

# **BelRed Look Forward Comprehensive Plan Amendment Environment Policy Updates**

## **Overview Presentation to ESC**

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# Direction Needed from Commission

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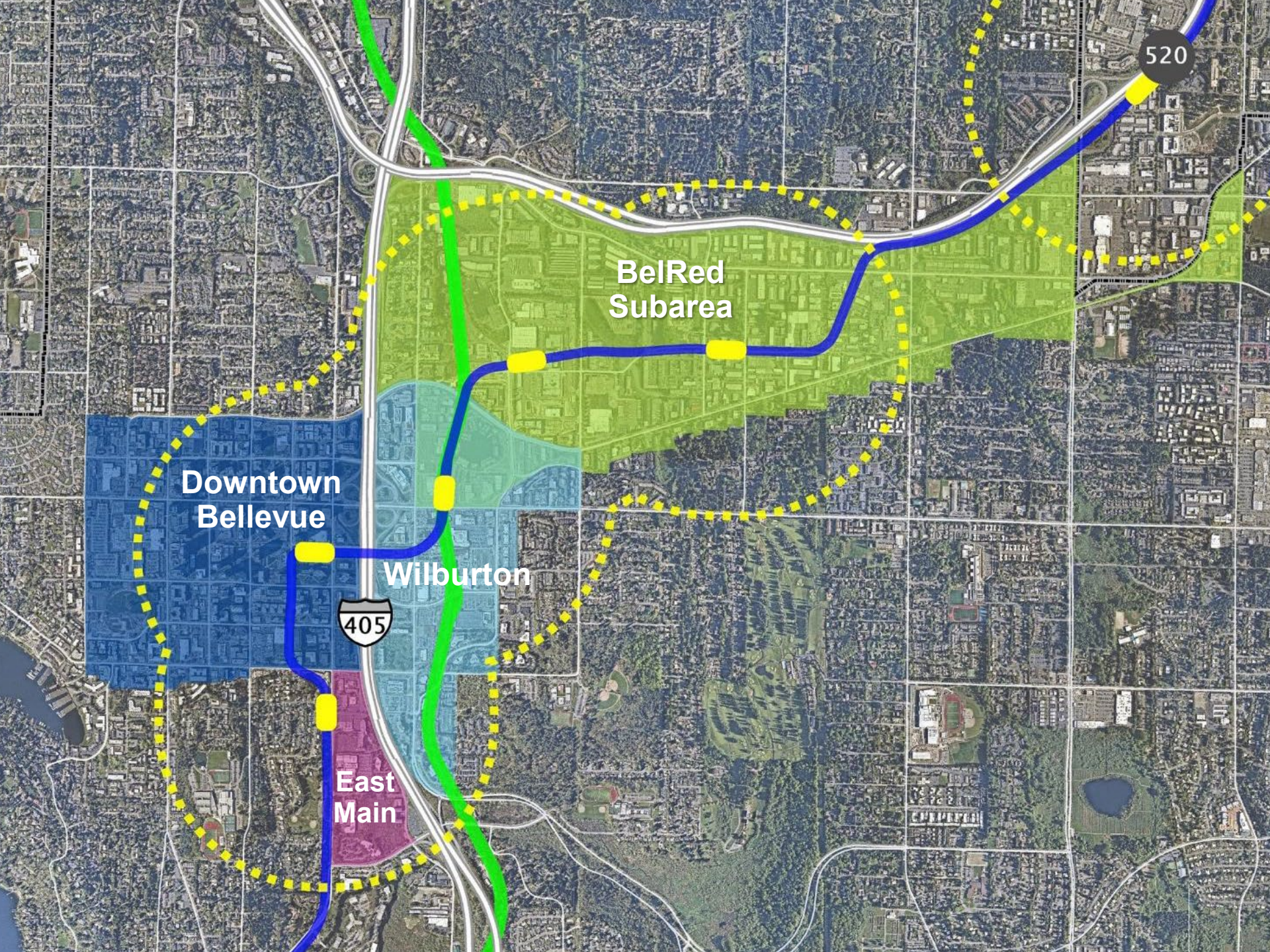
- Discuss proposed environmental policy amendments to the BelRed Subarea Plan and provide direction for revision, if needed.
- Approve recommendation for transmittal to the Planning Commission.



