



Bellevue Planning Commission

May 8, 2024

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update: Review of Full Draft

STAFF CONTACTS

Emil A. King, AICP, Planning Director, 452-7223
Thara Johnson, Comprehensive Planning Manager, 452-4087
Katherine Nesse, PhD, Senior Planner, 452-2042
Teun Deuling, AICP, Senior Planner, 229-6534
Community Development Department

POLICY ISSUES

Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan provides the roadmap for growth in the City. Washington State's Growth Management Act (GMA) directs counties and cities to periodically update their Comprehensive Plans. The update was launched February 28, 2022 and has included extensive public engagement. This memo and attachments address the suggestions made by the Planning Commission in their review of the individual elements over the past four months and the comments made by the community on the public review draft of the policy updates.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION



DIRECTION



INFORMATION ONLY



BACKGROUND

The Planning Commission has been reviewing the updates to the policies in each of the elements over the past four months. The Commission also received the recommendations of other boards and commissions, following their review of the policy updates, for the following elements:

- Utilities (Environmental Services Commission)
- Transportation (Transportation Commission)
- Human Services (Human Services Commission)
- Parks, Recreation and Open Space (Parks and Community Services Board)

- Urban Design and the Arts (Arts Commission)

The Planning Commission further reviewed the policies in those elements following the recommendation. At each review, the Planning Commission provided extensive feedback. Attachment A summarizes that feedback and details additional information and staff's recommended modifications in response to that feedback.

On January 15, Bellevue released a public review draft of the policy changes. This was followed by two public events and an online survey to gather feedback from the community on the policy changes. Additionally, some organizations submitted comments on specific policies. Attachment A also includes a summary of community feedback that led to changes in policies and staff's recommended modifications. The individual comments have been shared with the Commission as part of agenda packet for the review of each element or separately as they were submitted and are not included in this memo. Attachment B includes all of the changes to the policies relative to the current Comprehensive Plan policies.

Finally, on February 14 and 28, the Planning Commission reviewed updates to the Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map was based on a combination of the Preferred Alternative and the three other Action Alternatives studied in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Commission has reviewed the changes to the Wilburton Transit Oriented Development (TOD) separately. This review focuses on land use outside of that area, although the Wilburton Study Area is included on the map.

This meeting and the following one on May 22 are focused on review of the full draft of the Comprehensive Plan. This includes,

- 1) The complete Comprehensive Plan laid out in a publication format and including narrative sections that precede the policies in each element (Attachment C),
- 2) The changes made to policies in response to commission and community comments (Attachment A),
- 3) Changes to the Future Land Use Map (Attachment D)

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

On February 14, the Commission reviewed the staff recommended changes to the classification system used for Future Land Use designation. The Future Land Use designations in the Comprehensive Plan are meant to provide broad direction on the general uses and scale for the future development of areas of the city, while more detailed requirements and regulations are described in the Land Use Code and zoning map. The Commission asked for more information about the relationship between the Future Land Use designations and the zoning designations.

On February 28, the Commission reviewed the staff recommended changes to the Future Land Use Map. The changes included (see Figure 1):

1. Overlake-Adjacent Office
2. Crossroads Mall Site
3. Camp Sambica
4. Woodridge Light Industrial

The Commission concurred with three of the changes but asked for more information about the change to the Crossroads Mall site. Staff are recommending one additional change that was not reviewed at that meeting to accommodate additional affordable housing.

The Relationship Between Future Land Use Designations and Zoning

The Comprehensive Plan is Bellevue's foundational planning document, which provides the framework that the City seeks to grow over a 20-year planning horizon. As such, Comprehensive Plan Amendments are legislative acts with broad public participation and discussion for the orderly and coordinated development of a community. The Comprehensive Plan itself does not regulate property or land uses, but uses permitted by the City's Land Use Code must generally be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan's Land Use element sets the direction of future growth in a community and is depicted as a Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map is policy-oriented, and a Future Land Use designation represents the community's long-term vision for a specific area. The Future Land Use designations in the Comprehensive Plan are meant to provide broad direction on the general uses and scale for the future development of areas of the city, while more detailed requirements and regulations are described in the Land Use Code and zoning map. The Future Land Use designation links the Comprehensive Plan's vision with the specific zoning classification, or Land Use District, that implements that vision.

