

From: [Barb Braun](#)
To: [Council](#); [PlanningCommission](#)
Subject: Planning_Com_Comments_06212023.pdf
Date: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 6:36:21 PM
Attachments: [Planning_Com_Comments_06212023.pdf](#)

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Comments - Comprehensive Plan - Include Climate Element

Barbara Braun - Speaking on behalf of People For Climate Action

I live and work in Bellevue - 13609 SE 43rd Place

The City has a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050. The City has reaffirmed this commitment on numerous occasions including the recently adopted 2023-24 Federal Legislative Priorities.

People For Climate Action's assessment is that the Comp Plan DEIS is quite light on addressing the City's commitment to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and to meeting the targets. Our 20-year comprehensive plan needs to be pretty detailed and aggressive for the city to hit those lofty commitments. This needs to be rectified in the coming months and the final Comprehensive Plan should not be adopted without full confidence that our climate goals will be met.

The Washington Department of Commerce's Climate Element Review Group has been working on an optional Climate Element section guideline for Comprehensive Plans that should be included in the final EIS for Bellevue. The Guideline is supposed to be released this month, but we understand it may be delayed a few additional months.

Bellevue should adopt this guideline into our Comprehensive Plan even if this requires us to be a pilot city. The preferred Alternative should be analyzed on its ability to meet our climate goals using this Guideline. The Final EIS should include numerical estimates of future GHG emissions along with the key actions and mitigations required to enable us to achieve those measurable targets.

Again, the final Comprehensive Plan should not be adopted without full confidence that our climate goals will be met. The timing of the final EIS should be modified to allow time for the inclusion of this planning element, and the schedule for completing and adopting the Comprehensive Plan should be modified accordingly.

Bellevue needs to stand out as a large municipality who is taking climate action seriously and committed to making real, measurable progress.

Thank you!

From: [Steven Pestana](#)
To: [PlanningCommission](#)
Subject: Comments for 6/21 meeting on draft EIS
Date: Thursday, June 22, 2023 8:02:11 AM

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Good morning Planning Commission,

I wanted to send in my comments since I wasn't able to speak in person at the meeting yesterday.

I first want to thank the city staff for all their work around the growth alternatives and EIS, and the planning commission for their work too. I especially want to thank the staff for their presentation and for answering all the questions that came up - it was very informative, well put together, and helped me to better understand all the complexities of the process!

Second, I'd like to voice my support of much of what's recommended by staff with the draft EIS, and support moving even closer to the vision outlined by Alternative 3. Specifically, there are two opportunities I think the city could take in addition to what's already been recommended in the DEIS. Those are: prioritizing growth near all frequent transit stops, and allowing the creation of new neighborhood centers. My neighborhood doesn't currently have a neighborhood center, and will miss out on the amenities and opportunities that those will provide under the current recommendation.

By aligning closer to the original plan for growth alternative 3, allowing new neighborhood centers, a more diverse mix of zoning and affordable housing in all neighborhoods, and allowing more growth near all frequent transit stops would go a long way to bring these benefits to all of Bellevue's neighborhoods. This would also help address the city's equity and climate goals, reducing reliance on cars, making affordable and walkable communities, and making Bellevue's green spaces accessible.

Thank you for reading my comments!
Cheers,
Steven Pestana

From: [Barb Braun](#)
To: [PlanningCommission](#); [Stead, Elizabeth](#); [Johnson, Thara](#)
Subject: Observations June 21 Planning Commission Meeting
Date: Friday, June 23, 2023 11:57:21 AM
Attachments: [Comment on Planning Com Mtg June 21.pdf](#)

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June 21 Planning Commission Meeting

Barbara Braun
13609 SE 43rd Place

I appreciate all the work the staff have done on the Comprehensive Plan analysis to try to come to a Preferred Alternative that will allow density and affordable housing while maintaining our values such as livability, climate, tree canopy, open space, walkability, etc.

I would like to share a couple of observations from the June 21 Planning Commission meeting which I hope can be reflected upon and addressed. I give this feedback in a constructive spirit and a deep desire for Bellevue to remain a great place to live and work.

Observations

1. The Comp Plan is highly complex and is changing many, many things. At the meeting, it did not appear all Commissioners are up to speed on the Comp Plan or the staff's analysis. It is vitally important for the Commissioners to be adequately informed of the plan details and the analyses being performed so they can more meaningfully respond to the requests for decisions and guidance. Further the Commissioners should become familiar with the public input so the discussion can better balance the wants of the public with developer's advocacy. Perhaps a retreat or offline workshop can be conducted so Commissioners can be appropriately onboarded before we continue. Otherwise, I fear decisions will be made without complete information or in opposition to our values as defined in the Comp Plan scope.
2. The staff was advocating for a modified Alternative #3. Alternative #3 already allows for ~95,000 additional housing units, or a 2.7 times the amount we predict is needed (~35,000). Commissioners seemed to be pushing for capacity beyond 95,000 by allowing high rises in all density areas under the guise of "flexibility." If this is allowed, the result will be a mishmash of incongruous building types scattered around the city. This is in opposition to our values, will radically degrade neighborhood character, will not result in affordability, and will have unnecessary impacts such as greatly increased traffic congestion. Why are the Commissioners pushing for even higher density than is outlined in Alternative #3?

