

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC

2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Review of Planning Commission recommended updates to the Comprehensive Plan to comply with the state Growth Management Act (GMA), Chapter 35A.63 RCW, and recent state legislation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**DIRECTION**

The Planning Commission recommended the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update under the requirements of the state GMA, Chapter 36.70A RCW. The update focuses growth in Downtown, Wilburton, BelRed, and other Mixed Use Centers and accommodates the adopted growth targets for Bellevue. It also meets the requirements of recently adopted state legislation, including planning for affordable housing, addressing racially disparate impacts, and allowing middle housing. Planning Commission Chair Craighton Goepple will present the Commission's recommendation. Staff seek Council direction on the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update as recommended by the Planning Commission. Action to adopt the update will be sought at a future date.

RECOMMENDATION

Direct staff to prepare the ordinance for final action to adopt the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update as recommended by the Planning Commission. If Council desires, staff is available to return to a subsequent Council meeting to address questions or potential changes to the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan prior to Council providing direction for final action.

BACKGROUND

Council launched the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan on February 28, 2022. The City prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), consistent with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), Chapter 43.21C RCW, and the City's environmental analysis was completed on February 1. Council has received updates on the progress since the launch and provided direction on the Preferred Alternative studied in the EIS. The Planning Commission formalized its recommendation to Council on the periodic update as required by the City's Land Use Code on July 10 (Attachment A). The update is now returning to Council for consideration of the Planning Commission's recommendation and for Council's eventual adoption.

State law requires that Bellevue and other cities in King County "...take action to review and, if needed, revise their comprehensive plans and development regulations to ensure the plan and regulations comply with the requirements of [the GMA]" by December 31, 2024 and every 10 years thereafter

(RCW 36.70A.130 (5)). Bellevue ratified the growth targets adopted in the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) on March 28, 2022. In addition, the state legislature has passed legislation modifying the GMA and the comprehensive planning in Code Cities provisions in Chapter 35A.63 RCW, which added new requirements, including:

- House Bill (HB) 1220: Emergency Shelters and Housing – Local Planning and Development (2021)
- HB 1110: Growth Management Act – Minimum Development Densities in Residential Zones (2022)
- HB 1337: Growth Management Act – Accessory Dwelling Units – Urban Growth Areas (2022)
- HB 1181: Climate Change – Planning (2022)
- HB 1717: Growth Management Act – Tribal Participation (2022)
- HB 1241: Growth Management Act – Comprehensive Plan Updates – Deadlines (2022)

The new planning requirements in these bills need to be included in this periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan, with the exception of the requirements in HB 1181 (due in 2029).

ANALYSIS

At the launch of the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Council provided direction to continue Bellevue's legacy of well-managed growth that prioritizes a high quality of life and community-building. Council also provided direction to integrate state, regional, and county requirements with the City Council's vision for the City, community feedback, and guidance from City studies and plans. The scope of the periodic update included:

1. Employ consistent, equitable outreach and engagement with diverse communities;
2. Update the vision for growth in the City;
3. Make policy changes in all of the elements that reflect the City's priorities for the next 20 years;
4. Update the land use map or make policy adjustments to expand housing capacity to plan for the growth targets identified in the CPPs;
5. Explore amending the land use categories used in the Comprehensive Plan map to reference zones more broadly;
6. Update policies to manage growth in the City's identified Countywide Centers and Regional Growth Center;
7. Amend the housing section to be consistent with the rewritten housing section of the CPPs and address the need for affordable housing;
8. Include policies that address the legacy of discrimination; and
9. Include policies that address the causes and impacts of climate change.

Detailed below is how the update to the Comprehensive Plan meets each of these items. The complete draft of the update to the Comprehensive Plan can be found in Attachment B (Volume 1 – General Elements) and Attachment D (Volume 2 – Subarea/Neighborhood Plans). The Future Land Use Map can be found in Attachment C (24" x 36").

Integrating State, Regional, and County Requirements

After adoption, the Comprehensive Plan must be certified by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and reviewed and accepted by the Washington State Department of Commerce. Certification of the Comprehensive Plan by PSRC is required to qualify for federal transportation funding managed by PSRC as the Puget Sound Region's Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The City sent a draft copy of the Comprehensive Plan update to PSRC and the King County Affordable Housing Committee (KC AHC) for early review and feedback. In addition, the City notified the State of the anticipated adoption as required by law. Their response letters were sent to the City after the Planning Commission formalized their recommendation to Council. Staff-recommended changes to address feedback are found in Attachment E.