Bellevue's Land Use Code covers a variety of land use regulations, including those pertaining to zoning classifications throughout the City. Zoning is a regulatory tool of dividing land within a jurisdiction into regulated zones. This designates land into various types of purposes and uses. The Code lays out requirements for uses allowed, development regulations such as height limits, setbacks, maximum density, parking standards and other requirements. A zoning map provides a visualization of various zones throughout a jurisdiction. It is the officially adopted zoning map, and not a Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map, that will identify how a specific parcel can and cannot be used or developed. The zoning map, however, must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Currently, a one-to-one correspondence exists between many Future Land Use designations and zoning classifications in Bellevue, rather than certain designations allowing for multiple zones within a single designation. In broadening the Future Land Use designations, the goal is to provide more general guidance and flexibility for how development can respond to community needs while being consistent with the City's vision for the general use and scale of development

in an area. The broadening of land use designations was focused in mixed use areas and in residential areas because many similarities between zones exist in these categories.

New zoning classifications consistent with the proposed Future Land Use designations will be discussed with the Planning Commission as part of the Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) process.

Crossroads Mall Site

Staff recommend Midrise Mixed Use (Figure 1) on the Crossroads Mall site. In the EIS, in the Preferred Alternative, this site was studied with a Highrise Mixed Use future land use designation. Highrise Mixed Use is intended to include buildings that could be as high as 15 stories. It is a scale and density found primarily in BelRed, and, in the future, in the Wilburton TOD Area. In contrast, Midrise Mixed Use could include a 5 over 2 type of development that has become fairly common on the edge of the Overlake area of Redmond (this is a development of two steel-frame construction base stories that are built for commercial activity and 5 wood-frame construction stories on top that are usually residential). This is a scale that is much closer to the High Density Residential and Medium Density Residential that borders the Crossroads Mall site.

Midrise Mixed Use is a lower density than was studied in the EIS. Because it is within the range of what was studied in the EIS, the change would not need additional environmental study.

Figure 1. Crossroads Mall Site (see Attachment D for full Future Land Use Map)

