

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC

Recommended Omnibus Land Use Code Amendment and proposed Bellevue City Code Amendments to address clean-up amendments in the Land Use Code, amendments required for compliance with state law, and minor amendments which require limited policy consideration and clearly advance established priorities.

Jake Hesselgesser, Acting Director
Nick Whipple, Assistant Director, Code and Policy
Development Services Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**DIRECTION**

Staff will introduce the recommended Omnibus Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) and the proposed Bellevue City Code Amendment (BCCA). Planning Commission Chair Khanloo will present the Planning Commission recommendation approving the LUCA without modification. The Resolution documenting this recommendation is included as Attachment A.

Following discussion, staff is seeking City Council direction to prepare the LUCA and BCCA for final action at a future meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Consider directing staff to finalize the Omnibus LUCA and BCCA Ordinances for final action at a future meeting.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**Background**

Staff continuously collect and document potential Land Use Code (LUC) clean-up items and periodically address them through clean-up LUCAs. Historically, these amendments have been limited to spelling corrections, outdated cross-references, scrivener's errors, and minor edits intended to clarify code intent. The city last completed a clean-up LUCA in 2022.

For this cycle, the approach directed by the council expands the scope to include amendments necessary for minimum compliance with state law, as well as small-scale code edits that require limited policy direction and are not expected to be controversial. The amendments are also limited to topics not already being addressed through other ongoing or upcoming projects. City Council directed this approach when the project was initiated on February 3.

Strike drafts of the recommended clean-up amendments are included in Attachments B through F. The amendments are organized into separate strike drafts because they generally address different subject areas. Accordingly, if directed by the council to return for final action, the amendments would be presented as separate ordinances corresponding to those distinct subjects.

These proposed changes are referred to as "omnibus" amendments because Development Services combines a collection of relatively small, discrete amendments into a single process for administrative

efficiency. The omnibus package includes both LUCAs, which are reviewed by the Planning Commission, and related Bellevue City Code Amendments (BCCAs) affecting development regulations.

The primary goal of this project is to improve the clarity and usability of the code by addressing as many clean-up items as possible to support consistent review and application. The project also provides an opportunity to incorporate minor code amendments that better implement established policy but do not warrant separate workplan items. In addition, the project will ensure continued compliance with state law.

Planning Commission Review

The recommended LUCA includes three categories of amendments: technical clean-ups and process improvements; updates necessary to achieve minimum compliance with state law; and low-controversy amendments intended to better implement established city policy direction. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended forwarding the LUCA to City Council. The Commission also unanimously recommended adding an amendment to the East Main portion of the Land Use Code to establish a residential fee-in-lieu option consistent with the existing commercial fee-in-lieu amount. While not originally included in the LUCA scope, the Commission directed staff to add the item in response to public feedback.

Clean-Up and Process Improvements

Recommended amendments in this category include:

- Correcting cross-references and inconsistent formatting
- Adding and revising definitions for clarity
- Consolidating duplicate process-related code into citywide sections
- Clarifying extended vesting provisions to reflect current policy and practice
- Other minor code clarifications that do not require additional policy direction

State Law Compliance

The recommended LUCA includes amendments necessary to achieve minimum compliance with recently adopted state legislation, including:

- SB 5611, Streamlining and Clarifying Land Use Permitting
- SB 5571, Building Cladding
- HB 1757, Residential Redevelopment
- SB 5509, Childcare Reform
- SB 5559, Unit Lot Subdivision
- HB 1096, Lot Splitting
- HB 1183, Building Code and Development Regulation Reform

Low-Controversy Updates

Additional amendments were evaluated based on consistency with adopted city policy, limited anticipated impacts to stakeholders, and whether the amendments could be implemented without extensive additional outreach or analysis. This category also includes targeted refinements to recently adopted regulations, including Wilburton and Middle Housing provisions.

Recommended changes include:

- Tree code updates, including allowing property line trees to count as one-half credit and aligning

SR-1 retention requirements with other SR districts

- Consolidation and clarification of permitting processes for Master Development Permits, Administrative Design Permits, departures, and process mergers
- Removal of single-family residential as a permitted use in higher-density residential and mixed-use zones, while continuing to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) with middle housing

The tree code adjustments respond to implementation feedback and are intended to provide greater flexibility while encouraging tree retention. The process changes are intended to simplify and clarify permitting requirements and review procedures. The removal of single-family residential as a permitted use in the city's highest-density zones is intended to better align zoning regulations with planned future land uses and support the city's housing growth and capacity goals.

Public Engagement

Staff followed a public engagement plan with three outreach methods to inform the public, stakeholders, and interested parties about the proposed amendments and provide opportunities for comment.

- Process IV Requirements. Consistent with Chapter 20.35 LUC procedural requirements, public input will be solicited through a notice of application, notice of public hearing, and public hearing.
- Direct Engagement and Feedback. Staff will engage with the development community and residents through outreach efforts, including Bellevue Development Committee (BDC) meetings.
- Online Presence. The city webpage will provide project information, staff contacts, and instructions for submitting comments.

LUCA Schedule

The Omnibus Amendments were initiated by the council on February 3. The Planning Commission completed their review of the LUCA on May 13, and council review will happen on June 9 with council action anticipated for July. This schedule is intended to ensure compliance with state law changes that must be implemented by the statutory deadline in summer 2026.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

Code changes recommended in the Omnibus Amendments either align with existing policy or are required for compliance with state law.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with the Omnibus Amendments.

OPTIONS

1. Direct staff to finalize the Omnibus LUCA and BCCA Ordinances for final action at a future meeting.
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Planning Commission Resolution
- B. Clean-Up Amendments Strike Draft
- C. Development Regulations Strike Draft
- D. Trees, Landscaping, and Environment Strike Draft
- E. Process Changes Strike Draft
- F. Bellevue City Code Amendments

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N/A