

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

June 20, 2024
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Bhargava, Commissioners Cálad, Khanloo, Villaveces

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: Commissioner Ferris

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Vice Chair Goepple, Commissioner Lu

STAFF PRESENT: Thara Johnson, Emil King, Gwen Rousseau, Kate Nesse, Janet Shull, Teun Deuling, Department of Community Development; Matt McFarland, City Attorney's Office

COUNCIL LIAISON: Deputy Mayor Malakoutian

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER
(6:30 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Bhargava who presided.

2. ROLL CALL
(6:31 p.m.)

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Vice Chair Goepple and Commissioner Lu.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
(6:31 p.m.)

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Cálad. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khanloo and the motion carried unanimously.

4. REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
(6:31 p.m.)

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian noted having been absent from the Commission's previous meeting due to being with the Mayor in Washington, D.C. to meet with the congressional delegation to ask for some grants and funding for major projects in Bellevue, including Eastrail, the Grand Connection, and waste water infrastructure.

The City Council recently received an update regarding the Grand Connection, for which the consultant firm HR&A was recently hired to address funding strategies. The Council also voted

to approve the the Land Use Code amendment addressing tree preservation, retention, replacement and protection.

5. STAFF REPORTS
(6:33 p.m.)

A. Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Strategic Planning Manager Janet Shull took a few minutes to review the Commission's schedule of upcoming meeting dates and agenda items.

6. WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Bhargava took a moment to note that under Ordinance 6752, the topics about which the public may speak during a meeting are limited to subject matters related to the city of Bellevue government and within the powers and duties of the Planning Commission. Additional information about the new rules of decorum governing conduct of the public during meetings can be found in Ordinance 6752.

A. Written Communications
(6:36 p.m.)

Janet Shull noted the receipt of a number of written communications since the Commission's previous meeting, largely comments on the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and largely from folks residing in the Newport Hills areas whose comments and concerns were in regard to umbrella zoning. Other communications from Newport Hills residents expressed an interest in seeing some changes occur at the Newport Hills Shopping Center. There also were comments received in regard to affordable housing.

B. Oral Communications
(6:37 p.m.)

Alex Tsimerman remarked that the Commissioners looked like damn Fascist rats and dirty human garbage. Bellevue has 450,000 residents and Nazi Gestapo antisemitism principles that have existed for a very long time. The city and the mayor and the mayor's sex toy boyfriend the City Council are persecuting Alex Tsimerman due to testimony given about something that is very important. The persecution comes due to a difference of opinion, or because of a different country of origin, or due to being a Jew. It is all a fraud. For 40 years it has not been possible to find an honest man in the department. It means the system is totally corrupt and is acting like Nazi Gestapo. In 40 years nothing has changed. In each case the city has evidenced lies and fraud. The three branches of government are all acting as one.

Chair Bhargava noted for the record that the comments of the previous speaker did not have any relation to the city of Bellevue government or the powers and duties of the Planning Commission.

Pamela Johnston pointed out that the film of the Commission meetings are posted to YouTube, which has boundaries about things that cannot be said.

7. PUBLIC HEARING
(6:45 p.m.)

A. BelRed Subarea – Comprehensive Plan Amendment

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cálad and the motion carried unanimously.

Acting Planning Director Thara Johnson explained that the BelRed Look Forward process has been under way for nearly a year and a half. It has involved various boards and commissions, community members and stakeholders. Much of the feedback received is reflected in the draft policies. The public hearing is the culmination of the work for the Commission, which will forward its recommendation to the Council for action.

Senior Planner Gwen Rousseau said the recommendation of staff was to amend the Future Land Use Map to increase the city's capacity for growth by extending the station area nodal designations; increasing the maximum building intensity allowed through the FAR amenity incentive system; expanding the areas designated for residential use; and providing for distinct economic centers. Staff also recommend amending the BelRed subarea plan policies to strengthen and clarify direction for achieving the BelRed vision. That includes policies in all sections of the plan, touching the three overarching themes of open space and natural systems, cultural and community connections, and land use and urban form.

With regard to open space and natural systems, the focus is on improving ecological functions and resilience; exploring opportunities for regional storm water facilities; working cross departmentally on stream rehabilitation and restoration plans; and incorporating parks, recreation and natural amenities into rights-of-way. The focus relative to cultural and community connections involves growing community capacity; building greater recognition of the arts district; securing long-term affordable arts and cultural space and fostering community connections and learning. The amendments to the transportation policies focus on investing in a complete and connection multimodal system; working with providers to service light rail stations; developing a multiuse trail system with local and regional connections; and providing for a connected, high-quality pedestrian environment. With regard to the land use, urban design and housing policies, the focus is on cultivating distinct economic centers and mixed use neighborhood districts; providing for a diverse range of housing and services within each district; promoting the preservation of small ethnic grocery stores and food services; and incentivizing amenities that respond to unique site characteristics.

Gwen Rousseau noted that pages 2 and 3 of the staff recommendation, Attachment A in the packet, included an overview of the public comments received to date. During the first phase of affirming the vision for the city, the community highlighted key topic areas to focus on, including housing, sustainability, mobility and placemaking. During the second phase, community members indicated they wanted to see the greatest increases in density in areas served by frequent transit, especially in the existing growth centers, including BelRed. The public expressed an interest in having a variety of housing options within all parts of the city, and they supported the creation of family sized apartments with two or more bedrooms per unit. The community expressed an interest in neighborhood amenities that support the development of recreational opportunities, night markets, public plazas, art, urban gardens and street trees.

During the scoping period for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and the Wilburton Vision Implementation environmental review process, community members, including property owners in BelRed, expressed interest in increasing the allowed building heights and densities in BelRed to maximize the capacity for housing development. Alternative 3 included the largest

increase in development intensity in BelRed, and it received the most support from people commenting on the draft Environmental Impact Statement. The environmental impacts identified by community members included the displacement of local small businesses and environmental health impacts from exposure to air pollutants if housing or other sensitive uses were located near high-volume roadways such as I-405 and SR-520.

During the public review of future land use designations and the proposed policies, the public supported the proposed policy direction generally and voiced strong support for policies that called for encouraging mixed use development; increasing capacity for a broad range of housing; incentivizing the incorporation of stream corridors; exploring opportunities for regional surface and storm water facilities; incorporating parks and natural amenities into public rights-of-way; and emphasizing natural resource benefits to riparian corridors in the acquisition of land for parks and open space. The community also supported promoting a safe; comfortable and integrated vibrant pedestrian experience; securing long-term affordable arts and commercial space for arts and culture organizations, as well as affordable housing; ensuring a connected active transportation network; and streamlining policies to simplify and remove potential conflicts between Volume 1 and Volume 2.