1. Employ consistent, equitable outreach and engagement with diverse communities

Bellevue 2044 – Building a Livable City for All was the City's call to action for the community to be involved in the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Over the past two and a half years, the planning team has worked with the community to identify development priorities, address key challenges, tackle the need for more housing, and center equity. The need for inclusive and equitable engagement was paramount. Bellevue is the fifth most diverse city in the state – 61 percent of the population is non-white and 43 percent were born outside the U.S. This engagement effort used a range of methods and tools to involve as many community members as possible. Highlights include:

- Engaging over 7,000 individuals.
- A postage-paid, mailed questionnaire to every household, with online translations that received over 3,300 responses.
- 78 events including in-person workshops, virtual presentations, focus group conversations, and pop-up events in the community.
- 46 percent of these events were targeted for groups that are historically marginalized or typically underrepresented in city planning processes, including workshops in Spanish and Mandarin, listening sessions with people experiencing homelessness, youth workshops at Bellevue schools, and presentations to other groups.
- A statistically valid survey of residents about their priorities for growth.
- Grant-funded work done in collaboration with other Eastside cities to engage with BIPOC communities around the topic of middle housing.
- Formation of a Bellevue 2044 Strategy Team that brought together representatives from the business community, developers, nonprofit leaders, neighborhood leaders, and partners from the local school district to engage in deliberative dialogue around key issues.

In addition, the Snoqualmie Tribe sent a comment letter and their comments have been addressed in the recommended update, including the protection of culturally significant trees, respect for tribal sovereign rights, and support for partnership with tribes in land stewardship and wildlife management, including acknowledgement of ancestral tribal land in environmental and local history education.

A report providing a summary of all community outreach and engagement conducted for Bellevue 2044 is available on <https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/planning-initiatives/comprehensive-plan>. In addition, Bellevue won a VISION 2050 Award from PSRC for community engagement during the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

2. Updated the vision for growth in the City

The vision for growth is succinctly stated in the first policy in the Land Use element:

LU-1. Focus the City's growth and development as follows:

1. Direct most of the City's growth to the Downtown Regional Growth Center, other Countywide Centers (see Map LU-3) and to other areas designated for compact, mixed use development served by a full range of transportation options.
2. Plan for housing growth with a broad range of housing choices to meet the changing needs of the community.
3. Enhance the health and vitality of existing single-family, multi-family and mixed use residential neighborhoods.
4. Provide for commercial uses and development that serve community needs.

There were two primary changes to this policy. The first was to add "Countywide Centers" a new designation by King County. They are areas that support high-capacity transit but are generally smaller than the PSRC-designated "Regional Centers." The second was to add the second item, to "Plan for housing growth with a broad range of housing choices to meet the changing needs of the community." This was added to meet the new requirement under HB 1220 to "Plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock." (RCW 36.70A.020 (1)(4)).

There was strong community support for this vision for growth. By far the most common concern among people the City engaged with was about the cost of housing and the need for more housing, especially housing types that are affordable for entry-level home owners and housing for people who work in Bellevue. There was also broad support for continuing the City's strategy of focusing most of the job and housing growth in growth centers, near transit.

3. Make policy changes in all of the elements that reflect the City's priorities for the next 20 years

The top three priority areas for people in Bellevue as expressed throughout the process are housing and homeownership opportunities, preserving and enhancing the tree canopy, and having convenient access to businesses and things to do. In addition, safety was raised in a variety of contexts throughout the engagement process, including pedestrian and bicycle safety, safety from crime, and safety from racially-motivated violence. The feedback was communicated back to the community and to the decision-makers throughout the process.

The following City boards and commissions were involved in the review and updating of policies, informed by the community feedback. Some of the boards and commissions are required by Bellevue City Code to be involved in the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan. Those boards and

commissions reviewed the policies relevant to their areas of expertise and provided a recommendation to the Planning Commission on the update of them. The Planning Commission received the recommendations of the boards and commissions and evaluated the updates in the context of the broader community feedback, state and regional requirements, and consistency across the entire plan.

- Arts Commission (recommended arts-related policies in the Urban Design and the Arts element to Planning Commission on March 6, 2023)
- Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network
- Environmental Services Commission (recommended policies related to City-managed utilities in the Utilities element to the Planning Commission on March 7, 2023)
- Human Services Commission (recommended policies in the Human Service element to Planning Commission on February 21, 2023)
- Bellevue Network on Aging
- Parks and Community Services Board (recommended policies in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space element to the Planning Commission on February 13, 2023)
- Transportation Commission (recommended policies in the Transportation element to the Planning Commission on March 14, 2023)
- Youth Link Board

All departments in the City organization contributed to the review of the policies in the Comprehensive Plan. In addition to department expertise, the updates to the Comprehensive Plan were informed by the following reports and analysis.

