

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES

March 12, 2025
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Vice Chair Cálad, Commissioners Bhargava, Ferris, Khanloo, Lu, Villaveces

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: Chair Goeppeler

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Kate Nesse, Community Development Department; Kirsten Mandt, Nick Whipple, Development Services Department; Robert Sepler, City Attorney's Office; Genesee Adkins, City Manager's Office

COUNCIL LIAISON: Deputy Mayor Malakoutian

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER
(6:30 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Vice Chair Cálad who presided.

2. ROLL CALL
(6:31 p.m.)

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
(6:32 p.m.)

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khanloo and the motion carried unanimously.

4. REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
(6:33 p.m.)

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian stated that the Council on March 11 discussed a proposal regarding mandatory minimum sentencing for public disorder crimes; the staff will return in six months to present additional information. The Council also focused on the Grand Connection crossing project and the city's effort to balance the ambitious vision with fiscal considerations was discussed.

The Commission was informed that the vacant seat on the City Council generated 20 applicants; the list has been narrowed down to five candidates who will be invited for in-person interviews, which will occur at the next Council meeting.

5. STAFF REPORTS

(6:35 p.m.)

A. Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Senior Planner Dr. Kate Nesse took a few minutes to review the Commission's schedule of upcoming meeting dates and agenda items.

Dr. Kate Nesse reported that a short memo is being prepared regarding the possibility of adjusting the timing for sharing written public communications. Options will be shared with the Commission at its next meeting. It was suggested that in the meantime the approach utilized by the Transportation Commission should be implemented, which is that staff forwards to the Commissioners all emails as they come in.

There was agreement to try the approach and to evaluate it at the next Commission meeting.

6. WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

(6:37 p.m.)

Vice Chair Cálad took a moment to note that under Ordinance 6752, the topics about which the public may speak during a meeting are limited to subject matters related to the city of Bellevue government and within the powers and duties of the Planning Commission. Additional information about the new rules of decorum governing conduct of the public during meetings can be found in Ordinance 6752.

A. Written Communications

(6:38 p.m.)

Dr. Kate Nesse noted that ten additional emails had been received, primarily in regard to the middle housing topic but also with respect to the Wilburton LUCA and the HOMA proposals.

B. Oral Communications

(6:39 p.m.)

Due to a high number of public speakers pre-registered, a motion to extend the oral communications period from 30 to 45 minutes, and to give priority to individuals who had not previously spoken, was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khanloo and the motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer Robertson spoke on behalf of Howell Development and expressed support for the proposed middle housing densities of four, six and nine dwelling units per lot, plus the two ADUs allowed. Bellevue has agreed to accommodate 70,000 new jobs and 35,000 new housing units by 2044. The Commission was urged to consider having a half-mile limit for the density bonus near neighborhood commercial regional growth centers and the countywide growth

centers. That is in line with the concept of a 15-minute city. The Commission was also urged to be very careful about the tree credit standards. It would be unfortunate if those standards undermine the objectives of increased density. With regard to a possible oversight, it was pointed out that the land use table in 20.20.38.C.1 talks about the number of dwelling units per lot, but the residential land use table in 20.10.440 talks about the number of dwelling units per structure. The two should be made consistent. Many stakeholders believe the FAR limits on single family homes need more work. The Commission and the Council has a heavy lift to provide the number of housing units to accommodate all the new jobs and developers need to be on board in taking up the task by right-sizing the density, and the draft in regard to densities near neighborhood centers is on the right track. The Commission was strongly encouraged to maintain the proposed density measures and recommend proceeding to a public hearing.

Jessica Roe with McCullough Hill spoke representing a client in regard to Bellevue's implementation of HB-1110. The current code is inequitable and unnecessarily restrictive in neighborhood zones; it goes well beyond the state's requirements. It was emphasized that without increased density allowances, Bellevue should at least maintain the current FAR regulations for single-family homes. It was stated that over the past five years, the speaker's client has built 223 large, family-sized homes in Bellevue, responding directly to local demand, primarily from multigenerational families employed in Bellevue. The Commission was urged to not arbitrarily restrict single-family home sizes, which would limit options for families and impact the broader housing market. The staff should be directed not to exceed the state requirements and restrict the single-family housing supply.

Veronica Shakotko with the Master Builders Association supported the voluntary fee-in-lieu program and recommended to continue offering incentives rather than imposing restrictive measures. The FAR for single family homes on lots over 10,000 square feet should not be reduced from 0.5 to 0.3. The Commission should also consider increasing the FAR for single-family homes, and suggested increasing the FAR for homes that include accessory dwelling units (ADUs). With regard to cottages, support was voiced for increasing the maximum square footage from 1200 square feet to 1750 square feet, allowing for a third bedroom. A one-car garage should also be allowed in addition to the square footage. The language that measures the square footage of cottages within the roofline should be adjusted given that it would reduce the usable living space by 200 to 300 square feet. ADUs and DADUs should be excluded from the FAR to better accommodate diverse housing needs and provide affordable alternatives. The size of DADUs should be increased to 1500 square feet, and garages should be allowed to be exempt from the FAR limit. Expanding Bellevue's unit lot subdivision code should be supported to reduce delays and costs. The Commission was also urged to align the code updates with other city codes, including transportation and utilities. The clearing and grading setback should be reduced from 200 feet to 20 feet, allowing for more flexibility during infrastructure work. The Commission's commitment to reviewing the tree code relative to middle housing is appreciated.

Holly Golden, a land use attorney with Hillis Clarke, spoke as a steering committee member of the Eastside Housing Roundtable. The Commission was urged support the bucket of recommendations set forth by the Roundtable that work together as a package. There is a shared fundamental belief among the Roundtable members that they should be creating an abundance of

housing to solve the unaffordability crisis. Land use codes have a direct impact on housing affordability. In Houston where there is no zoning code, the average cost of a home is \$300,000, while in Bellevue it is \$1.64 million. The Commission has the opportunity to move the needle in making sure the Wilburton code will not prove to be too expensive and will work. It was argued that the current proposed fees, especially those related to mandatory affordability, are too high and would make developments economically infeasible. The Roundtable supports a residential fee of \$13 per square foot for residential units and \$16.50 per square foot for commercial developments across the neighborhood. The transportation corridors should be considered in two different categories, and attention should be focused on the public-facing elements. The corridors are where people will be moving around the neighborhood. Internal site circulation is a separate thing.