The comments provided during the Commission's review primarily were from property owners who expressed support for the recommended land use designations, and general support for the policies proposed. Some of the concerns raised were related to the next phase when Land Use Code amendments will be brought forward.

With regard to the decision criteria, Janet Shull said Part 20.30I of the Land Use Code and the Process IV requirements, the Commission has been involved in the review of the proposed amendments to the BelRed subarea plan. In making a decision in regard to whether or not to recommend the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment, Section 20.30I.150 of the Land Use Code establishes six final review decision criteria. All applicable criteria must be met in order to be recommended for approval.

For the BelRed Look Forward CPA proposal, only four of the six criteria are applicable. Based on the criteria, the Department of Community Development staff recommend approval of the proposed amendment. The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other goals and policies of the city as well as the Countywide Planning Policies, the Growth Management Act, and other applicable laws. It expands the development capacity for a broad range of residential and non-residential uses near frequent transit; helps meet the needs of Bellevue's projected population and employment growth; and minimizes the environmental impact of new development.

The proposal also addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire city by concentrating the increased development capacity for growth near light rail, thereby optimizing recent regional investments. It facilitates a better balance between jobs and housing, and it encourages active transportation and use of public transit and thereby minimizes vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gases emissions, and increases access to a diversity of housing and jobs.

The proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions, such as the tighter housing market, more frequent and more intensive storm and heat events, wider economic disparities, and regional investment in light rail, by increasing the supply of housing, increasing opportunities for on-site natural drainage, and expansion of the tree canopy. It also increases access to opportunity by maximizing the potential for growth near stations.

The proposal demonstrates a public benefit and enhances the public health, safety and welfare by increasing opportunities for active transportation, by promoting healthy exercise, by minimizing harmful emissions to air and water, by increasing the capacity for growth. By increasing the diversity of housing, the proposal increases the number and diversity of people who can have convenient access to well-paying jobs, affordable housing, high-quality schools, parks and frequent transit service. The proposal also builds resilience to the impacts of climate change by restoring streams in their riparian corridors, reducing impervious surface, promoting low-impact development, and by expanding tree canopy. The proposal would promote social connection and community wellbeing by preparing environments that encourage community events and public gathering.

Gwen Rousseau reiterated that the recommendation of the staff was to recommend the BelRed Look Forward CPA to the City Council for adoption, either following the public testimony or at the July 10 Commission meeting.

Charlie Bauman with GT Capital thanked the Commission for its hard work over the past couple of years in formulating the BelRed plan, which offers a real improvement and demonstrates that the central goal for BelRed is housing production. In moving into the code drafting phase, it should be remembered that BelRed has many unique constraints to development which need fixing. Otherwise the housing goals of the Comprehensive Plan will fall short. The proposed street grid is one of the constraints. As currently contemplated it reduces the available land for housing, divides sites into undevelopable parcels, dead-ends in illogical places, and destroys the economic value of many sites. For those reasons and others, the grid will never be fully built, resulting in a largely unfunctional grid and a reduction in housing production. BelRed's many critical areas offer another constraint. The existing setback requirements from streams and steep slopes make many sites largely undevelopable. The requirements reduce housing production, which in turn prevents any habitat restoration from occurring. Both housing production and habitat restoration is possible given the current best available science and code flexibility, but changes are needed in the Land Use Code and the upcoming Critical Areas Ordinance. With regard to the development standards, housing production must be efficient to be feasible. Many existing development standards create inefficiencies and hinder new housing supply. There are too many to list, but the existing standards need to be reviewed with a fine-toothed comb to eliminate those that work against new housing supply. It is essential that the Land Use Code be incentive based to encourage as much housing development as possible. The incentives need to be carefully calibrated to ensure they truly encourage development rather than inadvertently acting as disincentives. The proposed BelRed subarea plan is a milestone and should be approved. It will put the city one step closer to a livable, walkable, housing dense, transit-connected neighborhood destination, but first there needs to be a Land Use Code that removes the obstacles and incentivizes housing production.

Valentina Veneeva, a Bellevue resident, stated that car infrastructure in Bellevue is not perfect, but it is already good enough. A person in a car anywhere in Bellevue can go from Point A to Point B in a reasonable time and in a safe manner. The returns on further investments will be small. If someone could drive through all of Bel-Red Road at the speed limit without stopping anywhere, they would gain less than five minutes compared to the Google Maps predictions. The same cannot be said about transit, pedestrian or cycling infrastructure and investments in those areas can be life changing and life saving. Buses almost never get anyone anywhere in a reasonable time in Bellevue. Buses should be provided with separate lanes to ensure they run on time, and there should be more frequent and shorter routes, especially near light rail stations and multifamily housing. Cycling can be made safe, but it can take a long time. It is especially unsafe in the BelRed and Crossroads areas. The existing infrastructure is abysmal and disconnected.

Safety and convenience for pedestrian facilities is also poor. Sidewalks are narrow if they exist at all, and crosswalks are infrequent, stressful and unsafe. BelRed development is an opportunity for the city to commit to safety by providing infrastructure improvements for everyone, not just drivers. Bellevue is supposed to be a city in a park, not just a drive through.

Kyle Sullivan voiced support for the vision of the BelRed subarea plan. Bellevue has the opportunity to create something unique and wonderful in the area. While many of the same values have been put forward in plans around the region, including Redmond and Kirkland, the BelRed area is simply on another level. There is a huge amount of space and potential resources available. It will be exciting to see how the city's arts district plans come to fruition, and even more existing to see how light rail will serve as the catalyst for a truly multimodal neighborhood. With less reliance on cars, the city can instead focus on creating a smaller scale street system that is sized for people. The proposed trail network will give an impressive level of connectivity to the city and the region, and will provide for an abundance of recreation. In general, the revised list of policies have great changes. However, there are some aspects that should be tweaked to support the vision for BelRed. With regard to parking, the former policy S-BR-22 was removed because it duplicates a Comprehensive Plan policy. While true, the policy also called for allowing for a reduction in the parking supply in transit development nodes, which is not reflected in the replacement policies. S-BR-91 recommends considering parking maximums, but says nothing about removing parking minimums. Given the abundant public transit and active transportation resources planned for BelRed, the plan should include a policy that explicitly asks for consideration of removing parking minimums throughout BelRed. Bellevue should keep as many options on the table as possible. Allowing for the removal of parking minimums will not commit the city to eliminating them everywhere for all uses. The plan should have more specific language regarding midblock crossings and pedestrian streets. The Comprehensive Plan includes language about midblock crossings, but the BelRed subarea plan should call out midblock crossings as a priority. Similarly, there is no mention of pedestrian streets in the current plan despite being called out as a dedicated category in the BelRed streetscape plan. There are policies using phrases such as "pedestrian friendly" or "pedestrian oriented," but the policies should refer to active transportation so more street users will be considered.