# Agenda

- History of BelRed and Overview of Subarea Plan and Planning Process
- Environmental Outcomes & Community Feedback
- Proposed Policy Changes
- Discussion and Action





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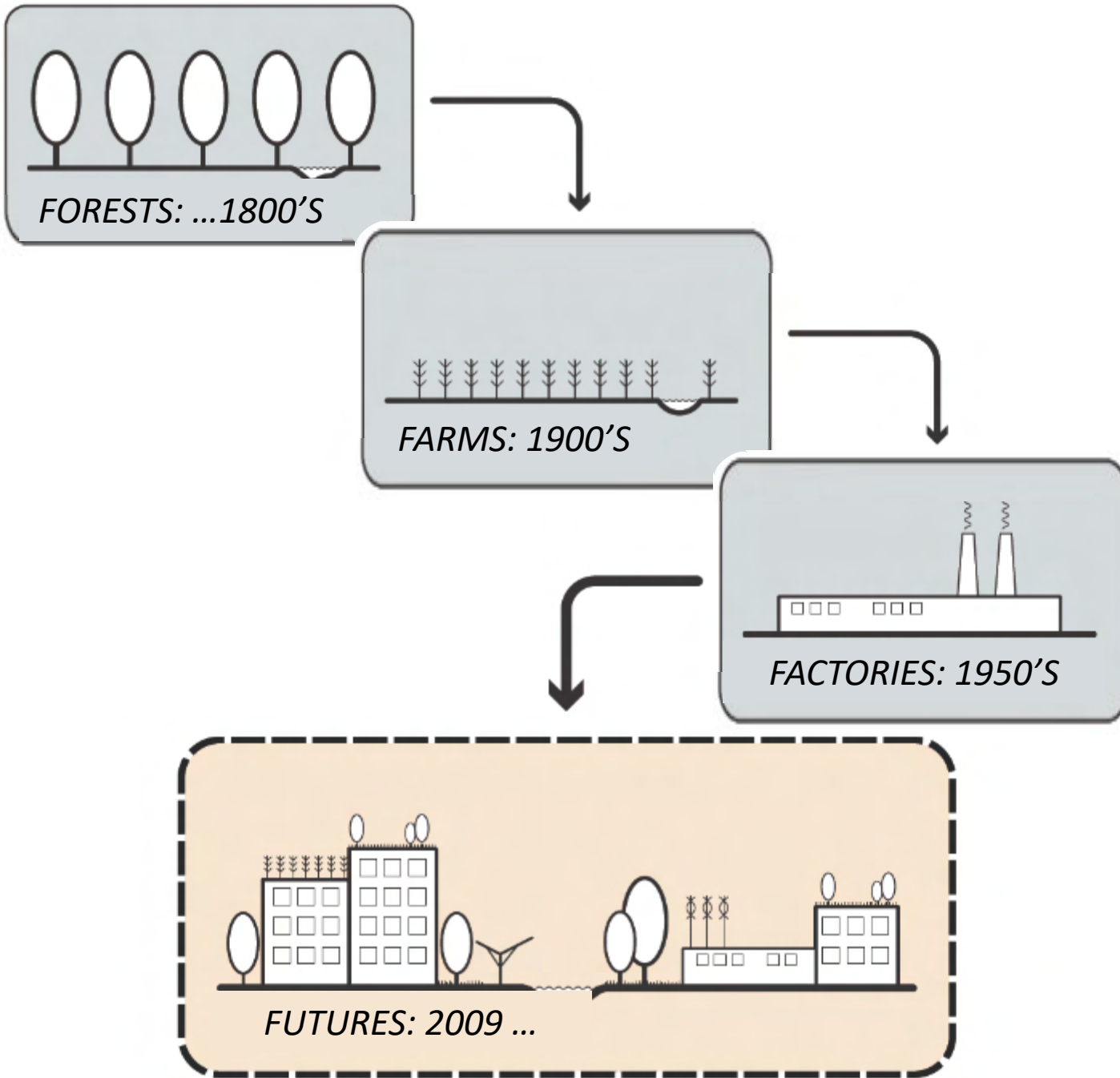
BelRed  
Subarea

Downtown  
Bellevue

Wilburton

405

East  
Main



# BelRed Subarea Plan

## What?

- One of Bellevue's 14 Subarea Plans part of Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan
- Contains policies that highlight unique aspects of the BelRed Subarea

## When?

- Adopted in 2009

## Why?

- Transform a declining industrial area into a model of smart growth and sustainability
- Anticipate light rail investment
- Accommodate new housing and job growth

## Bel-Red Subarea Plan

### GOAL:

To develop a sustainable urban development pattern that dramatically reshapes the future of the Bel-Red Subarea, while allowing the area to transition gracefully from its past.