Randy Bannecker spoke representing Seattle King County Realtors and encouraged flexibility in design and ease of permitting in the development regulation phase. Middle housing is an important tool for affordability. The Commission was encouraged to allow additional density and the fee in-lieu option under a voluntary approach, with a fee schedule that allows projects to pencil out. The Commission was urged to maintain the 0.5 FAR limit on single-family homes on large lots to accommodate larger families; to support increasing cottage sizes to 1,750 square feet and allow for a third bedroom; and to exempt ADUs and DADUs from the FAR calculations. The importance of simplifying Bellevue's code for middle housing to promote fee-simple homeownership opportunities through unit lot subdivisions, was encouraged, noting the high costs and complexity associated with condominium declarations. The importance of providing affordable homeownership opportunities for first-time buyers in Bellevue was stressed. The process of adding middle housing to lots needs to be made simple, understandable and affordable.

Tyler Woodbridge addressed the issue of the middle housing and voiced support for increasing housing density, the supply of housing, and housing affordability, emphasizing the importance of balanced and fair policy-making. Support was shared for policies that incentive density through increased FAR, especially in areas suited for higher density and transit use. However, there are serious concerns about two aspects that could have unintended consequences. As drafted, the policy creates a hard cutoff in regard to lots above 10,000 square feet, disproportionately harming owners just beyond the threshold. It would be better to institute a tiered approach similar to Kirkland, reducing FAR gradually from 0.5 to 0.3 beyond 10,000 square feet. Concern was also voiced about removing the FAR exemptions for single-dwelling units, and the potential negative effects, particularly in East Bellevue where many lots cannot support multi-unit developments, was emphasized. The policy would limit redevelopment and lead to neighborhood stagnation. The Commission was urged to reconsider both issues for a flexible, balanced approach.

Carol, a Wilburton resident, noted having lived on 134th Avenue NE since 1969 and expressed concern that increased multi-housing density and the associated traffic could attract crime, homelessness and graffiti, negatively altering Bellevue's safety. The pace of adding density and more building should be slowed.

Phyllis White voiced concerns about balancing growth with the needs of residents, emphasizing that rapid density could displace longtime residents due to rising property values. The Commission should thoughtfully consider the perspectives of current Wilburton residents.

Tim Hay, a Bellevue resident for 60 years and a former homebuilder, presented a visual scale model depicting the impacts of densification on a typical Bellevue single-family street. The speaker emphasized some practical problems, such as insufficient space for garbage collection, curbside parking limitations, and the impracticality of locating dumpsters due to setbacks. It was stressed that increased density and related logistical issues like garbage collection and street congestion will severely impact neighborhood livability, especially on cul-de-sacs.

David Cagle spoke as a member of the Wilburton Community Association (WCA) Board of Directors, and voiced strong opposition to the draft middle housing code amendments, noting that the WCA took the unusual step of formally opposing the amendments despite a general policy of neutrality. The proposed amendments aim to rapidly replace single-family homes with middle housing, ushering in changes that will be radical and permanent. References were made to significant ongoing developments such as Pinnacle, Wilburton TOD, and Crossroads, and it was noted that Bellevue already meets the housing targets set by King County. The Wilburton TOD FEIS provides capacity for 14,800 units. It was argued that the draft amendment far exceed the requirements set by recent state legislation in HB-1110 and HB-1337. There are potential negative impacts on traffic and neighborhood character to be considered.

Mike Nykrem, a builder in Bellevue for nearly 50 years and a former Kirkland planning commissioner, said the current housing crisis is directly related to the Growth Management Act (GMA). The Urban Growth Boundary is too restrictive and needs to be removed, while the rest of the GMA provisions should be retained. The intense redevelopment envisioned by the draft will effectively end single-family housing. Attention needs to be paid to practical issues, including the need to clarify Bellevue's tree code, the need to address problems caused by curb cuts, and the issues of parking and garbage collection related to increased housing density, as witnessed currently in Seattle. The speaker emphasized concerns regarding the floor area ratio standards, particularly the new requirements for thicker eight-inch walls due to updated state energy codes. FAR should be measured from the interior of walls rather than from the exterior of walls or rooflines; exterior measurements could severely reduce usable living space due to the thicker walls required by updated codes. Additionally, there are Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) to be addressed. Conflicts could arise from older CC&Rs which might limit implementing the new density requirements, such as four units per lot. The Commission was urged to address those specific concerns clearly in order to prevent unintended complications.

Mike Mincy, a local realtor, spoke indicated support for the comments made by the representatives of the Seattle-King County Realtors and Master Builders Association, specifically in regard to the tree standards and lot sizes. The need for clarity in those areas was emphasized.

Andrew Coates with KG Investment Properties stated that setting the fee in the urban core at \$18

will lead predominantly to on-site performance in eight-story, podium-style residential projects. With an \$18 fee there will likely be little fee revenues collected, undermining efforts to achieve deeper affordability. The importance of balancing fees and incentives was stressed, noting that highrise and mass timber projects could pay the fees, supporting the desired neighborhood developments. It has been said that highrise rents for more but costs more, but that is not a justification for higher fees on highrise projects. The Nexus study and feasibility studies provide contradictory conclusions.

Neil Mulnick highlighted the importance of commercial activity in creating an 18-hour, transit-oriented neighborhood with thriving retail and foot traffic. It was noted that Bellevue is facing significant challenges in commercial development, and the proposed commercial linkage fee of \$16.50, unprecedented elsewhere in Bellevue, risks further delaying needed commercial projects. The necessity of carefully calibrating the fee to ensure commercial viability was emphasized. Also emphasized was the importance of good project design, specifically regarding back-of-house functions like garbage collection and loading zones. Support was voiced for maintaining a clear separation between pedestrian areas and essential back-of-house functions. The commission was urged to focus on viability. A concern was expressed that overly ambitious street and internal circulation standards may hinder neighborhood development and limit public benefits, including affordable housing.

Brady Nordstrom spoke representing the Housing Development Consortium and the Eastside Affordable Housing Coalition and voiced strong support for the position outlined by the Eastside Housing Roundtable. The Commission was urged to carefully consider the balanced recommendations developed around access corridors, fee-in-lieu amounts, and the timing of the catalyst program and when it vests, whether at the permit application stage or at the issuance stage. Significant progress has been made, and only slight adjustments remain necessary.

