



Bellevue Planning Commission

December 9, 2020

PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT

Introductory Study Session: 2021 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments

STAFF CONTACT

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Community Development Department

POLICY ISSUES

The Comprehensive Plan is Bellevue's foundational policy document which guides the nature and intensity of development in the City and sets out the community's vision for the future, provides policies to guide city actions, and provides a framework to allow the city and community organizations to work towards common goals. An amendment to the Plan is a mechanism by which the City may modify its land use, development, or growth policies.

-LUC 20.30I.120 - Purpose

Pursuant to the state Growth Management Act (GMA), the Bellevue City Code permits property owners to propose site-specific Comprehensive Plan amendments, and for any person or entity to propose non-site-specific (i.e. text) Comprehensive Plan amendments. These privately-initiated applications are accepted and reviewed annually; they are not part of a broader city initiative. Proposed site-specific amendments, if approved, lead to rezoning.

The city processes these applications through procedures and criteria set forth in the Land Use Code at LUC 20.30I. The city considers the scope of geographic expansion to accurately define a proposal's geographic extent; Threshold Review determines whether a proposal is eligible for a full, or Final review; and Final Review itself gives substantial consideration to a proposal's merits framed by the Comprehensive Plan. This memo:

- Introduces the two privately proposed site-specific Comprehensive Plan amendments; and
- Reviews the purpose and use of Bellevue's two-part plan amendment process.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION

DIRECTION

INFORMATION ONLY

1. Review the applications and the Threshold Review criteria (Attachment 4). Determine if there is any data that would help the Planning Commission to inform a decision for Threshold Review. Please be mindful that the amount and type of requested data is contingent upon availability of information and staff resources.

A second Planning Commission Study Session is scheduled for early 2021. This study session will examine whether shared characteristics with similarly situated property exist, in preparation for consideration of the expansion of the geographic scope of the proposal (LUC 20.30I.140.F).

- Audit the Background and Analysis information for evaluating comprehensive plan amendment process effectiveness and efficiency as it unfolds throughout 2020-2021.

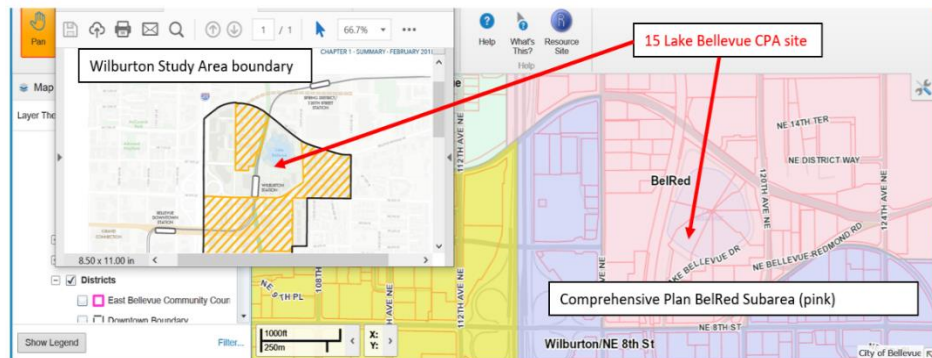
Proposed Plan Amendment	Site-specific Proposal	Applicant
<p>15 Lake Bellevue 20 114296 AC 15 Lake Bellevue Dr. <i>BelRed</i></p>	<p>This privately-initiated application proposes a map amendment from BelRed-General Commercial (BR-GC) to BelRed-Office Residential (BR-OR-2) on a 2.8-acre site, and amend Policy S-BR-96 for maximum building heights allowances.</p>	<p>Sean Thorson</p>
<p>DASH Glendale 20-114270 AC 12600 NE 8th St and 900 124th Ave NE <i>Wilburton</i></p>	<p>Proposed site-specific map change on two parcels totaling 7.5 acres from Multifamily-Medium (MF-M) to Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU)</p>	<p>DASH</p>

In addition to these 2021 site-specific proposals, the Northeast and Northwest Bellevue Great Neighborhoods subarea plan updates, initiated by City Council in 2019, will be coming on to the commission’s 2021 plan amendments work program. They will be reviewed through Final Review, starting in late spring 2021.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The 15 Lake Bellevue proposed plan amendment site is within a section of the BelRed Subarea that is the subject of the BelRed Look Back, a study and assessment of the zoning regulations put in place in 2009. This study is not yet underway.

The site is also within the Wilburton Study Area, whose boundaries extend north of NE 8th Street. The Wilburton Study Area plan amendments proposed as part of



Study implementation are also not yet underway, and the Study Area Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has not been completed. The FEIS will address impacts to **Transportation, Ecosystem** and **Water Resource** elements that could influence any site redevelopment around Lake Bellevue:

- Transportation:** A significant component of the analysis for the Wilburton Study Area contained in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement relates to transportation and multimodal mobility. It currently includes the initial transportation analysis, to be completed as part of the Final EIS, to evaluate the impacts from enacting potential zoning and transportation network changes for the overall Wilburton Study Area.

- **Ecosystems:** The site is not within the 2035 growth areas identified in the Wilburton Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS.) See yellow cross-hatch areas (above left.) The DEIS notes that ecosystem resources evaluated included aquatic resources and wetlands, and that solutions or mitigation related to specific redevelopment projects could vary on a case by case basis. Opportunities to improve the natural network could be achieved by enhancing, exposing, and utilizing the natural systems such as Lake Bellevue, riparian wetlands and uplands, and Sturtevant Creek as amenities.
- **Water Resources:** New and redevelopment projects are required to implement best management practices (BMPs) to the maximum extent feasible to reduce identified impacts from stormwater runoff and provide flow control per the City’s stormwater code. This could provide mitigation to reduce runoff volume and flow rate, and mitigation in the study area could result in enhancement of natural systems such as Lake Bellevue and Sturtevant creek as amenities.

Given their age, the buildings that are built next to and over Lake Bellevue are likely nonconforming to requirements that would regulate such construction today.

Purpose and use of two-step review

Growth Management Act procedures (RCW 36.70A.470(2)) allow any interested person or persons to suggest plan amendments. With this open approach, where anyone who qualifies to apply can make any amendment proposal, cities determine if a proposal should receive further consideration as part of the amendment process. The place or point of beginning of this determination is Bellevue’s Threshold Review

Threshold Review is the first part in Bellevue’s two-step annual process. The process was developed in 2001 (Ordinance No. 5328) and then revised in 2005 (Ordinance No. 5650). Consistent with administrative procedures at WAC 365-196-640 (6), Threshold Review determines whether a proposal is appropriate for plan amendment review. Applications that have passed over the threshold, so to speak, will be considered together in the work program established by City Council action for Final Review.

Using Final Review to address merit-based issues

The second part, merit-based Final Review addresses specific merit-based issues and fulfills GMA requirements that amendments proposed to the Comprehensive Plan be considered cumulatively (WAC 365-196-640 (5)). Final Review addresses issues such as how the Plan’s Land Use Strategy locates jobs and housing growth; where the geography of the city’s planning areas affects the Land Use Strategy; why consistency with other, similar amendments is important in plan review; and when reviewing a potential environmental impact such as traffic is appropriate.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. City maps of 2021 Comprehensive Plan Amendment applications
2. DASH aerial site map
3. 15 Lake Bellevue aerial site map
4. Threshold Review Decision Criteria