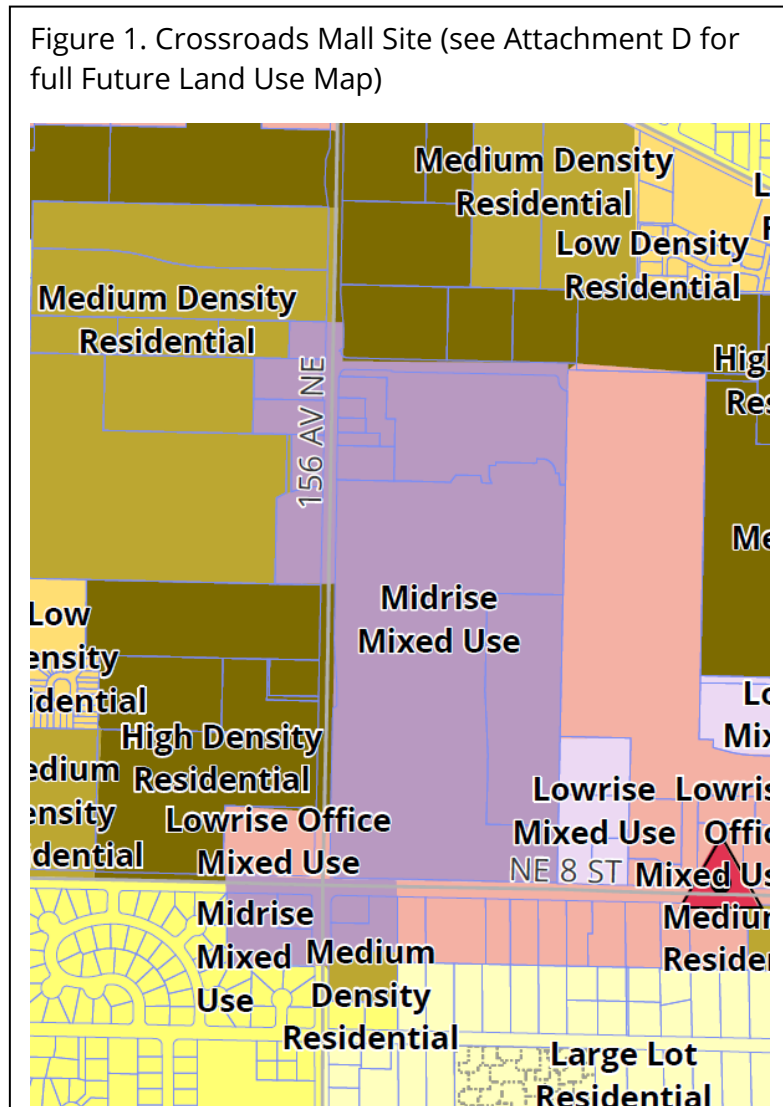
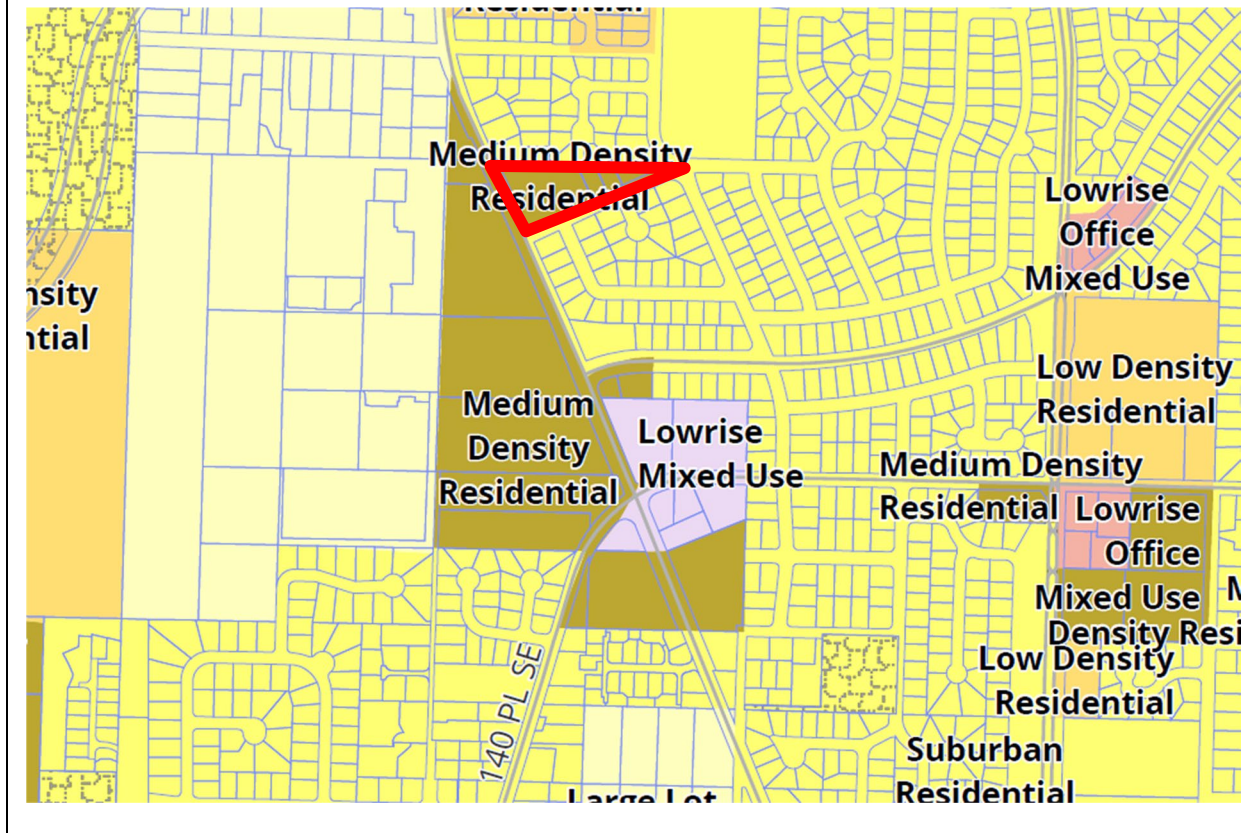


Figure 2. Jubilee Reach Site (see Attachment D for full Future Land Use Map)



Jubilee Reach Area

Independent of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Jubilee Reach approached the City about using the C-1 option to increase the density on their parcel to create affordable housing. The city calculated that this could take over a year to implement. As an alternative, the Future Land Use Map could be amended to Medium Density Residential future land use on this site and the two neighboring parcels (Figure 2), as it is across the street. The result would be the same but would allow Jubilee Reach to apply to rezone their property much faster and would enable them to move forward with development faster.