Neil Mulnick, owner of Mountvue Place Shopping Center, a nearly five-acre site located next to Fred Meyer on NE 20th Street, thanked the Commission for its hard work to date on the BelRed look forward update. The work sets out a clear vision for bold growth in the city over the next couple of decades. The document offers a seminal opportunity for the city. The BelRed subarea plan policy amendments are supported. The Highrise Residential Mixed Use designation for the shopping center site is strongly supported given the proximity to light rail, Overlake Village in Redmond, and the large amenity base that includes grocery stores, restaurants and other services. The whole area in BelRed is an ideal location for much needed residential development. The Land Use Code amendments for BelRed will provide an opportunity to incentivize redevelopment in what is a very challenging market. While the vision looks out a couple of decades, the city is facing a housing crisis currently. New housing needs to be catalyzed right away.

Jacque Kimzey, a former resident of northeast Bellevue and current resident of southeast Redmond, noting being someone who continues to frequent businesses in and around the BelRed neighborhood. The expectation is that the BelRed area will have an additional 11,000 new housing units and 950,000 square feet of non-residential capacity. The new residents will require transportation options that are safe and accessible for everyone. If the new residents are forced into car dependency due to a lack of safe pedestrian walkways and bike lanes, Bellevue will become a traffic nightmare. The new light rail stations are great start, but what is needed

currently is a plan to create Complete Streets to connect light rail stations to local businesses and housing units.

Alex Tsimerman began with a Nazi salute and called the Commissioners dirty garbage rats and human garbage and addressed the city rather than the Commissioners. The BelRed plan is a beautiful fairytale for children and old men. Fairytales are good because those who listen have happy endings. Every year life in Bellevue grows worse and worse. It never gets better. No one stands up to clean up the government that is making life miserable. The Sound Transit train between Bellevue and Redmond only cost \$360 billion. Every day when driving the train can be seen, and everyday traffic must stop as the train goes by. Each train is totally empty. People who earn even the area's average salaries never use the train. All the money has been spent for nothing. Real plans are supposed to be detailed, not just fairy tales. All the idiots who live in the city should go to the Council and ask for details as to why life in Bellevue grows worse every year.

Laura Gardner, a former resident of Lake Hills and a current non-Bellevue resident who moved for a better livability and to pursue a car-light and ultimately car-free lifestyle, commented that BelRed offers a unique opportunity to build a new neighborhood from scratch. The plan anticipates that tens of thousands of new families will call the neighborhood home. With light rail at its core, many people will move to BelRed to live car-free. The city should do everything it can to support that. If all the new residents bring cars with them, the roads will face even worse gridlock. Some of the best things about the new neighborhood in which the speaker now lives includes narrow streets with wide tree-lined sidewalks safe enough for children to navigate by themselves. The environment supports young families in having kids, which is essential to combat school closures and an aging population. The BelRed streetscape plan looks good. The favorite components are the green streets and pedestrian streets that will facilitate a strong sense of place and community for residents and visitors, and which will enable events for neighbors to enjoy and to attract visitors to spend money at local businesses. They will actively combat things like urban heat island effects and flooding, which needs to be planned for with the changing climate. It seems, however, that pedestrian streets are missing from the subarea plan; they should be added in order to be consistent with the streetscape plan.

Loretta Lopez noted having read the original EIS for BelRed area more than 20 years ago. At the beginning of the process years ago the Bridle Trails Community Club was very vocal about trying to daylight the streams and adding native plant vegetation. Those objectives should not be forgotten. As the years have passed, other ideas have come into focus, such as having a pollinator garden, and pedestrian areas along the entire strip of the BelRed area. A place for a small dog park is needed. Pedestrian areas with a lot of native vegetation is still a top priority.

Nicole Myers noted that strides have been made in recognizing the health impacts of air quality and noise. In BelRed there are Class B and Class C properties for which the nighttime allowable noise levels are 20 decibels higher than in single family residential areas. The new housing in BelRed will be surrounded by ongoing construction, resulting in huge noise impacts during the day and at night. Strengthening standards for sleeping areas would be very helpful in making BelRed a nicer place to live. BelRed has potential safety issues with rail crossings. Seattle's Comprehensive Plan includes language calling for the use of intelligent transportation system technology to alert motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians to the presence and anticipated length of closures due to train crossings. Bellevue should use all available resources to ensure that at-grade crossings are safe. Seattle's Comprehensive Plan also includes language calling for creating connections between natural areas and open spaces for both people and wildlife using habitat corridors, green streets, pollinator pathways and other green connections. The older versions of

the BelRed vision seems more ecologically connected through various means.

Pam Johnston agreed with the comments made by Loretta Lopez. Sections 43 through 59 of the BelRed lookback are superfluous. There should be environmental walkways going everywhere in the city. It should not be necessary to rewrite everything when it comes to Crossroads or Factoria. In Northtowne people cannot walk to the grocery store without walking around a whole loop. Number 14 talks about uses for low jobs and low density areas, but nothing is said about having open space in those areas. Number 13 talks about transit oriented and pedestrians but says nothing about cycling and other active modes of transportation. In the realm of Number 70, it talks about art but misses out on a key aspect that happens in BelRed from jumpy tents to gyms. People are looking at the low cost that used to be warehouses for athletic training and gym-type areas. It is true that storage places are not that welcome, but health uses are wanted in the city. They often require a lot of space but at low cost. There are parking laws in Bellevue that say cars cannot be parked for 24 hours, and that should apply to BelRed also. Many people want to go there to use the light rail, and those wanting to use the light rail have to drive to it.

Ben Nickle, a resident of Downtown Bellevue, voiced excitement about the BelRed plan. The staff have done a great job on it. One great idea to include would be to have a pedestrian street in BelRed that would be a long plaza with no cars. The Wilburton plan is centered around a similar corridor, the Eastrail. The Commission was encouraged to include a policy in the BelRed subarea plan to establish a pedestrian street.

Guy Nguyen, a resident of Overlake Village in Redmond, noted having come to the meeting by light rail. With wider sidewalks more people will walk around, and with that comes a need for more trash cans. Many people gather on the sidewalks and a pedestrian street would create an area for people to gather without being next to a busy road.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Cálad. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Villaveces and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Villaveces asked the staff to comment on the issue of pedestrian streets. Gwen Rousseau said there are general policies about creating pedestrian-friendly environments, and the streetscape plan indicates pedestrian streets could be located in places where there may be constraints affecting the creation of a roadway, such as steep slopes or other blockages.

