



Bellevue Planning Commission

July 22, 2026

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT

Final Review Public Hearing on Evans Plaza Comprehensive Plan Amendment

STAFF CONTACTS

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Community Development Department

POLICY ISSUES

Staff recommend the Planning Commission amend the applicant's proposal from Lowrise 2 Mixed Use to Lowrise 1 Mixed Use and approve the proposed Evans Plaza Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) as it would accommodate future mixed-use residential development in a Neighborhood Center in line with the growth strategy for Bellevue, as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, and support the health and vitality of residential areas by planning for Neighborhood Centers.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION	DIRECTION	INFORMATION ONLY
☒	☐	☐
Request	Summary Guidance	
1. Conduct a Final Review public hearing for the proposed amendment	Direct staff to first review and present the staff recommendation, then open the public hearing and accept public testimony. Close the public hearing.	
2. Conduct a study session following the public hearing to make a recommendation	Review the staff recommendation, public record, and consider the public testimony. Ask questions of staff; review the proposed resolution.	
3. Take action on a recommendation	The Commission uses a resolution to the City Council for the recommendation action. Take action to provide Planning Commission recommendation by resolution.	

Annual CPA proposals are reviewed by the Planning Commission and acted upon by the City Council through the Final Review process set forth in the Land Use Code at [LUC 20.30I](#). Final Review evaluates the merits of proposed amendments included in the annual CPA work program. Final Review evaluation includes staff review, a Planning Commission public hearing and recommendation by resolution, and City Council action by ordinance. The Planning Commission holds Final Review public hearings and

makes recommendations. The City Council's subsequent action on Planning Commission recommendations is the final City action to amend the Comprehensive Plan.

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

The Final Review Decision Criteria for a proposed CPA are set forth in [LUC 20.30I.150](#). Based on a review and application of the criteria, Community Development staff developed the Final Review recommendation. The staff report includes the Final Review Decision Criteria.

The staff recommendation for the proposed amendment is included in the recommendation summary below. The full staff report is available [online](#) (also included as **Attachment A**) and included in the report materials provided to the Planning Commission along with [the July 1, 2026, Notice of Final Review public hearing](#).

Summary of Recommendation

Staff recommend an alternative Lowrise 1 Mixed Use land use designation for the proposed map change, based on a review of the land use designations of Neighborhood Centers elsewhere in Bellevue, PineView's characteristics as a Neighborhood Center focused on office uses, and the site's limited transit access.

During the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, land use map changes were studied and implemented to allow for a mix of residential and commercial uses and low-rise buildings in most Neighborhood Centers. City Council provided direction at the time to only allow greater residential densities in a limited set of retail-focused Neighborhood Centers, in order to provide an opportunity for future redevelopment. Only three of the identified Neighborhood Centers – Kelsey Creek Shopping Center, Lake Hills Village, and Lakemont Village – have the Lowrise 2 Mixed Use designation, which allows for greater residential densities. Other Neighborhood Centers – such as Newport Hills Shopping Center, Northtowne Shopping Center, and BellEast Shopping Center – are more commonly mapped with Lowrise 1 Mixed Use, another mixed-use land use designation allowing for a similar mix of uses but at a lower scale and density than Lowrise 2 Mixed Use.

The Comprehensive Plan defines these land use designations as follows:

- Lowrise 1 Mixed Use: The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing, retail, service, office and complementary uses at **the lower end** of a low scale and density.
- Lowrise 2 Mixed Use: The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing, retail, service, office and complementary uses at **the higher end** of a low scale and density.

PineView is an office-focused Neighborhood Center with limited retail options, community gathering spaces and transit access to support higher residential densities. Access to nearby frequent, reliable transit service can be a rationale for allowing higher densities. Considering the site's limited transit access, future development could not be considered transit-oriented development as the site is not within one-half mile walking distance from Bellevue's frequent transit network.

Summary of Public Comment

Public comments received during the Final Review process are included in the public record and posted on the [Comprehensive Plan Amendments webpage](#). A total of 21 public comments from 14 individuals or organizations have been received to date. 15 comments were submitted by community members, one of which has voiced support for the proposal and 14 of which have expressed concerns. Four comments were submitted by or on behalf of the applicant in support of the application as submitted and in opposition to the later staff recommendation to consider an alternative land use designation for the proposed map change. Two comments were submitted by the King County

Wastewater Treatment Division (KCWTD) requesting the City to reach out to KCWTD if construction permit applications were to be received by the City to assess potential impacts on a nearby King County wastewater facility.

Concerns were mostly raised about the loss of existing businesses that would result from the site's redevelopment; the scale and intensity of future development and its impacts on the surrounding area and transportation network; whether the application meets the definition of "significantly changed conditions" as the Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2024; and, the presence of unused development capacity nearby, especially within the BelRed subarea.

Summary of Planning Commission Input

The Planning Commission reviewed the application during Threshold Review per the decision criteria for Threshold Review of a privately-initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendment at LUC 20.30I.140.

