and open space throughout BelRed.
- A new policy to ensure equitable and convenient access to nature, parks, trails, and open space.
- Updates and new policy to emphasize opportunities along the West Tributary of Kelsey Creek, Goff Creek and near NE Spring Boulevard for park, trail, and open space development.
- Updates to highlight opportunities for supporting the performing arts and community events within park facilities in the heart of the BelRed Arts District.
- Updates to emphasize natural resource benefits to riparian corridors and upland areas in the acquisition of park and open space lands.
- Updates to remove redundant policies covered in Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan that apply citywide.
- A new policy to incorporate parks, recreation, and natural amenities into streets.

Ryan Walker and Gwen Rousseau discussed the proposed policy repeals, modifications, and new policies.

Discussion:

- There are two areas of emphasis in the goal: 1) diverse offering of parks; 2) streams and tributaries. How will diverse parks that serve a lot of users be measured? *Response: Some of the things that will be evaluated include the linkage of parks. The Parks Plan has specific goals identified regarding the size of the park, natural existence, and arts.*
- There was a comment made during the Oral Communications portion of the meeting agenda about the streams. The goal is to have a connected series of river parks—want to be sure users have an integrated, river-oriented system that is usable. *Response: Trails are located on the current plan map along streams. The streams are an organizing feature, to some extent.*
- Would like a system of streams and trails that connect. *Response: The narrative sections provide more context to the plan.*
- Need to illustrate the connectivity in the maps and make sure it is clear—want the trails to parallel the streams and possibility of a Riverwalk along the river corridor.
- Would like S-BR-53 strengthened. The parks are linked through a series of trails. The trails and water features need to work cohesively together. *Response: We can look at edits to S-BR-53. S-BR-61 also speaks to some of these aspects.*
- Would like the waterways to be an organizing element of the water system—trails, parks, and waterways should be cohesive.
- Need a statement of positive organizing principles.
- Need more integrated linkage of park facilities along the stream corridor.
- Want to be mindful about the open stream beds becoming camping areas.
- Should the connectivity of the walking area be added to the overarching goal?
- There was a general discussion about when property can be acquired to develop the stream corridor.
- Need to remove “emphasis” from S-BR-53—don’t want this to exclude other areas or cause confusion. *Response: The west tributary includes some of the highest density, so it was given initial emphasis. It is not meant to be exclusive.*

Motion by Chair Clark and second by Boardmember Kronoff to extend the meeting until 8:45 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

- Boardmembers requested that staff review S-BR-53 to see if it should be reworded or if the wording is ambiguous.
- S-BR-60—should wildlife, native plants, animals and additional habitat be added. *Response: This may relate to other sections. The intent of BelRed is to have SubArea policies to be specific to the area. The plants and animal habitat also need to be protected.*

The Parks & Community Services Board approved these minutes on March 12, 2024.

- In regards to S-BR-52 and equitable and convenient access to parks, how is parking considered? *Response: There are standards for different park functions. If it is a large community park, parking would be needed. Parking is a regulatory item and there are calculations for the specific requirements.*
- Are there different amenities at a mini-park versus a neighborhood park? *Response: Not necessarily. There are some guidelines but they are not linear.*
- Will the Planning Commission receive a redlined version of the Parks Boards edits/comments? *Response: No. Just the final recommendations.*

11. **NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

12. **PROPOSED AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:**

Camron Parker said that the March meeting agenda may include:

- BelRed Policies
- Human Services Needs Update
- Human Services Strategic Plan Review
- Ashwood Park Master Plan Update

13. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

A. Parks CIP Project Status Report

14. **WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held March 12, 2024.

At 8:44 p.m., Vice-Chair Clima declared the meeting adjourned.