Commissioner Cálad noted that old S-BR-63, new S-BR-86 calls for providing pedestrian connectivity and a high-quality pedestrian environment. There is a clear need for pedestrian options in BelRed. Gwen Rousseau said the Commission had envisioned places where they might be the ability to close streets for festivals and the like, especially 131st Street near the station.

Commissioner Ferris also supported the idea of having a pedestrian streetscape. Given the existing infrastructure it will be difficult to achieve, but the notion should be supported at a high level by the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Ferris also referred to the staff presentation that specifically called out the policy move around promoting the preservation of small businesses where grocery stores were highlighted. From a bigger picture standpoint, the desire is to save most of the existing small businesses. Gwen Rousseau said in the land use section there is a policy regarding the area between 140th Avenue NE and 148th Avenue NE where there are several small ethnic grocery stores and food services. Policy S-BR-35 expresses and interest in those uses in particular and

seeks to make sure they are not displaced. There is an overall desire to see all small businesses supported throughout BelRed.

A motion to recommend to the City Council the proposed CPA for the BelRed subarea plan be adopted, since the amendment is consistent with all the decision criteria in LUC 20.30I.150, was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khanloo and the motion carried unanimously.

****BREAK****
(7:44 p.m.)

B. Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Comprehensive Plan Amendment
(7:50 p.m.)

A motion to extend the meeting to 10:00 p.m. was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cálad and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Khanloo. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cálad and the motion carried unanimously.

Acting Planning Director Thara Johnson explained that the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update process only occurs once every ten years under the Growth Management Act. The Comprehensive Plan is the city's foundational document and sets the vision for how the city will grow and evolve over the next 20 years. The update process was launched by the City Council in February 2022. Since then the Commission, the other boards and commissions and the community have dedicated time and energy to the endeavor. The direction provided by the Council was to integrate all state, regional and county requirements along with the Council's updated vision and priorities. The current draft document is the culmination of work by various boards and commissions, including the Environmental Services Commission, the Transportation Commission, the Human Services Commission, the Arts Commission and the Parks & Community Services Board.

The extensive outreach and engagement over the last two and a half years utilized a variety of tactics and methods to ensure hearing from a diverse representation of the community. The public input contributed to an update that reflects the community's needs and values, setting direction for a livable city for all. The city received a Vision 2050 award for the community engagement.

Continuing, Thara Johnson said the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update included an Environmental Impact Statement given the substantive nature of the projected growth. The EIS process included other planning efforts, including the BelRed Look Forward and the Wilburton Vision Implementation planning effort. The community feedback informed the growth concepts fairly early on in the process, setting the stage for developing alternatives for analysis in the EIS. There were three action alternatives along with a no action alternative. The evaluation process included an economic analysis and an equity analysis. There were some 1600 comments from the community relative to the draft EIS.

The Commission's recommendation on the preferred alternative, which largely was a combination of the different alternatives, was analyzed in the final EIS. That led to the development of the city's growth strategy that is reflected in the Comprehensive Plan draft, and served as the basis for some of the policy changes to both Volume 1 and Volume 2. Following

the public hearing, which will be continued to June 26, the Commission will be asked to formulate a recommendation to be carried forward to the Council for action.

Senior Planner Dr. Kate Nesse said the staff were recommending changes to accommodate growth within the city. Updates to the land use map are being recommended aimed at providing a variety of housing types at many price points. The changes also aim to provide support for commercial and mixed use areas that are served well by many transportation options. The growth strategy being recommended focused most of the growth in mixed use centers; offers a range of housing choices; invests in residential and mixed use neighborhoods; and allows for commercial uses to serve community needs. New future land use designations are proposed as recommended by the Council. The future land use categories and descriptions are recommended for updating with a new way of describing them using illustrations to show the character of development. There is also a recommendation to use broader categories that group similar development styles together.

The recommended updates also address amendments made to the Growth Management Act, specifically HB-1220, which calls for planning for and accommodating housing affordable to all economic segments of the community; identifying policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement and exclusion in housing; and establishing anti-displacement policies. The requirements of HB-1110 and HB-1337 are also addressed in the proposed update by creating a framework to allow four to six units per lot, including ADUs. HB-1181 is also addressed which is focused on the climate element and implementing certain requirements.

Changes are being recommended to maintain consistency with the Countywide Planning Policies and the Multi County Planning Policies in the areas of equity, climate change and environmental sustainability, and housing. The proposal also identifies centers based on the new criteria in the Countywide Planning Policies; the regional growth center continues to be the Downtown, several countywide centers are identified, as are several neighborhood centers.

Policies are being recommended to minimize the causes of climate change, to address the impacts of climate change, to expand on urban forestry, and to address some HB-1181 requirements.

Turning to a summary of the public comment received, Dr. Kate Nesse said the robust community engagement process has included more than 7000 unique individuals. Forty-six of the events were targeted at groups that have been historically marginalized or underrepresented. The community outreach efforts engaged the population in a number of ways, including in-person workshops, virtual presentations, focus group conversations, and pop-up events. The wide variety of comments received have highlighted the love of Bellevue community members for parks and green space; a concern about housing affordability; a desire to get around easily on foot, by bike, by bus or by car; and the need to ensure that the environment is protected.

Since June 6 when the public hearing was noticed, many comments have been received, all of which are available on the Comprehensive Plan website along with all comments received during the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update process. Comments have been received about requests for specific map changes. Several folks advocated for a more narrow relationship between zoning and future land use categories. There have been comments received from the owners of the Crossroads Mall site about their desire to change the future land use category to Highrise Residential Mixed Use in the center of the parcel. There were also comments received advocating for more density on the site of the Newport Hills Shopping Center, as well as comments expressing concern with the flexibility being proposed and comments requesting

changes in the code provision for large lot residential parcels. Several comments advocated for a more narrow relationship between zoning and future land use.

With regard to the frequently used term “umbrella zoning,” Dr. Kate Nesse clarified that the recommendation is in regard to future land use categories that give a general sense of the future development. Within the general description in the Comprehensive Plan and on the Future Land Use Map, there would be multiple zones that could fit into the category. Many of the zones actually have a one-to-one relationship with a future land use category. The approach groups zones that have a similar development style within one future land use designation, allowing landowners to apply for just a zoning change, not a full Comprehensive Plan amendment. The folks that are asking for a more narrow relationship would like to continue separating the zones as distinct development styles.

There have been comments received about adding language about pickleball to a narrative, not to a policy. There have also been comments in regard to TR-57 advocating for a road diet or narrowing travel lanes, and about CL-88 to make the daylighting of streams optional instead of required.