Jessie Clawson with McCullough Hill briefly echoed the comments made by Neil Mulnick, Andrew Coates and Brady Nordstrom, and highlighted the collaborative efforts between affordable housing and market-rate developers to create viable housing policies. The Commission was urged to provide clear, actionable guidance to city staff to reduce project costs and to facilitate the creation of abundant housing. The Commission's pivotal role in realizing the vision of a thriving Wilburton neighborhood was emphasized.

7. PUBLIC HEARING – None
(7:22 p.m.)

8. STUDY SESSION
(7:22 p.m.)

A. Proposed Middle Housing Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) to Implement HB-1110 and HB-1337

Assistant Director Nick Whipple noted that since the Commission's last meeting significant community engagement took place through multiple well-attended outreach sessions. The proposed middle housing policy amendments have been revised based on feedback received

during those sessions. Once scheduled, the public hearing will represent a critical milestone in advancing the proposal.

Bellevue has been proactive in addressing housing needs, including through setting a goal of creating 35,000 new housing units by 2044, as mandated by King County. The ambitious goal has guided the city's comprehensive planning and development strategies since well before the state's recent legislation. In fact, the Bellevue City Council explicitly directed planning staff to encourage the development of middle housing as part of the city's broader housing and growth strategies. Consequently, the proposals intentionally go beyond state-mandated minimums in certain aspects. The Council also directed as part of the Next Right work to encourage middle housing in the city.

Code and Policy Senior Planner Kirsten Mandt said the three well-attended information sessions included an in-person event with attended by about 50 persons. Attendees of a lunch-and-learn session numbered about the same. The sessions generated robust discussions and raised common questions regarding covenants, potential traffic impacts, additional residential growth, and clarifications about walking distance regulations and subdivision codes. There were also concerns voiced about critical areas, comments about single-family FAR reductions, environmental review processes tied to the Comprehensive Plan, and feasibility suggestions. Feedback from the engagements has informed several adjustments proposed in the updated draft code.

The proposal has been scaled back since February to clearly differentiate the original proposal, the current draft code, and the baseline requirements of HB-1110. Under the current public review draft, the standard citywide baseline is four dwelling units per lot. Six units per lot are proposed near frequent transit service, defined as four or more stops per hour for at least 12 hours daily, within a quarter mile of identified neighborhood centers, the Downtown regional growth center, and the four candidate countywide growth centers. The nine units per lot are limited to areas within a half-mile radius of major transit stops, specifically light rail stations and bus rapid transit routes like the B Line. HB-1110 similarly requires four units per lot citywide and allows six units per lot if two affordable units are included, specifically within a quarter mile of major transit stops.

The maps have been updated to highlight the frequent transit service areas, neighborhood and growth centers, and proximity buffers to major transit stops. The changes align with the Comprehensive Plan goals focusing residential growth near transit, employment, and mixed-use centers.

Regarding FAR, Kirsten Mandt said the current proposal targets Bellevue's typical lot sizes of around 10,000 to 13,000 square feet and adjusts the standard FAR to 0.5 for the first 10,000 square feet and reducing to 0.3 for lot areas above that threshold. The exemption criteria that previously allowed unlimited development size will be removed in favor of a more gradual, stepped approach.

To support infill feasibility for middle housing, the draft proposes setback flexibilities, including reducing front and rear yards by 10 feet in less dense zones, side yards to a minimum of five feet each side, and allowing zero side-yard setbacks for attached structures on adjacent lots. Such flexibility encourages rowhouse development without forcing lot consolidations, which could otherwise affect unit yield. Notably, HB-1110 does not mandate setback reductions; it addresses density requirements only.

A modest increase of five percent is proposed for impervious and hard-surface lot coverage limits following consultation with utilities and stormwater staff, who expressed no concerns regarding surface water runoff impacts.

For cottage and courtyard housing, the adjustments include increasing the maximum cottage size to 1,750 square feet, exempting 250 square feet for single-car garages from FAR calculations, and slightly reducing the open-space width requirements to facilitate easier infill development. Courtyard configurations remain consistent with prior discussions that emphasize the open-space requirements and resident orientation.

The proposals regarding ADUs include increasing DADU sizes to 1,200 square feet, exempting their square footage from FAR, and again allowing a 250-square-foot exemption for garages. The half-mile exemption radius from major transit stops follows state definitions and is separate from HB-1110's definition.

Other considerations include clarifying the subdivision codes for middle housing ownership flexibility, aligning the multifamily zoning standards with the single-family zones. Additional feedback is needed before updating the tree credit section for clarity and effectiveness.

The transition area design district overlay will also require adjustments since HB-1110 mandates middle housing receive regulatory treatment identical to single-family housing. Multifamily project standards, such as landscaping and setbacks, would apply only to developments exceeding the middle housing threshold, which is currently defined as ten units or greater.

The parking standards under consideration propose one parking space per unit for middle housing and multifamily projects, which aligns with similar ongoing projects. HB-1110's baseline parking requirement differs slightly, requiring one space per unit for lots up to 6,000 square feet and two spaces per unit for larger lots.

Kirsten Mandt said in order to stay on schedule for the June 30 deadline, the public hearing should be held in April.

Chair Goepple said flexibility in the tree code is crucial for Bellevue, especially given the housing goals. It would be helpful for the Commission to receive more specific details about proposed adjustments at the next meeting given that the topic was frequently raised during community feedback. Flexibility in the tree code is an essential element of creating effective housing solutions in Bellevue.

Chair Goepple voiced concern about allowing nine dwelling units per lot, noting a strong belief that the approach will significantly alter the character of the neighborhoods in a way that is not sustainable. Given that House Bill-1110 already brings substantial change, allowing up to six units per lot is acceptable, but going beyond that to nine units seems excessive. The state law's standard of six units per lot is more reasonable.

Regarding the FAR changes for single-family residences, Chair Goepple voiced appreciation for the proposed adjustment. The idea of maintaining a floor-area ratio of 0.5 up to 10,000 square feet, and then applying a reduced ratio of 0.3 FAR only to additional lot area above that threshold is sensible. It seems fair and reasonable to scale the regulation in that manner.

Chair Goepple voiced concerns about the size of ADUs and DADUs. Kirsten Mandt clarified that the proposal for DADUs is currently 1,200 square feet with an exemption from the FAR

calculations. The state law baseline limit is 1,000 square feet, but the proposal increases it to 1,200 square feet with the exemption. Additionally, consideration is being given to adding a 250-square-foot exemption specifically for garages. Chair Goepple said something on the order of 1500 square feet would accommodate a third bedroom and that should be the recommendation.