### OVERVIEW

As one of Bellevue's major employment areas, the Bel-Red Subarea historically included a large share of the City's land zoned for light industrial and commercial uses. Particularly on the west end, land uses include sprawling, large lot warehouses and distribution buildings, with acres of surface parking. The transportation network is sparse and discontinuous, with little in the way of a street grid. Six streams run through the area, all heavily impacted by past development, but remarkably still provide some functioning fish habitat. The area has one major city recreational facility (Highland Park and Community Center), but no substantial neighborhood parks or trails.



View of Bel-Red Subarea looking west.

In recent years, Bel-Red's light industrial past has seen significant declines, and the area has been in transition. Several large employers, such as Safeway distribution and



# BelRed Vision

A broad range of housing at various levels of affordability,

A vibrant economy with a diverse mix of commercial uses,

A distinctive and sustainable urban form and design,

A comprehensive, connected parks and open space system,

A model of environmental sustainability with

- stream corridor restoration and use of natural drainage practices,
- expanded tree canopy, and
- environmentally sensitive design, and

A complete, connected and well-balanced multi-modal transportation system that contributes to BelRed's sense of place and sustainability.



# BelRed Look Forward

## *What?*

- A planning process resulting in a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to the BelRed Subarea Plan that updates both policies and land use designations

## *When?*

- Part of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update process launched in February 2022
- Adoption by Council anticipated in Q3 2024

## *Why?*

- To reflect new information
- To strengthen and clarify implementation strategies
- To increase capacity for housing and job growth





# POLICY REVIEW, RECOMMENDATION, AND ADOPTION TIMELINE

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

...

SEPTEMBER

## PUBLIC REVIEW

KEY POLICY  
MOVES

## BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION

ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES

ARTS

PARKS &  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICES

TRANSPORTATION

*Note: A Land Use Code Amendment process will follow adoption of the CPA, with adoption anticipated in mid-2025.*

## PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION AND CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION

LAND USE

PKS & ENV

TRANS,  
HOUSING,  
URBAN  
DESIGN,  
ARTS

PC PUBLIC HEARING &  
RECOMMENDATION

CITY  
COUNCIL  
ADOPTION



## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

# BelRed Vision

*Redevelopment of the corridor will provide opportunities for major environmental enhancements, including:*

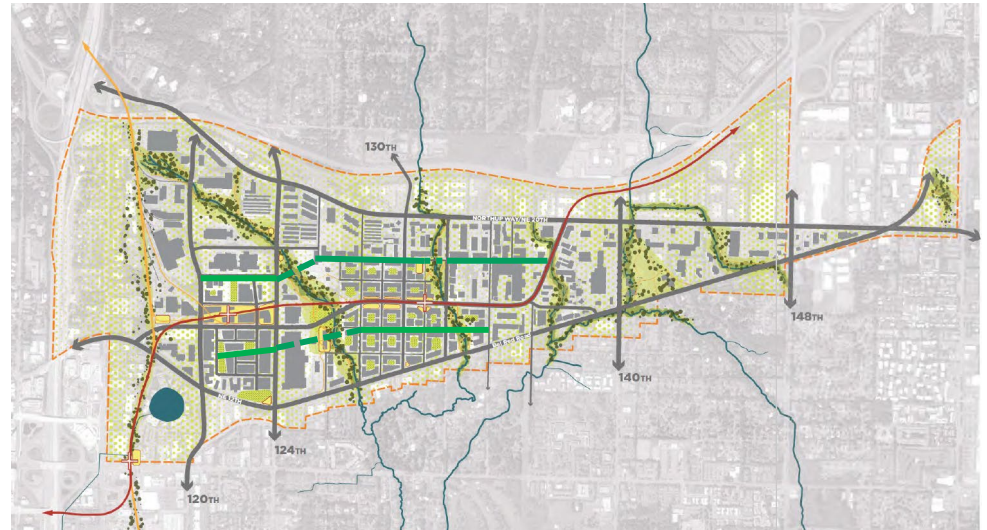
- improving riparian corridors,*
- adding trees and green spaces, and*
- providing a more environmentally sensitive approach to managing storm water and other natural resources.*