Dr. Kate Nesse said the Commission must base its decision on the decision criteria. The staff have concluded that the recommended updates are consistent with the Council vision and other goals and policies of the city; and are consistent with the Growth Management Act, the Countywide Planning Policies and the Multicounty Planning Policies. The updates address the interests and changed needs of the entire city by addressing the updated growth targets; by addressing the results of the study documents, including the Racially Disparate Impact Analysis; and by addressing changes in state law and addressing the needs of the entire city and providing a framework for subarea planning. The updates address significantly changed conditions, including the new citywide growth targets; the new housing goals and mandates under state law; the updated centers framework for countywide centers; and the increased need for mobility options and the expansion of the multimodal transportation network. The updates also demonstrate a public benefit by providing adequate land capacity and urban services to accommodate growth; by reinforcing environmental protections; by encouraging economic development; by supporting efficient transportation systems; and by protecting private property rights.

Divya Kapuria with Heartland, real estate advisors to the ownership group of the Newport Hills Shopping Center, thanked the staff, the Commission and the City Council for all the important work that has gone on to update the Comprehensive Plan. Engagement with the city and the community began in 2023 with the goal of helping redevelop the Newport Hills Shopping Center into a vibrant neighborhood center. Over the last year, there have been meetings with many community stakeholders who desire to see the center redeveloped. The community has expressed a desire for a third place in the form of a public plaza, gathering spaces, open space and retail shops, all of which can be delivered when paired with appropriate density on the site. Over the course of engagement, requests have been made to study a higher density designation for the site for the purposes of the EIS. The hope was that by studying the designations, the ownership and the future developer would be provided with much-needed flexibility in the absence of knowing other development standards, such as the FAR on the site. Given the scale and character of the neighborhood, a two- to four-story mixed use development center makes the most sense on the site, not a ten-story tower. In addition to being out of scale, a ten-story building would not be a financially viable product in the neighborhood. The ownership looks forward to continue working with city staff to develop details of the zoning standards for the Lowrise-Mixed Use NB zone assigned to the shopping center site, and working with the community to create a center that

enhances and respects the Newport neighborhood.

Jodie Alberts, vice president of government affairs for the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, and on behalf of the PLUSH Committee, expressed strong support for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The Commission was thanked for shaping the policies into a plan that will ensure the city will be adequately prepared for future needs, particularly in terms of housing capacity. Earlier in the year the Chamber conducted a poll of 400 residents, asking them to identify the most pressing issue facing the city. Housing affordability emerged as a top concern. Regardless of the city's current preparedness, the city will continue to experience growth, putting additional strain on supply and infrastructure, impacting both current and future residents. It is critical to implement policies that are flexible for development and which will ensure that Bellevue becomes an even more vibrant and inclusive place to live. High density and capacity are key to achieving flexibility. Both the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map exemplify the approach. Over time, and as economic conditions are favorable, development can occur and importantly adapt with the policy in place to meet the diverse needs of the city. Adopting the Comprehensive Plan in its current form will be a vital step toward securing Bellevue's future as a thriving, inclusive and resilient city. By embracing policies that promote high density, mixed use development and flexibility, the pressing issue of housing affordability can be addressed in ways that will accommodate the inevitable growth coming to the city. The Commission should approve the Comprehensive Plan and by so doing continue to prioritize the diverse needs of the community, ensuring that Bellevue will remain a desirable place to live for future generations to come.

Elizabeth Maupin thanked the Commission for the thoughtful work that has gone into the plan. Many of the councils of the smaller area cities tend to follow Bellevue's lead in many areas. The Commission has the power to shape the future of the city of Bellevue, and influence surrounding municipalities for decades to come. The efforts to center affordable housing, equity and housing abundance in the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map is to be applauded. Policies and funding is needed to enable affordable housing that the market will not create on its own. Mandatory inclusionary zoning is a powerful tool to leverage growth to create permanently affordable housing in mixed income communities, ensuring that low- and moderate-income families are part of the city's future. It is important that city money should focus on housing for those with the lowest incomes, allowing more of the essential workers to live in Bellevue. The Commission was urged to save space for low-income communities and individuals with mobility issues near transit; those groups are most likely to regularly use and be dependent on public transit.

Daniel Nygaard, a resident of the Newport Hills community for more than 21 years, noted having moved to the neighborhood originally because it was a thriving community with a grocery store, a bank, a drugstore and other amenities that the local residents were able to walk to. Slowly things started to die. The same was true for Lake Hills, but that area underwent a revitalization. Newport Hills feels forgotten. The Commission was encouraged work toward a revitalized Newport Hills Shopping Center, the type of thing that requires a great deal of planning. It will not happen on its own. The proposed plan will bring in what is needed to revitalize the neighborhood. Housing that is affordable to young families and seniors is lacking, however.

Suzanne Baugh, a long-time Lake Heights resident, noted that the Newport Hills Shopping Center used to have a grocery store, liquor store, hardware store, pharmacy and many other services. Over the last 25 years, however, there has been a precipitous decline in the center generally. To say it is in disrepair understates the poor condition significantly. The Newport Hills

Shopping Center is nothing short of a dangerous eyesore in the midst of the community. Several developers have proposed redevelopment projects for the site, but all of those efforts failed or were abandoned due in part to restrictive land use and zoning issues, and in part to a group of Newport residents opposed to any meaningful change. Thus nothing has changed and the mess remains. The Commission needs to know there are residents who are not opposed to allowing for flexibility in the Comprehensive Plan. The usual naysayers are currently active sending out misleading and inaccurate information to Newport residents regarding the proposed update to the Comprehensive Plan. There is a real opportunity to make something happen and the help of the city is needed. The Comprehensive Plan needs to provide the flexibility necessary to encourage a developer to recreate the site with retail spaces and different types of housing for seniors who want to age in place and for young families, both of which would support local retailers and other amenities, such as the Newport Hills Swim and Tennis Club. Newport has waited a very long time. With the Comprehensive Plan update in process and the upcoming subarea planning process scheduled to begin in early 2025, it is time for a positive change. The flexible updates in the Comprehensive Plan should be supported because they will encourage the revitalization of the Newport Hills Shopping Center.

Walter Moore, also a longtime Lake Heights resident, commented that over the years the local shopping center has gone downhill. Now what the neighborhood is looking at is a dated strip mall with rundown and deserted buildings and poor land use. There is really no appeal to take a family there, other than to have a meal and then leave. It has been that way for at least 20 years. The current zoning is standing in the way of redevelopment. The Commission was asked to update the zoning for the Newport Hills Shopping Center site from Neighborhood Business to an appropriate mixed use zoning that will yield affordable housing and an exciting neighborhood village.