After reviewing the geographic scope of the application at the meeting on January 14, 2026, the Planning Commission directed staff to include an additional parcel – the corner parcel on the block (parcel number 272505-9167) – in the proposed amendment (see the location map at the end of the Staff Report, **Attachment A**). Following the Threshold Review public hearing on February 11, the Planning Commission found that the proposed amendment is consistent with all the Threshold Review decision criteria and made a recommendation to the City Council that the Evans Plaza proposal be included in the 2026 annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment work program.

On March 10, City Council voted unanimously to include the Evans Plaza proposal in the 2026 work program and, therefore, moving it to Final Review. On June 10, as part of Final Review, Planning Commission studied and reviewed the staff agenda memo to evaluate merit-based issues. During the June 10 meeting, the Planning Commission and community members provided comments on the proposed application and staff's recommendation to consider an alternative Lowrise 1 Mixed Use land use designation for the proposed map change, as outlined below.

The Planning Commission requested additional information about:

- Considering the proposed amendment as part of the Great Neighborhoods program
- Examples of comparable developments located farther from transit facilities
- Air quality considerations for future residential development
- Using the CPA process to require affordable commercial space
- Providing additional community engagement opportunities

Planning Commission also asked staff to provide additional detail as to whether the proposed amendment addresses "significantly changed conditions", per the Final Review Decision Criteria defined in the Land Use Code in Section 20.30I.150. Please see the Staff Report, which is available [online](#) and included as **Attachment A**, for a detailed evaluation of the recommendation against the decision criteria.

Great Neighborhoods Program

At the June 10 meeting, Planning Commission asked staff whether the proposed amendment could instead be considered as part of the Great Neighborhoods program, which provides a process for developing neighborhood area plans through extensive community engagement to define specific neighborhood values and policies.

As part of Threshold Review, staff evaluated whether the proposed amendment raises policy or land use issues that are more appropriately addressed by an ongoing work program approved by City Council,

such as the Great Neighborhoods program. As outlined in more detail in the staff report prepared for the Threshold Review Public Hearing on February 11, and in response to decision criteria LUC [20.30I.140](#), staff concluded that the proposed amendment does not raise such issues.

At the time of Threshold Review, Council had not directed staff to include Bridle Trails – the neighborhood area where the site is located – in either the current or upcoming 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 iterations of the Great Neighborhoods program. As it was undetermined when Bridle Trails would be part of the Great Neighborhood program, it was concluded that the proposed amendment could not be addressed by that ongoing work program in a timely manner. Furthermore, the annual Comprehensive Plan amendment process provides a specific mechanism by which the city may periodically modify its land use, development, or growth policies to reinforce the role of the Comprehensive Plan in guiding growth in Bellevue. The amendment process provides opportunities for applicants of privately initiated amendments to demonstrate a change in the Comprehensive Plan is warranted per the process steps and decision criteria provided in the Land Use Code.

Comparable Developments

At the June 10 meeting, Planning Commission asked staff to provide examples of comparable low-rise mixed-use developments located farther from transit facilities in Bellevue. Reflective of the city's growth strategy up until 2024, that type of development has not been built yet.

In line with Bellevue's growth strategy, the current Comprehensive Plan (Bellevue 2044) as well as the preceding 2015 Comprehensive Plan directs most of the city's growth and compact, mixed-use development to Downtown and other mixed use centers (BelRed, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria, and Wilburton), which are all characterized by strong connections to transit. With the 2024 periodic update, the Comprehensive Plan now also designates Neighborhood Centers as appropriate locations for compact, mixed-use development as well. Neighborhood Centers are located throughout the city but not necessarily near frequent transit currently.

Lake Hills Village provides an example of low-rise mixed-use development in one of Bellevue's Neighborhood Centers, though Lake Hills Village is better served by transit. The staff presentation will provide images of Lake Hills Village and other low-rise mixed-use developments located near transit in Bellevue to provide additional context. The Comprehensive Plan was adopted in late 2024 and a subsequent land use code amendment (LUCA) to encourage housing opportunities in mixed-use areas (HOMA) was only passed earlier this year. Therefore, there are no known examples within Bellevue of comparable developments located further away from transit service. Since the site is not located near frequent transit, staff recommend amending the application to Lowrise 1 Mixed Use which provides for a lower scale of development than Lowrise 2 Mixed Use.

Air Quality Considerations for Future Development

Both the land use designation recommended by staff and the designation requested by the applicant would allow the proposed amendment site to be redeveloped with mixed-use residential development. Therefore, as Evans Plaza is located immediately north of SR-520, the proposed amendment would allow sensitive uses to be sited near a source of air and noise pollution. The Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Element provides policy direction to limit exposure to air pollution in (residential) developments:

LU-44. Promote measures to protect sensitive uses from risks of exposure to air and noise pollution by locating them away from pollution sources, where possible, or by use of feasible, effective building and site design measures to mitigate exposure.

LU-45. Design new development and encourage the retrofit existing buildings to improve indoor air quality and reduce resident exposure to air pollution.