Commissioner Villaveces said the existing open space requirements for cottages create awkward site layouts. Allowing driveways and driving surfaces to count as open space would greatly improve the layouts. In Kirkland, for example, the open space rules cause cottages to face away from shared spaces, making them less usable. If driving surfaces were to qualify as open space, it would permit cottages to face an interior courtyard, creating safer play areas for children and better community spaces. Additionally, paving the driving surfaces with permeable materials such as grass pavers would still meet usability and environmental goals. The change would significantly enhance the livability and attractiveness of cottage housing.

Commissioner Khanloo agreed with the comments made by Chair Goepple's, especially in regard to tree preservation. Bellevue's Downtown area already lacks significant trees, as development has prioritized buildings at the expense of tree cover. Extending the approach into the neighborhoods by cutting down a lot of trees would adversely impact livability, especially considering recent extreme summer temperatures. Retaining trees is essential for livability, reducing heat, and ensuring walkable neighborhoods. Increased density without adequate tree preservation will result in areas where people cannot comfortably live or raise families.

Commissioner Khanloo also strongly opposed the proposal to allow up to nine dwelling units per lot. An example is the area near the new fire station on 112th Avenue. Housing units there are densely packed, lack usable outdoor spaces, and appear uninviting to families. Observing that many units remain unsold after several years reinforces the concern about creating dense developments that do not meet community needs.

Commissioner Ferris also agreed with the need for flexibility in terms of the tree code, which is necessary to accommodate new development. The Commissioner also supported the proposed adjustment to FAR, with the reduced 0.3 applying only beyond the initial 10,000 square feet, which will provide fairness and flexibility. Nine dwelling units per lot is entirely too dense.

Commissioner Ferris voiced concern about relying too heavily on transit infrastructure for higher-density housing. Bellevue has seen instances where bus services planned for certain areas have changed after developments were completed. That could create future problems if dense housing is built without adequate parking and the transit routes later change or disappear. There should be a clear plan for how to address that scenario.

Commissioner Ferris asked staff to clarify the issue of CC&Rs and how they might influence or limit the new development proposals. Kirsten Mandt explained that Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) present a challenge because they essentially function as private contracts. Consequently, the city possesses limited regulatory authority absent state legislation granting explicit oversight. There are ongoing community education efforts encouraging property owners, particularly in platted communities, to thoroughly review their property titles, CC&Rs, and applicable covenants. The step is aimed at ensuring that residents fully understand permitted and restricted actions, as the city itself lacks direct control.

With regard to the transit service network, Kirsten Mandt clarified that existing bus services at the time of application submission determine eligibility for certain housing densities. Ideally, introducing additional housing units would strengthen transit networks by providing supportive

densities, thereby enhancing long-term transit viability. Although budget cuts remain beyond city control and could impact transit availability, the physical housing units themselves would remain.

Commissioner Lu expressed support for the incremental application of the 0.3 FAR adjustment and suggested that reducing building allowances above 6,000 square feet would not significantly limit housing options. Strong support was voiced for extending the garage exemptions to diverse housing types, noting anecdotally that garages are increasingly becoming a requirement for prospective homeowners. Caution was urged, however, in regard to allowing up to nine dwelling units per acre, particularly given existing uncertainties around transit availability. A more comprehensive justification and clarification would be needed before firmly committing to the higher density allowance.

Commissioner Lu asked if the community engagement captured any concerns regarding disruptions caused by housing construction itself. There is a difference between minor disruptions associated with ADUs versus potentially significant impacts arising from constructing larger housing complexes, such as nine-plexes. Kirsten Mandt responded that community engagement, which has been ongoing since early 2022, highlighted the residents' preference for smaller, multi-unit developments over larger single-family homes. The housing growth concerns were acknowledged and it was confirmed that efforts to balance the competing interests while achieving the Comprehensive Plan goals and growth targets are needed.

Commissioner Lu advocated for defining what constitutes a "walkshed" based on true walkability rather than a simplistic "as the crow flies" radius. Community feedback should be incorporated directly into identifying genuinely walkable areas, including accounting for factors such as safety and terrain steepness. Nick Whipple responded by recognizing the past difficulties encountered when addressing similar issues, especially in defining walking distances around transit stations, but agreed to explore the feasibility of incorporating physical impediments or gradients into future definitions.

Commissioner Lu also recommended informing prospective builders about potential CC&R restrictions by publishing or flagging areas where such rules might apply, without necessitating comprehensive, labor-intensive research.

Commissioner Lu proposed exploring exceptions to the setback requirements specifically for quiet heat pump installations. It could be a beneficial strategy for incentivizing environmentally friendly practices without negatively impacting neighbors.

Nick Whipple acknowledged Commissioner Lu's points and reiterated that there are complexities involved in defining walksheds and agreed that impediments should be recognized. There are also practical constraints to thoroughly cataloging enforceable CC&Rs, though the staff are open to the idea of educating the public about potential CC&R conflicts while clarifying the city's limited resources for comprehensive CC&R research.

Commissioner Bhargava reinforced the importance of clearly defining walksheds based on actual walking routes, and cautioned that overly broad definitions could significantly disrupt the neighborhoods. The Commissioner suggested overlaying potential obstructions to better understand true walkability within proposed areas.

Addressing the concerns about nine units per acre, Commissioner Bhargava asked staff to illustrate or visualize the building typologies needed to accomplish that density. Kirsten Mandt

said the goal is to create flexibility in regard to housing typologies. There are some nine typologies identified in the draft, and the idea is to let the specific site constraints and other regulations determine which to use. Commissioner Bhargava stressed the value of having concrete visualizations, explaining that clearer imagery could better inform the decision-making. The need for having a compelling rationale before endorsing densities as high as nine units per acre, which seems really high, was emphasized.

Commissioner Bhargava suggested additional studies addressing the concerns voiced by the public are needed, specifically regarding garbage cans. The issue seems minor and is easily overlooked. For instance, adding parking affects where garbage cans can be placed, impacting residents' quality of life. Simple studies of such a nature could illustrate the effects increased density would have, even on a typical street. The approach would either address concerns effectively or highlight areas where residents feel discomfort. In such scenarios, the new code should offer clear, simple solutions to maintain residents' comfort.

Commissioner Bhargava agreed with the proposal to reduce FAR incrementally for lots exceeding 10,000 square feet. Also supported was increasing the size limits for ADUs, potentially up to 1,500 square feet. The change would significantly enhance livability, facilitating housing opportunities suitable for families, rentals, diverse pricing options, and multi-generational living arrangements.