Linda Haller, a resident of Lake Heights/Newport Hills for more than 25 years, commented on having watched the Newport Hills Shopping Center drastically deteriorate over the years. There are many in the Lake Heights and Newport Hills neighborhoods that are in favor of some sort of redevelopment that will revitalize the shopping center in spite of the very few, very loud voices that oppose any type of redevelopment. The Comprehensive Plan update is nearing its final planning stage, and the final plan should include a variety of housing options that will accommodate all income and age groups, from young families through retirement age. It should also include the flexible housing needed to support those housing options. For the Newport Hills Shopping Center, the zoning should allow for retail spaces for the current businesses wishing to stay as well as a variety of new small businesses looking to become part of the wonderful neighborhood. The site should include some type of open area, preferably a park-like setting with walkways and trees, making it a great place for neighbors to get together. The local residents have waited a long time and have seen many failed attempts to revitalize the shopping center, and it is time to make sure the updated Comprehensive Plan is flexible enough to allow a new developer to quickly and efficiently take on and complete the redevelopment of the Newport Hills Shopping Center.

Yuanmeng Zhao, a resident of Overlake Village who often visits Bellevue by bus and light rail, called attention to the transportation policies in the Comprehensive Plan and the city's focus on Vision Zero. Even though Bellevue might not want to be another Seattle, inspiration can be taken from the Stone Way road diet in the Fremont district. The Stone Way project originally had significant opposition from local businesses, but the project has resulted in an 80 percent reduction in pedestrian collisions, a 33 percent increase in the volume of bicyclists in just three years. The peak hour motor vehicle capacity was maintained even after the road diet. Similar results have been seen in other cities based on the Road Diet Case Studies Report by the Federal

Highway Administration. The Commission was asked to keep the language of TR-57 as originally proposed, without the amendment, and to give staff the full freedom to evaluate the literature and data as well as the context of streets and surrounding areas when deciding on the best possible configuration of a given street.

Evan Sexton with Plymouth Housing thanked the Commission and the staff for all the work that has gone into the Comprehensive Plan update. Plymouth Housing is the region's largest developer of supportive housing. The Comprehensive Plan update represents a once-in-a-decade opportunity to tackle the immense affordability challenges being faced by the city. The Comprehensive Plan represents an important step toward housing abundance. Supported housing works as shown by the fact that 96 percent of Plymouth Housing residents never become homeless again. Plymouth Crossing has brought almost a hundred individuals in off the street. Many of the residents are seniors or are disabled relying on fixed social security incomes. With high local rents, the residents simply cannot afford housing without additional support. For genuine housing abundance, Bellevue must include substantial funding sources and cost reductions for affordable housing. While Plymouth Housing received a grant from the city for behavioral health services, the majority of the funding for the agency comes from federal and state sources. Local investments are needed to allow developers to cover funding gaps, offer additional services for residents, and to make them eligible for additional state and federal funding sources. Many Plymouth Housing residents do not own their own cars and transit oriented development is key to building effective affordable housing. The work done to capitalize on the area's investment in light rail, there remain significant areas within the watershed of the investments that do not allow for the density needed, and the lack of density will hold back affordable housing development. Bellevue is required to build 6270 new housing units under the county plan over the next 20 years, which is more than 300 units per year. Without fully utilizing the transit investments coming to the city, the housing allocation will be difficult to meet. Plymouth Housing acknowledges the work that has been put into the plan and the progress the plan represents. Where upzoning is done, the resulting windfall should be shared by the whole community, not just individual developers and landowners. Building on-site units as part of the affordability requirements is important. Any fee in-lieu program will need to be calibrated to be a viable alternative to on-site production.

Alex Brennan, executive director of Future Wise, a non-profit that advocates on land use planning across Washington state, spoke representing the Eastside Housing Roundtable, a coalition chaired by the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce and the Housing Development Consortium of King County. The coalition brings together a broad variety of stakeholders from the business community, affordable housing and social service providers, community-based organizations and environmental advocates with a focus on advocating for more housing at all affordability levels in Bellevue and across east King County. The Comprehensive Plan is an important step toward achieving those goals. The Roundtable is supportive of the direction being taken by the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map to address affordable housing and housing capacity needs in Bellevue. The update is great opportunity to create vibrant neighborhoods around the light rail stations and throughout the city. The resulting housing will allow more of the people who work in Bellevue to also live in Bellevue. In addition to expressing broad support for the recommendations, the Commission was encouraged to continue looking for ways to increase housing capacity, housing options and affordability.

Brady Nordstrom, associate director of government relations and policy for the Housing Development Consortium, thanked the Commission for centering affordable housing in the Comprehensive Plan update. Only 11 percent of Bellevue's total workforce lives in the city, contributing to traffic, rising housing costs, and other factors. The Commissioners were thanked

for boldly including capacity in the plan for new homes through the Future Land Use Map. The proposed draft plan has about 43 percent of housing growth capacity in affordable mid- and low-rise construction types, and that is vital to creating affordable housing in the future. Bold residential capacity is necessary but not sufficient to achieve affordability; also needed are visionary policies. The Commission was thanked for supporting the expansion of affordable housing funding and the exploration of new revenue tools; for enabling opportunities to explore well-calibrated affordable housing requirements; for policies aimed at working toward removing major costs and regulatory barriers to housing; for policies aimed at anti-displacement; policies that seek to increase home ownership, especially for those who have been historically excluded; and for policies that seek to undo housing discrimination.

Ethan Robinson, advocacy organizer for Habitat for Humanity of Seattle, King and Kittitas Counties, stated that for nearly 40 years the organization has been creating home ownership opportunities in partnership with community members. Habitat sees firsthand the transformative impact of affordable housing. The upcoming Orchard Gardens development on the land of the former Holy Cross Lutheran Church will provide home ownership opportunities for 25 families in Bellevue. To achieve the shared housing goals, the city must plan for and strategically prioritize density near schools, work places and transit hubs. The approach expands housing opportunities and helps control rising costs, nurtures the needs of local businesses, and is crucial for maintaining connected and vibrant communities. In seeking sustainable solutions for the housing crisis, it is essential to highlight policies that have proven effective. There have been significant successes with mandatory inclusionary zoning in jurisdictions across the region, enabling nearly 200 families to achieve home ownership. Mandatory inclusionary zoning is supported by comprehensive fee in-lieu structures. Securing adequate funding sources is imperative to effectively supporting affordable housing initiatives. Local investments can leverage additional resources from the county, state and federal levels, significantly amplifying the impact. Additionally, innovative approaches are needed for utilizing surplus and public lands to ensure long-term affordability and to foster sustainable community development. Strong anti-displacement measures and robust renter protections are essential to preserving community diversity and to provide essential support for vulnerable residents. Expanding home ownership, especially for marginalized groups, is critical to advancing equity and promoting stability within the community. The Comprehensive Plan represents a unique opportunity to shape a more inclusive and resilient city for future generations.

