



Bellevue Planning Commission

January 22, 2025

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING ITEM

SUBJECT

Public Hearing on the proposed Objective Design Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) to implement House Bill 1293. File No. 24-120021-AD.

STAFF CONTACT(S)

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POLICY ISSUES

In 2023, the Washington State Legislature adopted [House Bill \(HB\) 1293](#) amending the Growth Management Act, Chapter 36.70A RCW (GMA), requiring many cities to amend their codes to only contain design regulations that are clear and objective, as well as restrictions on the design review process itself.

This project will include changes to the Land Use Code (LUC), and will apply citywide where design regulations exist, which will primarily impact design district overlays that contain site and building design regulations. The goal of HB 1293, as passed by the state, is to improve clarity of requirements and help to reduce permitting timelines for design review.

The Comprehensive Plan contains a number of policies that this LUCA will help to implement. A few of the policies around helping to streamline the permitting process and provide more objectivity in the development regulations include:

- **HO-15:** Streamline permitting processes and create objective development regulations that encourage housing development throughout the city.
- **ED-7:** Provide an efficient, streamlined, timely, predictable and customer-focused permit process, conducted in a manner that integrates multiple city departments into a coordinated entity.

The Comprehensive Plan also includes an Urban Design & the Arts element that provides a design framework for guiding development within the city, recognizing the value of how the built environment works through both form and function to create spaces that are attractive and inviting for all people. The refinements provided in this LUCA make the design requirements in the code that provide the framework for the design of these spaces more explicit, which will ultimately help implement the goal of the element to enhance the city's diverse neighborhoods.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION

DIRECTION

INFORMATION ONLY

Following discussion on the proposed LUCA on December 11, and prior discussion on October 23, the Planning Commission directed staff to schedule a public hearing. Tonight, the Commission will be asked

to hold the public hearing on the proposed LUCA, and following the Public Hearing, either make a recommendation on the proposed LUCA or direct staff to schedule a subsequent meeting during which a recommendation will be made.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Staff held two study sessions for this LUCA. The first study session introduced the Planning Commission to HB 1293, the scope of the LUCA, and the methodology and process utilized for the strike drafts for the Downtown District (Part 20.25A of the Land Use Code (LUC)). Staff received input from the Planning Commission on the proposed LUCA to Part 20.25A LUC, as well as public comments on the LUCA.

The second study session focused on the remainder of the strike draft outside of the Downtown District and the full strike draft was included with the packet materials. Staff communicated as a part of the presentation for the second study session that there will be additional strike draft code provided at the public hearing that will include revisions to sign code that will have a delayed adoption date to coincide with the adoption of the sign code project at a future date. A staff report describing the background, review process, and this LUCA's compliance with the decision criteria, is included with this Memorandum as Attachment A. A strike draft of the proposed LUCA is provided as Attachment B and a strike-draft of the proposed sign-related provisions is included as separate attachment C so that it can be processed to take effect at a later date than the remainder of the strike draft.

At the December 11, 2024 study session, Planning Commission comments were limited to asking for staff to look for additional opportunities to tighten up the language and look for further opportunities to provide more objective language. Staff kept these comments in mind during final review of the strike draft, making a few additional updates to align with these suggestions. At this study session, the Planning Commission also directed staff to prepare and schedule the LUCA for a Public Hearing and asked for an update on any LUCA language adjustments to be presented at that time.

Prior comments were received from Planning Commission and the public at the first study session on October 23, 2024. Those comments and staff response are detailed in the December 11, 2024 agenda memo that is available for review [here](#).

Public Engagement

1. Process IV Requirements. Process consistent with Chapter 20.35 LUC procedural requirements to provide opportunities for public comment, including:
 - Notice of Application
 - Public hearing on the proposed LUCA
2. Direct Engagement and Feedback.
 - Presentation to the Bellevue Development Community at in-person meetings.
 - Development Services newsletter write-up with link to City webpage
3. Online Presence. City webpage to provide opportunities for the public to stay informed and to request additional information, including:
 - Staff contact
 - Information on the LUCA and LUCA schedule

LUCA Schedule

Date	Topic Areas
October 23, 2024	<u>Planning Commission Study Session #1:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and direction on Downtown, Part 20.25A LUC strike draft
December 11, 2024	<u>Planning Commission Study Session #2:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study session on remaining strike draft sections
January 22, 2025	<u>Planning Commission Public Hearing and Recommendation:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Commission has the option to make a recommendation at any point after the public hearing
(To be Scheduled)	<u>City Council Study Session:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present Planning Commission recommendation to City Council
(To be Scheduled)	<u>City Council Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final ordinance for City Council action

ATTACHMENT(S)

- A. Objective Design Staff Report
- B. Objective Design LUCA Strike Draft
- C. Objective Design LUCA Strike Draft – Signs Only
- D. Objective Design LUCA Adoption Resolution