With regard to the setback reductions, Commissioner Bhargava said clarity is needed in regard to the rationale. Kirsten Mandt said the goal is to enhance flexibility for infill projects. The proposed reductions are largely in line with state guidance. The adjustments are modest enough to increase feasibility without drastically altering neighborhood character, thus ensuring new infill development will remain consistent with existing single-family areas.

Commissioner Bhargava said the preservation of significant or landmark trees is another point that should be considered. While acknowledging the complexity and potential disruption that may cause, the Commissioners said studying strategies to protect the notable trees is essential to making thoughtful recommendations.

Vice Chair Cálad underscored the concerns about garbage collection by offering an example from Chicago which highlighted how increased density and parked vehicles create difficulties for garbage truck access, resulting in poor living conditions. There are also privacy issues associated with higher-density developments, especially the nine-unit configurations. Visual examples from Hong Kong underscore privacy concerns, emphasizing the importance of careful design to mitigate such issues. The issue of reducing FAR further warrants continued discussion to understand its full implications.

Chair Goepple expressed support for prioritizing walkability and adjusting the density zoning boundaries when clear barriers make a half-mile distance misleading and agreed with the previous comments about walkability.

Commissioner Villaveces called attention to a letter received from the Brierwood Center in which it was noted that a proposed street does not effectively connect to existing infrastructure and might unintentionally impact the area due to challenging topography. The concern warrants further investigation.

Regarding nine-unit density developments near transit, Commissioner Villaveces voiced support and said they accommodate more housing without necessarily increasing building footprints

excessively. They are likely to be stacked apartments intended for rental to students or young professionals who rely on public transit rather than personal vehicles.

With respect to reducing the FAR for lots above 10,000 square feet, Commissioner Villaveces cautioned that while creative, the approach might not deter large single-family developments; it could instead provoke resident dissatisfaction based on community feedback opposing the FAR reductions.

Commissioner Villaveces noted in regard to parking that exemptions are proposed for ADUs and cottages, which is good. However, caution was urged to avoid creating situations where increased parking requirements hinder development due to spatial constraints. Kirsten Mandt said there are parking exemptions related to proximity to transit, specifically a half mile, for all of the middle housing typologies. For ADUs, the exemptions apply when sited within a half mile of major transit stops. The requirement in HB-1110 allows for two parking spots per unit, but the proposal for the city is to go to just one per unit. Commissioner Villaveces recommended incorporating an allowance for mechanized parking systems in the code, allowing for stacked parking to reduce the space needed and thereby enabling more efficient land use and less street congestion.

Commissioner Khanloo echoed the concerns voiced about garbage and trash bin management in dense areas. The issue continues to pose practical difficulties for pedestrians, which is particularly evident in areas like Downtown Bellevue.

Commissioner Khanloo emphasized a strong interest in further studying walkability and agreed with the need to focus on realistic walking distances of around five to ten minutes, which typically is around a quarter of a mile. The walkability assessments should account for varied neighborhood conditions, such as hills that potentially could affect actual walk times and comfort.

Commissioner Khanloo reiterated support for increasing the allowable size of ADUs and DADUs given their importance in terms of family livability.

Commissioner Lu expressed a desire to understand more clearly how unit lot subdivision, or fee-simple subdivisions, might distribute costs based on different lot sizes. Specifically needed is clarity on cost-sharing mechanisms for subdivided unit lots to facilitate a better understanding of potential conflicts or implications.

Commissioner Bhargava asked whether staff had conducted yield studies comparing the parking requirements specified under HB-1110 versus those proposed in the current amendments. Kirsten Mandt said such studies had not been conducted but noted that feedback from the development community indicated greater concern with parking maximums than minimums. Commissioner Bhargava suggested conducting at least basic yield comparisons to understand the impact, if any, of the different parking requirements.

A motion directing staff to schedule a public hearing on the proposed LUCA was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khanloo and the motion carried unanimously.

****BREAK****
(8:20 p.m.)

B. Wilburton Vision Implementation Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA)
(8:27 p.m.)

A motion to extend the meeting to 10:30 p.m. was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lu and the motion carried unanimously.

Nick Whipple noted that following the public hearing on the proposed LUCA there were four outstanding topic areas, each with several options from which to choose. The Commissioners were reminded that the proposed LUCA had been shaped by a broad section of the community over a two-year process. The purpose is to implement the Wilburton vision and to align community aspirations with policy implementation and translate those policies into actionable guidelines through the Land Use Code amendments. The LUCA specifically incorporates key policies adopted in the Comprehensive Plan Amendment for Wilburton in July 2024, as well as the growth targets defined in the citywide Comprehensive Plan update approved in October 2024.

In addition to the broader community outreach during both the Comprehensive Plan and LUCA phases, the city initiated targeted stakeholder workshops after releasing the draft LUCA in May 2024. The stakeholder discussions following the initial draft have led to iterative revisions, resulting in the current draft, which is the fifth major iteration. The Commission has extensively engaged with the drafts across six previous study sessions. A public hearing was conducted which allowed for additional community input.

Moving to the outstanding topics, Nick Whipple began with local streets which would become publicly dedicated rights-of-way, constructed by developers as part of redevelopment, and subsequently turned over to the city. Designed primarily for vehicular traffic, local streets are distinctive within the transit-oriented development (TOD) area as they are among the few places where on-street parking is explicitly required, intended mainly to serve adjacent businesses.

Three distinct options for local street cross-sections were presented for Commission review. The current draft proposes a corridor width of 67 feet, including sidewalk and amenity spaces. An alternative request from property owners suggests reducing the total width to 59 feet, primarily achieved by narrowing sidewalks to six feet. Another potential adjustment involves removing mandatory on-street parking to further reduce corridor widths. On behalf of the staff, Nick Whipple emphasized the importance of maintaining at least an eight-foot sidewalk width, which aligns with recommendations from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), to which Bellevue subscribes. Bellevue endorsed the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide in 2014, which recommends sidewalk widths ranging from eight to twelve feet in commercial and downtown areas. The staff are agreed that maintaining the currently recommended ten-foot sidewalks will provide adequate pedestrian comfort and accommodate the anticipated density and pedestrian traffic in the Wilburton area.