Yichuan Zhao, executive director for Imagine Housing, a Newport Hills resident, strongly urged the Commission to maximize midrise development to get more housing. Even that level of density, however, will not be enough to address affordability. Housing affordability must be addressed, including through mandatory inclusionary zoning. The Comprehensive Plan is the plan for the next 20 years, by which time those who are kids today will be adults and will need to have a place to call home. The Commission was urged to adopt the proposed Comprehensive Plan update.

Kyle Sullivan, a Kirkland resident, expressed appreciation for the wide breadth of changes proposed by the Comprehensive Plan. The update makes huge strides in allowing for more housing, improving equity, expanding inclusivity, addressing climate change, preserving the environment, and streamlining policy language. Bellevue has enormous opportunities for growth and leadership. The Comprehensive Plan contains a lot of language in support of expanding the city's public transit and active transportation networks. However, the proposed change to TR-57 requiring a comprehensive technical analysis and exploration of other options before repurposing travel lanes for other uses is at best redundant and at worst a tool that will be used to stymie Bellevue's goals. The term "comprehensive technical analysis" is not defined leaves open the

question of what standard is expected. The policy should either make reference to a specific standard, or it should be removed. The transportation department is already required to perform a lot of analysis before making any change to Bellevue's streets. The hedging language against transit and active transportation is in conflict with the rest of the Comprehensive Plan update. There are dozens of policies in at least five elements that outright support transit and active transportation, and policies that compliment having a strong multimodal network. The Comprehensive Plan calls for a reduction in drive-alone trips and vehicle miles traveled per capita, but that cannot be done if there is no room on the streets for other modes. New streets are required to be Complete Streets with space for all; existing streets should not be treated differently. The amendment to TR-57 came about in response to a request from Kemper Development Company, a request that surely is in opposition to Bike Bellevue, which is a safety first project aimed at eliminating serious injuries and fatalities for pedestrians, bikers and drivers by making intersections safer and creating safer lane configurations for drivers, allowing freed space to be used to create a connected safe network for active transportation. What does not make Bellevue feel like a city in a park is being surrounded by cars. The amended TR-57 represents an attempt to keep Bellevue in the past. The Commission should make the right choice to make things better for the Bellevue of tomorrow.

Ben Mickle, a resident of Downtown Bellevue, addressed TR-57, which allows for the repurposing of travel lanes where excess capacity exists. The Commission was cautioned against being overly restrictive by adding new restrictions to the policy. The Federal Highway Administration actively promotes such projects as a proven strategy to improve roadway safety for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. Their recommendations are based on decades of experience and data. In one case study from Reston, Virginia, car crashes were reduced by 70 percent by reconfiguring the lanes. No hard data, expertise or federal transportation agency supports adding conditions such as "only where no practical alternative exists." The question is what is the practical alternative to saving someone's life. According to the data, that is exactly what the projects do. The transportation department should not be deprived of one of its most effective tools for keeping the community safe.

Rick Schoebel, chief operating officer of ROIC, the owners of Crossroads Mall, voiced strong support for the overall Comprehensive Plan and the city's work to support more walkable and vibrant neighborhoods. The Commission should support the Highrise Residential Mixed Use designation for the core of Crossroads Mall. The local third-place character of the mall is what attracted ROIC to acquire the site over ten years ago. The company is committed to keeping the unique character of Crossroads, and to keeping local restaurants and experiences at Crossroads. However, after the pandemic, retail changed. Some of the larger areas in the core of Crossroads are struggling. It is envisioned that once those stores are vacated, the future of retail is mixed use with a vibrant, modern retail base, and diverse housing options above. The Highrise Residential Mixed Use designation provides more flexibility for the mall to adapt to changing conditions and to be ready to respond when retail vacates. The designation will allow for building up in the core of the mall while keeping lower density next to the park. There have been great conversations with city staff and ROIC believes the balanced approach with highrise in the core and midrise around the edges of the property fits within the EIS and better meets the intent of enhancing Crossroads as a transportation-oriented mixed use community for generations to come. The Commission was urged to adjust the land use designation to have the core of Crossroads be Highrise Residential Mixed Use.

Julia Nagele, senior principal and director of design at Hewitt Architecture and an assistant affiliate professor at the University of Washington, noted having been engaged by ROIC to explore the merits of a Highrise Residential Mixed Use designation on the Crossroads Mall site.

Proximity to mass transit is very important to both a midrise and highrise designation. High-density, mixed use urban living requires mass transit connections. In the case of Crossroads, that takes two forms: the rapid transit busses that connect to the Overlake Village station, and the Overlake park and ride, all of which is within the one mile or 30-minute walkshed from Crossroads. There is an existing precedent of highrises being within one mile proximity, allowing for lower- and middle-income residents, in San Diego. The original designation for Crossroads Mall was Highrise Residential Mixed Use, and that is the designation that should go forward. The sheer size of the site brings with it the potential to have transitional midrise zones on the eastern and western edges of the property. Bellevue's superblocks formed in the middle of the 20th Century with an auto-centric focus have in some instances more than a block and a half of a transitional zone depth of a midrise structure to a highrise structure that could easily accommodate a lower intense context around the perimeter of the site. The Crossroads Mall site supports diverse retail and community services in what is truly a mixed use condition. The three properties in the center of the site were designated for high potential to be developed, including the existing surface parking lot. The heart of Crossroads, which is the community-focused court where a lot of events and activities happen, would not be displaced even considering highrise development within the boundaries of the existing mall structure.

Jacque Kimzey, a former resident of Northeast Bellevue who moved to Southeast Redmond to take advantage of a walkable neighborhood that is safe for pedestrians and cyclists, noted that Bellevue has committed to eliminating serious injuries and deaths on its streets by 2030, which is only six years away. Bellevue is a member city of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), a body which has published a street design guide that has improvements that promote safety for all road users and maximizes person throughput capacity. Bellevue transportation planners and engineers utilize the guide regularly to facilitate improvements that support mobility and Vision Zero. Road diets, the reallocation of street space and multimodal facilities are an industry-proven best practices tactic to help improve person throughput on corridors, while also increasing safety for vulnerable road users. NACTO has spent years working to reshape the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which has long prioritized moving vehicles quickly at the expense of safety, sustainability and accessibility for people. The city should not be putting up barriers to the adoption of proven safety measures. In a dense urban environment like Bellevue, transit lanes, bike lanes and pedestrian facilities legitimately are more efficient at moving more people than vehicle traffic lanes. Policies should not be adopted that preclude staff from considering more efficient uses of the right-of-way. Bellevue's Complete Streets ordinances, embedded in the city code, states that the city will, to the maximum extent practical, implement complete streets, which are streets that provide appropriate facilities to meet the mobility needs of people of all ages and abilities who are walking, biking, riding transit, driving and transporting goods. No unnecessary restrictions or barriers should preclude the fulfillment of the safety goals. A comprehensive technical analysis and an evaluation of other options is not defined, and without a clear definition it is easy to see how the clauses would be used as barriers, preventing staff from utilizing best practices to evaluate which street configurations make the most sense. The existing language of policy TR-57 should be retained to allow for maximum flexibility and the freedom to make sure the streets work well for everyone, including those who walk, bike, roll, take transit and drive. To meet the goals of Vision Zero and build complete streets in Bellevue, the city must adopt a Comprehensive Plan that prioritizes multimodal transit over single-use travel lanes for cars alone.