# Looking Back - Strengths

## Strengths

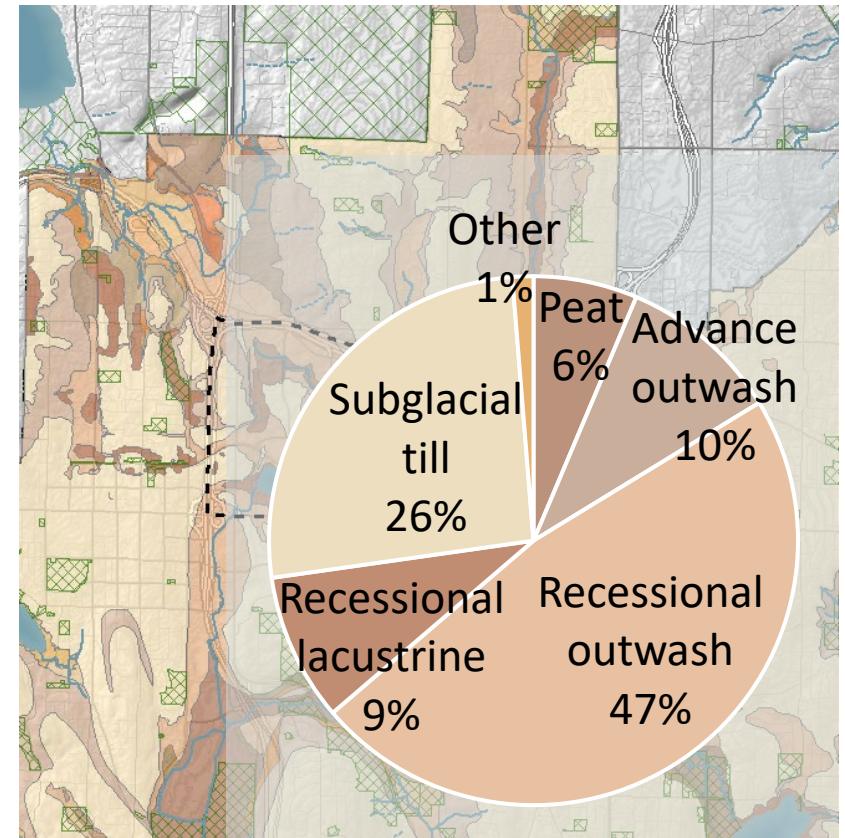
- Streams and wetlands provide a framework for improvements.
- “Green Streets” provide a basis for a network of natural drainage and connected corridors of trees and vegetation.
- 8.5 million dollars has been collected for parks and streams through the BelRed incentive system.



# Looking Back - Challenges

## Challenges

- Starting with a **deficit of pervious surface and tree canopy** *and a high water table.*
- **Daylighting streams** *and restoring riparian habitat can be cost prohibitive.*
- **Some conflicting requirements limit onsite natural drainage opportunities.**
- **Need for a coordinated surface and stormwater strategy for BelRed.**
- **Fees in lieu have not kept pace with rising land values.**



# Looking Forward

## Threats

- Increasing frequency, intensity, *and* duration of storm events.

## NEWS

### **Fires, floods, destruction: Washington copes with worsening climate change**

From rising sea levels and crop failures to dying forests and fish, Washington state is struggling

## Community Feedback

- Residents value *the city's* streams, lakes and wetlands *for* the role they play in a healthy ecosystem.
- Support expressed for reducing impervious surfaces, increasing natural drainage practices, and treating stormwater to protect water quality and reduce flooding.
- Support expressed for faster implementation.



# Environment Policy Moves

- **Updates** to streamline policies and clarify objectives to improve ecological function and resilience.
- **Updates** to explore and remove regulatory barriers to natural drainage practices.
- **Updates** to look for opportunities for regional surface and stormwater facilities that provide for a more coordinated and effective approach to flow control and water treatment.
- **Updates** to implementation policy to work cross departmentally to develop detailed rehabilitation and maintenance plans for stream corridors.
- **Updates** to remove redundant policies covered in Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan that apply citywide.