High rises are not in keeping with Bellevue's values:

- a. High-rises separate people from the street and do not create a sense of place or community.
- b. High-rises generally result in gentrification and inequality while low/mid-rises are better able to deliver affordability.
- c. High-rises create vertical sprawl and are shown to be harmful to human health.

Bellevue should not add density for density's sake. We should add only the appropriate density in transit hubs that allow for affordability while maintaining neighborhood character. Too much zoning "flexibility" will not achieve this goal.

3. There was a discussion about Mandatory Affordable housing. While developers will say they can't make money if mandates are in place, we must challenge that assertion. We do not have affordability today. Luxury housing is being developed everywhere. Mandates have been

effectively implemented in other cities and plenty of developers are participating.

If most of the new housing needs to be affordable, it is obvious we need to mandate it. If we don't mandate it, then we should not ask Bellevue residents to suffer the impacts of a high-density Alternative #3.

4. There is no provision for new open space. The Bellevue Technology Center is not needed for housing density. The land should be purchased and converted into open space or forest for Bellevue. This is a wonderful opportunity to create more equity in parklands in Bellevue in an area of lower incomes.

5. Wilburton was supposed to be a transit oriented, eco-neighborhood. It now looks like an extension of downtown with high-rise canyons and a lot of traffic. The recent development in Wilburton (REI, PCC, Trader Joes) is devoid of any sense of community or neighborhood character, is highly disconnected, and is unwalkable even though the buildings are next to each other. I hope more will be done to reduce roads and cars in Wilburton, and to create a truly world class pedestrian friendly neighborhood.
 - a. Part of Lake Bellevue should become a park and the shoreline should be accessible to the public.
 - b. The currently proposed OLB wetland should become a park with elevated pathways allowing for wetland education.

Thank you for your consideration,

Barb Braun

From: [Kevin Wallace](#)
To: [PlanningCommission](#)
Cc: [Johnson, Thara](#)
Subject: Request to Include Entire Medical Corridor in Wilburton Rezone
Date: Friday, June 23, 2023 12:37:57 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

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Dear Commissioners,

I represent the investment group that owns the Washington Park office buildings immediately north of NE 12th Street and west of 116th Ave. NE (labeled "Wallace" in the drawing on the left below). The Future Land Use map provided at your Wednesday meeting indicates our parcels are within a small area designated BR-MO-H-2 (outlined in blue in the drawing on the right below). This is the only land in the entire city with this zoning designation. All of the land sits in between Childrens Hospital and Overlake Hospital, and is separated from other land areas by I-405 and Eastrail, so it makes sense to consider it as one area for planning purposes and provide it all the same zoning designation. However, the area spans NE 12th Street north and south, placing some of it in the Wilburton rezone area and some of it outside.

This email is to ask you amend the Wilburton area boundary to include all BR-MO-H-2 land within its borders so that all of this small area of land is subject to the same comprehensive plan policies and land use code provisions. Doing so will better enable the redevelopment of the area to achieve a consistent, cohesive result, and enable the properties to the north to be able to pursue redevelopment in a more timely manner. As it stands now, our property and the other parcels north of NE 12th Street would be included in Bel-Red, and ultimately subject to the Bel-Red land use code, while the properties across the street with the same zoning would be subject to the Wilburton rezone and the Wilburton land use code. In addition to the unwarranted delay it would cause (the Bel-Red land use code update is currently not even scheduled), it's likely that the Bel-Red land use code and comprehensive plan policies will be different from those in Wilburton, meaning properties across the street from each other with the same zoning designation would have to follow different sets of rules. This is unnecessarily complicated and time consuming. All of this small area of land with the BR-MO-H-2 designation should be subject to the same set of rules.

You might also consider including the entire BR-MO area (outlined in yellow below) in the Wilburton area. This would allow for cohesive planning of the medical corridor land, both north and south of NE 12th Street. All of the properties in the BR-MO area north of NE 12th have been waiting since 2009 to receive an increase in zoning that enables redevelopment. There is no basis for continuing to keep this land zoned at a 1.0 FAR, and the proposed zoning designations in the Future Land Use map are already well thought out. Modifying the Wilburton map to include this land in the Wilburton Study Area would enable earlier planning and redevelopment of the corridor with a cohesive and consistent set of rules.

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