Christopher Randalls spoke on behalf of Complete Streets, an organization that advocates for better connections and improved safety for people walking, biking, rolling and taking transit. The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update process has been long and intensive, but the city is now

poised to adopt some forward thinking progressive policies that will help to create more affordable housing, support multimodal transportation investments, create more vibrant places, and do much more to make Bellevue a 21st Century city. Complete Streets appreciates the strong emphasis in the update on safety in all its forms, including ensuring that Bellevue residents, workers and visitors are safe from traffic violence. Nationwide cities are experiencing a road safety crisis where bigger vehicles and higher speeds are contributing to an unprecedented increase in the number of serious injuries and fatalities on the streets. Bellevue officials and staff at every level have worked diligently to advance work that supports Vision Zero and that will help eliminate deaths on the roads in six years' time. The only acceptable number of deaths on the streets is zero. There is industry and technical consensus that through better street design and lower speeds there can be a transportation system that supports mobility of all types while making sure that everyone is able to get where they need to go safely. Vision Zero is achievable and it is know how to get there. Many of the policies in the Comprehensive Plan update support and affirm the Vision Zero commitment. The city's transportation experts know that better and safer design can very often be achieved through an intentional redesign of the roadways to incorporate facilities that enable mobility for people walking, biking, rolling and taking transit while also ensuring greater person capacity for city streets. Complete Streets supports staff's proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan policy TR-57, which would codify the existing practices of intentional and meticulous evaluation before implementing street design changes. There are ample examples of a reevaluation of how to utilize the existing right-of-way on city streets is warranted in considering how to best incorporate transit facilities, such as through the recent unanimous Council direction to support travel time reliability and consistency in the forthcoming Rapid Ride K line how to lower speeds to help achieve Vision Zero, and more. Staff's proposed language ensures that roadway planning be conducted with vigor and intentionality, while avoiding the possibility of precluding staff from taking actions they know to be the best practice approach to the transportation network. The Commission was urged to adopt staff's proposed update to TR-57 without amendment.

Steve Kunkle, a Newport Hills residents since 1984 at which time the shopping center had among other businesses two gas stations, two banks, two grocery stores, a drug store and a liquor store, most of which disappeared when the city of Newcastle was formed. The Newport Hills Shopping Center property is mostly a parking lot. There is a higher and better use for the site. Restoring some of the services lost would be a good start. Change is constant, and renewal is a form of change. When change is imminent, there can be both fear and excitement. The fear is that something will be lost that is thought of as adequate and familiar. The excitement is about what is new and what may offer more benefits. A new shopping center could preserve some of what is familiar while also bringing forth new features, such as a small performing arts center or a daycare. About 24 years ago the city presented a redesign of the shopping center, but in 2000 the dot com bubble burst and nothing happened. There have been at least two attempts by developers to change the zoning since then to make the site feasible for a rebuild. The time has come to resume the city's efforts to bring Newport Hills into the 21st Century. Whatever can be done to speed up the process of achieving a new shopping center in Newport Hills will be supported, provided there is some allowance for community input. Hopefully it will not take another 24 years to see something new and better in Newport Hills.

Neha Jain, a Lake Heights resident, pointed out that there is an enrollment issue at Newport Heights Elementary School due to the fact that young families cannot afford to live in the neighborhood. The fact that the Newport Hills Shopping Center is in disrepair is something the neighborhood has had to contend with; it has become an eyesore that is visited by unsavory people. The current restrictive zoning rules make it financially unviable for any developer to take on. The community can and should benefit from having the shopping center revitalized. It can

become a place for community bonding with cafés and retail shops, and maybe a neighborhood hall for community events. Affordable housing is needed to get more young families into the neighborhood. The increased levels of traffic need to be addressed and planned for.

Mariya Frost, transportation director for Kemper Development Company, thanked the Commission for its ongoing work on the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Kemper Development Company strongly supports the staff-recommended changes to TR-57 and TR-21 and the Commission was urged to adopt them. TR-57 still allows for repurposing travel lanes for other transportation uses, but requires that it be done thoughtfully with careful consideration of travel data concerning all users of the transportation system, including drivers, emergency responders, freight and micromobility services. The strengthened policy is now more consistent with the city's approach to significant travel lane modifications in the Curb Management Plan, which requires a traffic analysis first. It is mindful of the significant density planned in the Comprehensive Plan update, and it is supportive of the city's ability to meet performance targets set in the Mobility Implementation Plan. The language as amended by the Commissioners and staff should be approved and moved forward. The language of S-BR-54 has been retained and shifted to apply citywide in what is now TR-21. Designing and developing arterial improvements is necessary to accommodate the dramatic residential and employment growth Bellevue is planning for, and it will help ensure that the arterial system will mitigate the traffic congestion the growth will create. The policy is essential.

Pamela Johnston, 3741 122nd Avenue NE, clarified that the words "Bike Bellevue" inherently mean a whole network within Bellevue. That is not what Bike Bellevue was, however. Bike Bellevue was fixing some holes, using a consultant, getting it done fast and in a short time. Given the program's name and ambitions, staff took it far and above what it was supposed to be. The Commission was urged not to apply any meaning to Bike Bellevue in the Comprehensive Plan. It got really mixed up because it was one single project and not the entire system.

A motion to continue the public hearing to June 26 was made by Commissioner Villaveces. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Khanloo and the motion carried unanimously.

8. STUDY SESSION – None
(9:23 p.m.)

9. OTHER BUSINESS – None
(9:23 p.m.)

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
(9:23 p.m.)

A. May 8, 2024

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cálad and the motion carried unanimously.

B. May 22, 2024

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Cálad. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Villaveces and the motion carried unanimously.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None
(9:24 p.m.)

12. ADJOURN
(9:24 p.m.)

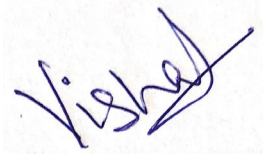
A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Villaveces and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Bhargava adjourned the meeting at 9:24 p.m.



Thara Johnson
Staff to the Planning Commission

Date



Vishal Bhargava
Chair of the Planning Commission

Date