# Proposed Policy Repeals

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- Old S-BR-27
  - Redundant with Volume 1 policies CL-81 and CL-96 calling for protection and restoration of wetlands.
- Old S-BR-29
  - Removed; study completed.
- Old S-BR-31
  - Redundant with Volume 1 policies CF-20, CL-38, CL-60, UD-44, UT-13, and UT-38 requiring the use of low impact development and stormwater management best practices.
- Old S-BR-32
  - Redundant with Volume 1 policies CL-10 and UD-46 calling for incorporation of environmental interpretation into projects.



# Proposed Policy Modifications

- S-BR-45 and S-BR-46 (Old S-BR-26)
  - Split into two policies to clarify policy intent.
  - S-BR-45: The word “enhance” was replaced with “improve”
  - S-BR-46: Specifics removed to broaden language and streamline policy.
- S-BR-47 (Old S-BR-28)
  - Added language to remove regulatory barriers.
- S-BR-48 (Old S-BR-30)
  - Added language calling for cross departmental coordination.





# Proposed New Policy + Changes

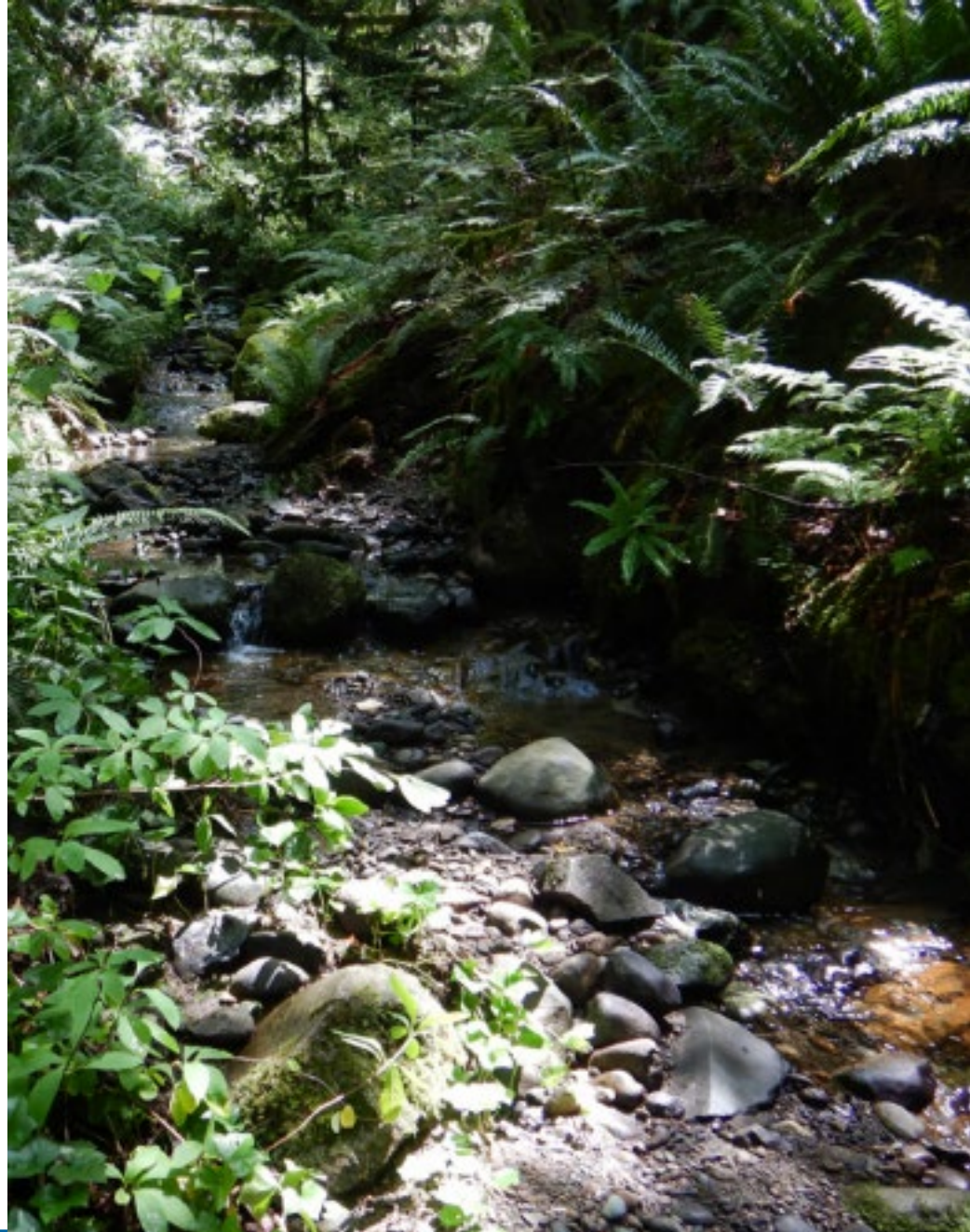
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- S-BR-98
  - Develop ~~detailed~~ rehabilitation and ~~maintenance~~ restoration plans for the West Tributary, Goff Creek, and Valley/Sears Creek riparian corridors to facilitate partnerships and coordinated strategies for improving water quality, flow control and wildlife habitat as well as for providing increased access/exposure to nature, aesthetic enhancements, and noise attenuation.