- The EIS including the appendices
 - Historic Resources Survey
 - Air Quality and Land Use Planning Report
 - Bellevue Housing Economic Policy Analysis
 - Impact of Growth Alternatives on Tree Canopy, Technical Report
 - Urban Tree Canopy Assessment
 - Climate Vulnerability Assessment
 - Bellevue Emergency Housing Land Capacity Analysis
 - Bellevue Affordable Housing Capacity Analysis, Technical Report
- Racially Disparate Impact Analysis
- Economic Analysis
- Storm and Surface Water Policy Review and Recommendations, Technical Memorandum

A side-by-side comparison of all of the Comprehensive Plan policies can be found in Attachment F.

4. Update the Future Land Use Map or make policy adjustments to expand housing capacity to plan for the growth targets identified in the CPPs

The Future Land Use Map has been updated to expand housing capacity primarily in the Wilburton Commercial Area and in BelRed around the light rail station areas. Further, the Land Use Map includes additional density near existing and future transit, specifically in the Crossroads commercial area and around Factoria Mall. Housing capacity has also been created to varying degrees in Neighborhood

Centers. The GMA and Chapter 35A.63 RCW require more housing on traditionally single-family lots, creating potential for more density across the City; however the Future Land Use designations will not cause the underlying zoning districts to change in this update, even though some of the parameters of those districts will be updated to comply with state law.

The anticipated growth resulting from these changes is expected to primarily be in Bellevue's growth centers, with almost 80 percent of the City's housing growth by 2044 occurring in Downtown, BelRed, and Wilburton neighborhood areas.

Table 1. Growth by Neighborhood (2019-2044)

Neighborhood	New Jobs	New Housing Units
<i>Neighborhoods with Mixed Use Centers</i>	66,300	32,600
<i>BelRed</i>	14,200	7,900
<i>Crossroads</i>	900	700
<i>Downtown</i>	37,600	14,500
<i>Eastgate & Factoria</i>	2,500	4,600
<i>Wilburton</i>	11,100	4,900
<i>All Other Neighborhoods</i>	3,700	2,400
<i>Total</i>	70,000	35,000

The Future Land Use Map can be found in Attachment C.

5. Explore amending the land use categories used in the Comprehensive Plan map to reference zones more broadly

Some of the Future Land Use categories have been broadened, providing more general direction in the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, this update employs a new approach of using illustrations to show the general character of development intended for most of the Future Land Use designations. The categories and key can be found on page LU-9 to LU-11 of the Comprehensive Plan (Attachment B). A crosswalk showing the relationship between the Future Land Use designations and zoning districts can be found in Attachment G.

6. Update policies to manage growth in the City's identified Countywide Centers and Regional Growth Center

PSRC created a centers framework in the Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) to direct growth in the region and funds for transportation. The largest centers are Regional Centers. In Bellevue, Downtown is designated a Regional Center. Then there are Countywide Centers that are designated by the counties. Bellevue has applied and received approval from King County for five candidate Countywide Centers listed below.

- BelRed
- Crossroads
- Eastgate
- Factoria
- Wilburton/East Main

These centers do not have the same boundaries as the neighborhoods of the same name. The boundaries of these centers can be found on Map LU-3, page LU-13 of the Comprehensive Plan (Attachment B). King County will publish the final criteria for the Countywide Centers in 2025 and Bellevue will apply for recognition of these five candidate centers at that time. Plans for Countywide Centers will be part of the Neighborhood Area Plans they fall within.