LUCAs concerning other parts of the city near major highways sought to address air pollution consistent with these Comprehensive Plan policies. For example, the Wilburton LUCA included a code provision to locate, where feasible, sensitive uses further away from I-405 on sites within 500 feet of that highway. The draft BelRed LUCA, which is currently under development, includes similar language regarding BelRed properties.

The recently adopted HOMA LUCA – which applies to mixed-use areas located throughout the city and not necessarily near major highways – did not include provisions requiring sensitive uses to be separated from sources of air pollution. Therefore, the land use districts relevant to this proposed amendment do not impose site design requirements based on the site’s proximity to SR-520. The site currently includes at least one sensitive use, a childcare center. Redevelopment could address the location of sensitive uses although it would not be required to under the current land use code.

Additional Land Use Requirements for Affordable Commercial Space

Planning Commission asked staff if approving the proposed map change could be conditioned on the provision of affordable commercial space on-site. Individual land use approvals, such as CPAs and rezoning applications, are typically not conditioned in that way.

It is an established practice to develop Comprehensive Plan goals and policies that provide the basis for the adoption of regulations, programs and services, which implement the plan policies and apply generally. Business retention is a priority identified in City Council’s 2024-2026 Vision and Priorities, the Comprehensive Plan, and the 2026 Economic Development Plan. In implementing these policies, the City manages a range of programs, initiatives and strategies aimed at retaining businesses.

Direct business engagement by the City’s Cultural and Economic Development (CED) division is an important part of these efforts, such as monitoring Bellevue’s development pipeline to identify businesses at risk of displacement. At various stages when projects receive permit approvals, staff will visit the property with the goal of supporting each business’s transition to a new location. Additionally, Bellevue’s Small Business Development Center helps businesses, also those facing displacement or looking to relocate, including by accessing loans and other financing.

The recently adopted HOMA LUCA also reflects Council direction to minimize business displacement. Under HOMA code changes, incentives are available to encourage, 1) the location or retention on-site of affordable commercial space and 2) grocery stores, childcare, and non-profits. These incentives would be available to the property owner if the site is zoned Neighborhood Business (NB) or Community Business (CB) under the Lowrise 1 Mixed Use future land use designation, or Mixed Use 8-story (MU-8) under the Lowrise 2 Mixed Use future land use designation.

Providing Additional Community Engagement Opportunities

In response to Planning Commission’s request to consider providing additional opportunities for community engagement prior to tonight’s Final Review public hearing, staff have engaged the Bridle Trails Community Club’s (BTCC) leadership to identify options to reach Bridle Trails community members who haven’t already participated in the process. Staff previously presented at a January BTCC membership meeting, which was attended by approximately 60 community members, outlining opportunities for the community to engage during the CPA process. Staff subsequently had a follow-up meeting in February with several interested BTCC members to provide additional information and answer questions.

Following the June 10 meeting, staff have continued to utilize citywide publications to raise awareness across the city as well as provide updates to community members who are already engaged in the process. As coordinated with BTCC leadership, Community Development department leadership participated in the July 8 Neighborhood Walk and was available to answer Bridle Trails community members' questions related to this proposed amendment. The next section provides additional details on the community engagement and outreach efforts conducted to date.

AMENDMENT NOTICE

Notice of Application was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on December 31, 2025, and mailed and posted as required by [LUC 20.35.420](#).

Notice of Threshold Review Public Hearing, Staff Recommendation and Geographic Scoping was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on January 28, 2026, and included notice sent to parties of interest. Property owners within the 500-foot noticing perimeter of the site received official notice, as did people signed up to receive such notices.

A [Notice of Public Hearing was posted on July 1](#) along with this Staff Report (**Attachment A**) and the final SEPA threshold determination.

Effective Community Engagement, Outreach, and Public Comments

Applicants and community members are engaging across a variety of media in proactive community engagement and public participation during the 2026 annual CPA process. The City's early and continuous community engagement includes:

- Throughout the planning process, staff utilized citywide publications, such as Neighborhood News (three editions) and From Planning to Policy (two editions), to raise awareness and provide updates across the city.
- Official Weekly Permit Bulletin notices.
- Responsive early outreach to requests for information and to become parties of interest.
- Proactive communications to parties of interest providing updates and outline next steps.
- Responding to written public comments and returning phone calls.
- Updated Comprehensive Plan Amendments webpage on the City's website with application materials and next steps.
- A January 28 presentation to Bridle Trails Community Club's membership to provide an overview of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process, outlining opportunities for the community to engage during this process.
- A February 5 follow-up meeting with Bridle Trails Community Club members to provide additional information and answer questions.

Per policy direction provided by the Comprehensive Plan, staff encouraged the applicant to engage the community directly about the proposed amendment.

Public comments come in throughout the process. All written comments are included in the public record for reference and for use by decision-makers. At the various steps, the public comments received are included in the public record and posted on the [Comprehensive Plan Amendments webpage](#).

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Staff Report and SEPA Determination
- B. Future Land Use Map of Evans Plaza
- C. Planning Commission Resolution for the Evans Plaza CPA