# Next Steps

- Staff will address suggested changes.
- Commission recommends policy changes to Planning Commission at March 5 meeting.



# Questions?

On Proposed Policies



# Proposed Policy Repeals

New Number	Old Number	Proposed Policy Amendment	Reason for Change/CPP/Note
<b>Environment (Repealed Policies)</b>			
	S-BR-29	Explore stormwater basin planning as a future step. Such planning might evaluate coordinated stormwater treatment and detention across multiple properties and may provide for broader environmental benefits as compared to a site-by-site approach.	Note: Removed; study completed.
	S-BR-31	Encourage the use of “green infrastructure”, the design and development of infrastructure projects in a manner that deliberately achieves multiple environmental and other public benefits. Discussion: Traditional infrastructure projects often were designed to solve a single functional problem, such as flood control. The concept of “green infrastructure” suggests that many infrastructure projects have the potential to provide multiple community benefits, such as enhancing neighborhood character and aesthetics, reducing urban heat reducing greenhouse gases and providing access and open space. If these multiple benefits are to be realized, they must be considered starting with early design work forward through all phases of project development.	<p>Note: Redundant with policies in Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, which as amended, would read:</p> <p>CF-20. Incorporate Low Impact Design (LID) standards and operational strategies into all relevant capital projects and ongoing maintenance.</p> <p>CL-38. Reduce runoff from streets, parking lots and other impervious surfaces and improve surface water quality by utilizing low impact development techniques in new development and redevelopment.</p> <p>CL-60. Implement the city-wide use of low impact development techniques and green building practices.</p>



# Proposed Policy Repeals cont.

New Number	Old Number	Proposed Policy Amendment	Reason for Change/CPP/Note
			<p>UD-44. Integrate low impact development principles early in the site design and development process to reduce the environmental impact of impervious surfaces.</p> <p>UT-13. Require Low Impact Development principles to minimize impervious surfaces and native vegetation loss on all infrastructure improvement projects.</p> <p>UT-38. Require the use of low impact development and stormwater best management practices where feasible to manage stormwater runoff, which may result in smaller facilities constructed on- and off-site for flow control, conveyance, and water quality.</p>
	S-BR-32	<p><del>Incorporate environmental education and interpretation into public and private projects, where appropriate.</del></p>	<p>Note: Redundant with policies in Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, which as amended, would read:</p> <p>CL-10. Incorporate environmental education and interpretation into public and private projects, where appropriate.</p>



# Proposed Policy Repeals cont.

New Number	Old Number	Proposed Policy Amendment	Reason for Change/CPP/Note
			UD-46. Incorporate interpretative or educational materials to highlight sustainable design components.
	S-BR-27	<p>Protect and enhance wetlands and other designated critical areas in Bel-Red, through the use of development regulations, incentives, and possibly public funds.</p> <p>Discussion: Special attention is needed if Bel-Red's critical areas are to be protected and restored, given that much Bel-Red development took place before standards were adopted to identify and protect these sites.</p>	<p>Note: Redundant with policies in Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, which as amended, would read:</p> <p>CL-81. Protect, restore and maintain shoreline, wetland and riparian habitats to reduce erosion, provide shade, protect water quality, provide habitat for fish and wildlife and improve the resilience of streams and aquatic species to climate change.</p> <p>CL-96. Use the best scientific information available in an adaptive management approach to preserve or enhance the functions and values of critical areas through regulations, programs, and incentives.</p> <p>Removed discussion; elements of which may be incorporated into preceding narrative.</p>