7. Amend the housing section to be consistent with the rewritten housing section of the CPPs and address the need for affordable housing

Bellevue's Housing element has been updated to be consistent with state law, the MPPs, and the CPPs. The major changes include:

- Adding policies to minimize displacement, especially of marginalized populations (see policies HO-2, HO-8, HO-32)
- Adding policies to repair historic actions that resulted in racially disparate impacts (see policies HO-3, HO-5, HO-6, HO-10)
- Adding and amending policies to increase access to housing of all types for households at all income levels, including housing for unique needs, middle housing types, and both attached and detached accessory dwelling units (see policies HO-4, HO-9, HO-11 to HO-14, HO-16 to HO-21, HO-63 to HO-66)
- Adding policies to support the creation of affordable housing, especially for households with the lowest incomes (see policies HO-30, HO-34 to HO-36, HO-38, HO-39, HO-53, HO-54, HO-56)
- Adding and amending policies to support the prevention of homelessness (see policies HO-68 to HO-77, HS-24 to HS-30)

8. Include policies that address the legacy of discrimination

The City published the Racially Disparate Impact Analysis, in compliance with the new regulations under HB 1220, to document the legacy of actions and policies that have had racially disparate impacts in the city. This analysis identified policies that could be changed to improve equity in the City. The updates to the policies reflect the recommendations in this analysis. Many of the identified policies also needed to be updated to align with CPPs. The analysis found 69 percent of the Housing element policies were supportive of racial equity because they did not lead to disparate outcomes for different racial groups. Another 18 percent only needed minor changes. There were five policies (13 percent) that needed substantial changes or repeal to address racially disparate impacts on housing. In the substantial revision to the Housing element, these recommendations were followed. In addition, the report made recommendations on 27 policies in other elements (primarily Land Use and Urban Design and the Arts). These recommendations were also incorporated into the update for these other elements.

The Racially Disparate Impact Analysis can be found online at:

https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/2024/rdi_final.pdf.

9. Include policies that address the causes and impacts of climate change

Bellevue's current Comprehensive Plan includes an Environment element. Recent changes to the GMA by HB 1181 add requirements for planning for the causes and impacts of climate change. Bellevue is not required to meet these requirements until 2029. The state Commerce Department has not yet published guidance for cities to meet the new requirements. However, Bellevue did take some steps toward meeting the requirements in this update.

- The Environment element was expanded to include climate change-related issues and was renamed "Climate and Environment."
- The required subsections, "Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction" and "Climate Resiliency" were added to the Climate and Environment element
- The City completed a Climate Impact Analysis as part of the EIS and added several new policies recommended in the analysis to respond to the causes and impacts of climate change (see policies NH-3, NH-11, HO-25, HO-42, TR-32, ED-27, CL-14, CL-66, CL-93, CL-104, HS-6, PA-38, UD-65).

The City is planning to meet the additional requirements added by HB 1181 by the 2029 deadline.

Planning Commission Deliberation

The Planning Commission reviewed the recommendations for the policy updates from the other boards and commissions and discussed additional updates. A Public Hearing draft of the Comprehensive Plan was published for community review with a public hearing held before the Planning Commission on June 20 and 26. The Planning Commission made the following two changes to the Public Hearing draft of the Comprehensive Plan:

- The Future Land Use Designation on the Crossroads Mall parcel was changed to Midrise Mixed Use with the center of the parcel being Highrise Mixed Use.
- The Future Land Use Designation "Lowrise Mixed Use" was split into two designations:
 - "Lowrise 1 Mixed Use" (associated with the zones Community Business and Neighborhood Business) and
 - "Lowrise 2 Mixed Use" (associate with the proposed zone Mixed Use – Low/Medium).

After the Planning Commission recommendation, PSRC submitted feedback on a draft of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff-recommended changes to respond to this feedback are included in Attachment E.

In addition, the plan has been corrected by a professional copy editor and minor mistakes and typos have been corrected. The City has also contracted with a photographer to take current photographs of the City to include in the update to the plan.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

The Comprehensive Plan is the foundation for all other plans in Bellevue. The last periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2015, although the City has adopted amendments to the Comprehensive Plan almost annually. This update includes a growth strategy for the next 20 years and aligns the plan with Council Vision and state, regional, and county requirements.

Fiscal Impact

The Comprehensive Plan is the City's guiding policy document that looks out over a 20-year planning period. Functional plans are developed or updated as future steps. The precise fiscal impacts of the Comprehensive Plan update are addressed as projects identified in functional plans are implemented.

OPTIONS

1. Direct staff to prepare the Ordinance adopting the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update as recommended by the Planning Commission.
2. Ask staff to return with answers to questions or potential changes to the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan prior to providing direction for final action.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Planning Commission Recommendation
- B. Recommended Comprehensive Plan, Volume 1 – General Elements
- C. Recommended Future Land Use Map
- D. Recommended Comprehensive Plan, Volume 2 – Subarea/Neighborhood Plans
- E. Changes Post Planning Commission Recommendation
- F. Policy Change Document (Volume 1 & 2)
- G. Crosswalk between Future Land Use Designations and Zoning Districts

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A