Medium Density Residential is a higher density than was studied on these sites in the EIS, however, Alternative 3 studied a density of 10 units per acre across these sites and many neighboring sites. With the neighboring site not increasing in density, the net impact for this area is still a lower density than was studied in the EIS. Because it is within the range of what was studied in the EIS, the change would not need additional environmental study.

POLICY ADDITIONS

There have been a few policy additions based on the Commission’s feedback, Community feedback or internal staff coordination. These are also detailed in Attachment A, along with the

reasons but we wanted to call special attention to them since the Commission has not yet reviewed these new policies.

Land Use

LU-32. Encourage reducing parking requirements in areas with good access to transit and active transportation facilities and prioritize parking options to serve the community with special needs.

Respondents were split regarding parking, with some people wanting to see a lifting of parking minimums and others who want to preserve parking. State law prohibits parking minimums in some cases. While there may be cases where parking should be required near station areas, allowing parking need to be met by developers at the market rate will ensure that the land near stations is being put to the highest and best use.

LU-40. Provide opportunities for increased density and height to accommodate clustering, efficient site planning and significant preservation of trees and open space on parcels over 10 acres.

The community supported policies to enhance the tree canopy and asked for additional policies to preserve or encourage natural areas during development.

Housing

HO-23. Evaluate the impact of short-term rentals on the cost and supply of housing.

The Commission suggested the policy (old number) HO-4, that focused on Single-Occupancy Rentals (SROs) could be retained to regulate and monitor short term rentals instead of SROs.

HO-53. Explore co-locating affordable housing in the development of new city-owned capital facilities.

Staff recommend a new policy to explore opportunities for affordable housing through the Capital Facilities planning process. Note the addition of this policy has caused subsequent policies to be renumbered.

Capital Facilities

CF-4. Develop and implement a Capital Facilities Municipal Operations Plan which addresses strategic site and facilities acquisition for municipal services to support level of service standards to serve the growing community.

Staff recommend a new policy to address long range Capital Facilities planning, including strategic acquisitions to support the growing community. Note the addition of this policy has caused subsequent policies to be renumbered.

Economic Development

ED-47. Identify areas at risk of business displacement and the space needs of those businesses and work to find or develop alternative space within the city.

The Commission wanted to emphasize small businesses or business start-ups in the Economic Development vision. In addition, the community voiced strong support for policies assisting small businesses, especially locally-based businesses and suggested that more be done to prevent displacement.

Climate and Environment

CL-7. Acknowledge ancestral tribal lands as part of environmental education.

The Snoqualmie Tribe suggested CL-6 include the Snoqualmie Tribe's Ancestral Lands Movement in this education effort. Staff felt there was value in including education about ancestral tribal lands more broadly in environmental education.

CL-21. Protect Culturally Modified Trees on both public and private lands, in partnership and consultation with regional tribes.

The Snoqualmie Tribe suggested including Culturally Modified Trees as a protected cultural resource, excluded from impacts related to development, both on public and private lands.

CL-88. Coordinate with WSDOT, King County, and neighboring jurisdictions to plan and prioritize culvert upgrades to ensure fish passage barrier removal, adequate projected stormwater passage, and continued climate-related adaptations to handle water passage into the future throughout Bellevue, especially where terrestrial species connectivity can be restored simultaneously.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife suggested adding a policy on fish passage to plan for future climate related conditions.

CL-96. Recognize the important role Bellevue plays in recovering salmon populations by acting on the goals of the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council, the Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda, the Washington Salmon Coalition, and other related groups and collaborative salmon recovery documents.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife suggested a new policy recognizing the goals of the WRIA 8 and Bellevue's role in achieving them.

Human Services

HS-28. Support services and investments for children and youth that lead to equitable outcomes in health, wellness, and education and meet essential needs, including shelter, housing, food, physical and behavioral health services, and safety from harm and violence.

The Commission suggested that there be policy to respond to the special needs of youth in regards to human services.

Urban Design and the Arts

UD-62. Preserve, enhance and interpret Bellevue's historical identity.

The Commission suggested retaining this policy as the broad goal is not addressed in other policies.

NEXT STEPS

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

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Response to Feedback
- B. Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update: Proposed Amendments
- C. Comprehensive Plan Complete Draft
- D. Future Land Use Map