# Proposed Policy Modifications

New Number	Old Number	Proposed Policy Amendment	Reason for Change/CPP/Note
<b>Environment</b>			
<p><b>Goal:</b> To redevelop the Bel-Red area as a model of environmental sustainability, by minimizing the impact of population and employment growth and realizing opportunities provided by new development to rejuvenate BelRed's natural environment improving ecological functions and resiliency achieve significant improvements over current conditions.</p>			
S-BR-45	S-BR-26	Promote the rehabilitation of streams and their adjacent riparian corridors, through a combination of public investments and private development incentives, as a means to enhance/improve the natural environment and provide multiple public benefits. Provide land use incentives to achieve stream protection and rehabilitation that goes beyond what can be achieved through application of the city's critical area regulations, including building setbacks of up to 100 feet in specific locations, to provide enhanced stream buffers.	Note: Updated to clarify policy intent and split into two policies.
S-BR-46	S-BR-26	Provide land use incentives to achieve stream protection and rehabilitation that goes beyond what can be achieved through application of the city's critical area regulations, including building setbacks of up to 100 feet in specific locations, to provide enhanced stream buffers. Discussion: Bel-Red's six streams are a major part of the area's natural legacy. Rehabilitation of the streams will bear multiple benefits for the	Note: Updated to broaden language and streamline policy. Removed discussion; elements of which may be incorporated into preceding narrative.



# Proposed Policy Modifications

New Number	Old Number	Proposed Policy Amendment	Reason for Change/CPP/Note
S-BR-47	S-BR-28	<del>Encourage</del> <u>Explore and remove regulatory barriers to natural drainage practices where feasible in public and private projects, as an alternative to traditional stormwater treatment and control. Allow natural drainage practices to offset traditional environment, for Bel-Red properties where nearby streams can become a significant area amenity, and for the wider Bellevue community. These benefits include improved water quality, habitat enhancement, stormwater and flood control, human use buffering, aesthetic enhancements, noise attenuation, and potential trail access where easements are available.</u>	Note: Updated to reflect current challenge.
S-BR-48	S-BR-30	<del>Consider</del> <u>Look for cross departmental opportunities for off-site regional surface and stormwater facilities or coordinated stormwater mitigation, as a means to provide for a more coordinated and effective approach to detention-flow control and water quality treatment needs, and potentially to achieve broader environmental and community benefits.</u>  Discussion: In some cases, providing combined offsite stormwater mitigation may help achieve some of the broader objectives of this Plan. For example, several properties could combine stormwater management requirements on the West	Note: Updated to reflect the next opportunity. Removed discussion; elements of which may be incorporated into preceding narrative.





# Proposed Policy Modifications

New Number	Old Number	Proposed Policy Amendment	Reason for Change/CPP/Note
		Tributary by expanding an existing wetland providing fish and wildlife benefits, increasing open space, as well as providing stormwater detention and water quality treatment. Opportunities for off-site mitigation will be determined on a case-by-case basis, determined by overall ecological and public improvements over on-site.	



# Proposed Policy Addition

Implementation			
<p><b>Goal:</b> To ensure an ongoing and effective process, with the right tools available, to result in effective implementation of the BelRed subarea vision.</p>			
S-BR-98		<p><u>Develop detailed rehabilitation and maintenance plans for the West Tributary, Goff Creek, and Valley/Sears Creek riparian corridors to improve water quality, flow control and wildlife habitat as well as to provide increased access/exposure to nature, aesthetic enhancements, and noise attenuation.</u></p>	<p>Note: Added to support coordinated and detailed planning for stream corridor improvements in BelRed.</p>

## Recommended changes to proposed policy addition:

S-BR-98. Develop detailed rehabilitation and maintenance restoration plans for the West Tributary, Goff Creek, and Valley/Sears Creek riparian corridors to facilitate partnerships and coordinated strategies for improving water quality, flow control and wildlife habitat as well as for providing increased access/exposure to nature, aesthetic enhancements, and noise attenuation.