Nick Whipple said flexible access is another corridor type intended specifically for lots greater than 105,000 square feet. It aims to break the larger parcels into smaller, more walkable blocks while meeting vehicular needs. The current proposal introduces flexibility by exempting properties flexible access on lots adjacent to I-405 that abut 116th Avenue NE given that there is no through access due to no street on the other side. Other adjustments made include reducing the corridor width from an initial 70 feet to narrower dimensions and permitting buildings to extend or span over corridors, allowing garage structures beneath and residential units above to maximize density and building efficiency. Corridors as narrow as 30 feet are also permitted in the draft solely for circulation purposes, with cantilevered building designs allowed due to the private nature of these streets.

Three possible approaches regarding flexible access corridors were presented, and it was noted the staff were recommending a potential adjustment in response to prior feedback that a ten-foot sidewalk width is not appropriate in all places. The recommendation was to reduce the corridor width to 47 feet, which is consistent with the NACTO guidelines of eight- to twelve-foot sidewalks, and which balances development efficiency and density concerns. A second proposal, suggested by property owners, advocates for reducing the corridor width to 37 feet by removing one amenity zone, reducing the remaining amenity zone width from five feet to four feet, and reducing the sidewalk width to six feet.

A motion to address each issue individually, including Commissioner comments, before moving to the next issue was made by Commissioner Khanloo. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ferris and the motion carried 6-1, with Commissioner Villaveces voting no.

Commissioner Bhargava said the basic design and safety standards are nonnegotiable. In creating a consistent public realm, there needs to be careful consideration before trying to value engineer the dimensions down. In places that do not have the same impact over the long run, there should be a balance between enhancing development affordability and efficiency and emphasizing the importance of maintaining a sustainable, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood. Local streets should have eight- to ten-foot sidewalks minimum.

Commissioner Lu agreed and noted a personal preference for Option C which eliminates a parking requirement but maintains wider sidewalks.

Commissioner Ferris underscored the permanence and significance of street grid decisions and stressed the need to get it right. For most of the Commissioners, local street design is not their area of expertise. The staff have engaged in extensive analysis and have engaged with stakeholders. Support was voiced for Option A.

Commissioner Khanloo asked if Option C aligns with NACTO. Nick Whipple allowed that it does. Commissioner Khanloo agreed with Commissioner Ferris in supporting Option A.

Commissioner Villaveces also agreed with Commissioner Ferris and voiced support for Option A based on the staff recommendations.

Chair Goepple also supported Option A for local streets.

Commissioner Bhargava voiced support for Option A with the opportunity to have eight-foot sidewalks instead of ten foot, bringing the total right-of-way to 63 feet. Commissioner Lu agreed.

There was a discussion of whether 8 foot sidewalks or 10 foot sidewalks and the consensus that 10 foot sidewalks were preferable.

A motion to recommend to the Council that the proposed Wilburton Vision Implementation Land Use Code Amendment be adopted consistent with the decision criteria in LUC 20.30J.135 was made by commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khanloo and the motion carried unanimously.

The recommendation for Local Streets was to go with Option A, with is in the current draft. With regard to flexible access, Chair Goepple expressed a preference for Option C, the

recommendation of by staff, but questioned the need for a five-foot amenity zone and suggested two four-foot zones instead to get the total down to 45 feet. Nick Whipple responded that the five-foot amenity zone aligns with city standards established elsewhere, supports tree canopy growth, the eco-district goals, and enables effective stormwater management. Convinced by the rationale, Chair Goepple supported Option C as recommended.

Commissioner Villaveces also supported Option C and but asked if it would allow for building cantilevers over sidewalks. Nick Whipple said it does on a case-by-case basis.

Commissioner Khanloo voiced a preference for Option A but noted being open to compromise.

Commissioners Ferris and Lu both expressed support for Option C.

Commissioner Bhargava suggested adjusting Option C by reducing the sidewalk width from eight feet to six feet and possibly reducing the size of the amenity zones.

Vice Chair Cálad agreed that Option C could have five-foot wide amenities and six-foot sidewalks on what are private access areas.

Commissioner Lu said the feedback from the stakeholders was that they can work with a single amenity zone of either four feet or five feet. One potential option would be to take that suggestion along with the eight-foot sidewalk width, which would be a combination of Option B and C.

Commissioner Bhargava voiced the opinion that reducing the sidewalk width to six feet from eight feet would not make a substantial difference. Having only one amenity zone would result in a street section with a planting capability on only one side. It would be better to have a four-foot planting section and six-foot sidewalks on both sides.

A motion to amend the current draft in regard to flexible access to accept Option C was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Villaveces.

The motion carried 4-3 with Chair Goepple and Commissioners Villaveces, Khanloo and Ferris voting in favor, and Vice Chair Cálad and Commissioners Lu and Bhargava voting again.

Turning to the topic of sidewalks along commercial driveways and public streets, Nick Whipple recommended reducing the sidewalk width from ten feet to six feet for commercial driveways, which is in line with what the property owners had asked for, while maintaining a ten-foot sidewalk requirement on existing public streets like 116th Avenue, 120th Avenue, NE 8th Street and NE 4th Street.

A motion to adopt to adopt the staff recommendation of Option B in regard to commercial driveways and sidewalks was made by Chair Goepple. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ferris and the motion carried unanimously.

With regard to non-motorized options, Nick Whipple explained that active transportation corridors are used to frame a block and apply to sites that are larger than 105,000 square feet, excluding areas adjacent to I-405 and 116th Avenue, with an exception added for Beta Bellevue due to challenges posed by the Sound Transit guideway. The current draft, shown as option A, requires a 20-foot paved path with two five-foot amenity zones designed strictly for non-motorized use. Property owners requested reducing the corridor width to 20 feet total, effectively

eliminating the amenity zones, and expanding allowed uses to include back-of-house activities such as garbage pickup and incidental loading. The staff hold the view that permitting an expansion of the use of the corridors would change the function from an active transportation route and create significant impacts such as increased trips for trash collection, as exemplified by the Pinnacle project which has trash pickup amounting to 200 trips per week. Nick Whipple suggested a compromise, allowing the corridor to also function as a fire lane while maintaining restrictions to preserve its primary role as an active transportation route.

Commissioner Ferris voiced support for Option A, the current draft. Commissioner Khanloo concurred. Dr. Kate Nesse confirmed that to go with Option A would not require a vote.

Chair Goepple allowed not being sold on the idea of requiring amenity zones for active transportation access and voiced support for Option C.

Commissioner Villaveces indicated support for Option B.

Commissioner Khanloo reminded the Commissioners that Wilburton is to be a walkable transit oriented development area. Active transportation corridors fit with the vision, as does Option A.

Commissioner Lu said the feedback from the community in regard to active transportation is valid. There is a need for things like garbage pickup and incidental loading, which are not likely to be frequent. Support was stated for Option B. Vice Chair Cálad and Commissioner Bhargava agreed. Chair Goepple voiced a change of mind and also supported Option B.

A motion to amend the draft to incorporate Option B with regard to active transportation was made by Commissioner Lu. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bhargava. The motion carried 5-2, with Chair Goepple, Vice Chair Cálad and Commissioners Bhargava, Villaveces and Land use voting in favor, and Commissioners Ferris and Khanloo voting against.

Nick Whipple said the shared use path option was added to the mix in October in response to a desire from the Commission and the stakeholders to allow for smaller access types that could be used to frame a block. Share use paths are focused on wheeled users and pedestrians. Under Option A, the staff recommendation, the width is driven by the 14-foot minimum width transportation standard for a multiuse path. Some stakeholders requested reducing the width to ten feet.

Commissioner Villaveces commented that with Eastrail serving as a spine running through the community, ten-foot shared use paths would be appropriate, which would be Option B. Chair Goepple also voiced Option B, as did Vice Chair Cálad. The other Commissioners supported Option A. With the majority supporting the current draft, no change was made.

Nick Whipple also noted that the Commission had asked staff to return with an option regarding off-street parking. Accordingly, Option A, which is the current draft, reflects a 75% reduction from the citywide parking minimums. The other option would be to have no minimum parking requirement within the TOD area.

Chair Goepple and Commissioners Ferris and Villaveces voiced support for Option A.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Khanloo, Nick Whipple explained that Option A would reduce by 75 percent what would otherwise apply in the city.

Staff explained the rationale behind selecting a 75% reduction based on previous feedback and scenarios studied, noting that the intent was to balance flexibility with practical considerations. Commissioners expressed mixed views, with some favoring fewer regulations and others supporting staff's recommended reduction. Discussion concluded without a definitive decision, highlighting the complexity and varied perspectives on parking policy.

Commissioner Lu suggested the relative impact between the two options is minimal. Given that, the path of less regulation is the better choice, which would be Option B, the potential adjustment of having no minimal parking requirement.

Commissioner Bhargava expressed alignment with Commissioner Lu, emphasizing the importance of flexibility due to the current lack of clarity and voicing support for option B, prioritizing flexibility over rigid mandates.

The majority of Commissioners favored keeping the draft as originally proposed with regard to off-street parking, which was Option A.

Moving to small-site flexibility, which the Commission also asked the staff to take a look at, Nick Whipple said the issue specifically addresses the challenges faced by smaller sites, defined as 40,000 square feet or less, in achieving the necessary FAR to meet the targeted density. It was explained that the staff proposed would allow residential projects on small sites to unlock full the development capacity, including height and FAR, if they meet green building certification and the baseline affordable housing requirements, either through fees in-lieu or on-site provisions. It was clarified that the approach would not require developments to exceed the baseline affordable housing requirements.

A motion to amend the original motion to include the adjustment for small sites as recommended by the staff which is to allow residential projects to achieve full development capacity through green building incentives and the baseline requirement for the provision of affordable housing was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lu.

Commissioner Villaveces asked if the option was all or nothing or if a developer could choose to pick and choose. Nick Whipple said the staff favored giving the flexibility for developers to unlock the full development capacity by going the green building and affordable housing route in some combination. With that understanding, Commissioner Villaveces noted support for the proposed adjustment.

Chair Goepple asked if there were any other issues related to flexibility for small sites the Commission should discuss. Nick Whipple said it was only topic brought forward. While Brierwood has been discussed, it is not a small site by definition. There are already other flexibilities the Commission has directed for small sites. With the explanation, Chair Goepple noted being good with the recommendation.

A motion to amend the motion on the floor to include flexibility by not mandating that projects provide green buildings and affordable housing was made by Commissioner Villaveces. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ferris and the motion carried unanimously.

The main motion as amended carried unanimously.

Commissioner Villaveces asked about the threshold for small sites. Nick Whipple said that 40,000 is consistent with how small sites are defined elsewhere in the city.

Turning to the topic of affordable housing fees, Nick Whipple said the aim is to balance development feasibility with the affordability objectives. Five factors were evaluated, but three are most closely related to the proposed fee, namely the public subsidies needed to bridge the affordability gap, the developer investment losses per square foot for including affordable units, and comparisons to neighboring cities. The annual rent loss divided by an assumed capitalization rate of 5.5 percent, which is deemed to be generous, yields the return on investment loss over the investment period, which is spread over the square footage of the building. The stakeholders were correct in noting that staff was assuming a higher rent can be asked for highrise development. That is why there is a delta between districts that allow for 100-foot buildings and those that allow 400-foot buildings.

Chair Goepple voiced appreciation for the careful and thorough analysis done by the staff but expressed a preference for the stakeholder recommendations of \$13 per square foot for residential fees and \$16.50 per square foot for commercial fees, recognizing the alignment between the development community and the affordable housing stakeholders.

Commissioner Villaveces said the two pathways forward for achieving the goal of providing more affordable housing, performance and fee in-lieu, are not the same and cannot be directly compared with each other. Two factors, namely the cost to build affordable housing and the Nexus and proportionality findings, were not communicated well and failed to consider what the market can support given high maximum fees. Balance will come by way of the lowest cost for achieving the outcome and the highest cost that will support development without precluding it. Bellevue's target is 5700 affordable housing units over ten years, and Wilburton's allocation is 12 percent of that, or 684 affordable units over ten years. The development capacity of Wilburton is based on 7.4 million square feet of developable land in the form of 101 parcels, excluding the MI parcels. Based on the current zoning and certain assumptions, total development works out to 63.4 million square feet. The fee in-lieu that can be collected from the development capacity at \$13 per square foot works out to \$825 million. Assuming unit costs of \$314 per square foot, excluding land, and an average unit size of 900 square feet, the average cost per unit is \$280,000. Under those numbers, the potential number of units that could be funded from collecting the fee in-lieu is \$2,920, or 51 percent of the total city target and four times the target for Wilburton. It does not appear that a fee of \$13 per square foot is too low.

Commissioner Khanloo said she did not have any questions.

Commissioner Ferris suggested the numbers calculated from the staff study are spot on. However, it would be wise to accept the suggestion of the Roundtable. It is better to err on the side of making sure development will happen.

Commissioner Lu commented that any data-driven decision at the base level involves speculation on the data itself. Though attempted, it was difficult to replicate the staff calculations, specifically the 5.5 percent cap rate, without significantly adjusting rents or arbitrarily changing land values. Given the economic uncertainties, the Commissioner advocated for focusing on current known conditions rather than potential future variances and expressed support for recognizing the fees at \$13 and \$16.50 per square foot.

Commissioner Bhargava expressed difficulty in reaching a decision, even after having extensively reviewed the data and consulting with stakeholders. The validity of the arguments from both sides concerning the fee calculations were acknowledged and the wisdom in considering current economic conditions, including rising interest rates and persistent high

construction costs, was emphasized. Future market shifts can be expected, but support should be given to the current recommendation of \$13 and \$16.50. The importance of adaptability in future evaluations was stressed.

Vice Chair Cálad acknowledged the substantial efforts made by staff, the Roundtable, the Commissioners and the public, and recognized the complexity and difficulty of the issue.

A motion to amend the draft to reflect Option B, the stakeholders request, for the affordable housing fees was made by Commissioner Ferris and seconded by Commissioner Villaveces. The motion carried unanimously.

Turning to the issue of a catalyst program, Nick Whipple acknowledge receipt of an updated request from the Roundtable and emphasized the alignment between staff and stakeholders in introducing a phased approach to mandatory affordable housing in Wilburton. As structured, the program would initially reduce residential on-site affordable housing requirements by half to five percent for the first 500 units. The staff suggestion is to tie that to issued building permits, later reverting to the full requirement of ten percent set aside at 80 percent of area median income. Developers opting to pay fees instead of providing on-site affordable units would receive a 25 percent fee reduction from the approved rate of \$13 across the board. The discount would similarly apply to the initial 500 units permitted, after which full fees apply. The fees are proposed to adjust annually based on the Consumer Price Index.

For commercial development, the proposal includes a 25 percent fee reduction for the first 600,000 square feet receiving issued building permits. Additionally, recognizing community interest in supporting life science developments, a 50 percent fee reduction would apply to the first 500,000 square feet specifically for life science uses, separate from general commercial space.

The proposal emphasizes instituting regular evaluations or "look-backs" to assess the effectiveness of fee structures and their impact on attracting or deterring development. Formalizing the review process through code or ordinance is recommended to ensure consistent commitment and adjustments.

There are differences between what the stakeholders have requested and the staff proposal. Some of them relate to when a project vests to the benefits. Under the staff proposal, projects would get the benefits of the catalyst program at the building permit stage, meaning benefits would become available only after permits are issued and actual construction is about to start. The staff believe the approach aligns better with the goal of delivering housing and infrastructure in line with Wilburton's vision. Under the stakeholder proposal, developers would lock in reduced fees or lower set-asides when submitting a land use application. The entitlement process includes a land use permit, which is where proposals are unveiled. The subsequent revision cycles can take anywhere from one to three years before getting issued. The approach would lock in the benefit while the projects are being reviewed. The stakeholder recommendation includes a condition that they must submit building permits within one year to maintain the benefits.

Nick Whipple expressed concern about the stakeholder approach, suggesting it might not strongly incentivize timely construction, noting instances where developers extend permits without moving forward. It was acknowledged that setting expiration timelines on the benefits could mitigate the speculative risks. The stakeholder request is aligned on the five percent on the first 500 units, and the subsequent ten percent, but seeks vesting the benefits at the land use application stage or June 1, 2026, whichever occurs later. Additionally, the stakeholder approach

would allow projects to vest more units with the reduced fee, up to 1000 units, with the full fee applicable only after the initial 500 units are vested. There is also a request to suppress the fee at the reduced rates until at least June 1, 2027, or until 750 units are vested, whichever happens later.

For commercial development, the stakeholders request would vest fees at the land use application stage or June 1, 2026, whichever is later, with a hard maximum of 600,000 square feet. No fee adjustment would occur until after 850,000 square feet are vested or June 1, 2027, whichever is later. The stakeholders also requested a 50 percent reduction in fees for research and development and medical offices without a square footage cap, available until June 1, 2028. Furthermore, the stakeholders prefer reviewing the effectiveness of the program after three years instead of staff's proposed five-year review period.

Chair Goepple voiced support for the staff recommendation.

Commissioner Villaveces expressed concern about the issue of vesting. The goal of the catalyst program is to get construction going. There are high financial risks for developers under staff's proposal. Support was voiced for the suggestion of the stakeholders with the added condition of a benefit expiration period to incentivize timely progression.

Commissioner Ferris noted support for the approach recommended by the stakeholders.

Commissioner Lu agreed, particularly in regard to R&D and medical office.

Commissioner Bhargava supported the need for flexibility. Given the timelines involved, projects could see their catalyst benefits lost to another project. The risks could deter the desired outcomes. Commissioner Bhargava agreed with the notion of including an expiration date to keep things moving forward. A preference for the stakeholder request was noted.

Vice Chair Calad recognized the effort that everyone has put into these options.

Chair Goepple asked for input regarding the stakeholder-requested time period during which projects must seek a building permit. Nick Whipple voiced the understanding that the benefit could be locked in at the land use application phase, but the benefit could only be retained if progress is made. As noted, projects would have one year to submit a building permit in order to retain the benefits. With that explanation, Chair Goepple voiced support for the stakeholder request.

Commissioner Khanloo emphasized the expiration date included in the stakeholder request. Nick Whipple said that staff would follow up with the stakeholders to make sure all of the nuances of the proposal are captured.

A motion to amend the original motion to adopt the stakeholder request regarding the catalyst program was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lu and the motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair Calad asked for any discussion on any other topics that were not covered in slides.

Commissioner Villaveces called for flexibility in 20.20.525 to allow siting mechanical equipment in the middle of buildings and still gain an extra floor. Additionally, the language regarding lot dimensions needs to be very clear in terms of how they are measured.

The original motion as amended carried unanimously.

9. OTHER BUSINESS – None
(10:00 p.m.)

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
(10:00 p.m.)

A. February 12, 2025

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Chair Goepple and the motion carried unanimously.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None
(10:01 p.m.)

12. ADJOURNMENT
(10:01 p.m.)

A motion was adjourn was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Chair Goepple and the motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair Cálad adjourned the meeting at 10:01 p.m.



Kate Nesse
Staff to the Planning Commission

04/15/2025

Date