



Bellevue Planning Commission

A Resolution of the Planning Commission October 22, 2025

Critical Areas Ordinance Update Land Use Code Amendment Recommendation

AYE	NAY	ABSENT	
X			Negin Khanloo, Chair
X			Jonny Lu, Vice-Chair
X			Andres Villaveces
X			Carolynn Ferris
X			Mariah Kennedy
X			Arshia Nilchian
X			Craighton Goepppele
On the motion of: Commissioner Goepppele			
Seconded by: Vice Chair Lu			
The following resolution was adopted: To recommend the Critical Areas Ordinance Land Use Code Amendment to the City Council as set forth in Attachment A to the agenda memo.			

WHEREAS, the Growth Management Act, Chapter 36.70A RCW (GMA), requires local jurisdictions to periodically review and evaluate their adopted critical areas policies and regulations using Best Available Science (BAS) to ensure protection of these areas; and

WHEREAS, the Bellevue City Council initiated processing of this Land Use Code Amendment to update the City's Critical Areas Ordinance on February 25, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Plan Policy CL-52 directs the use of geotechnical information and an analysis of critical areas functions and values to evaluate the geologic and environmental risks of potential development on geologically hazardous areas and implement appropriate controls on development; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Plan Policy CL-54 directs the use of specific criteria in decisions to exempt specific small, isolated or artificially created steep slopes from critical areas designation; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Plan Policy CL-87 requires and provides incentives for the opening of piped stream segments during redevelopment where scientific analysis demonstrates that substantial habitat function can be restored, and where the cost of restoration is not disproportionate to the community and environmental benefit; and



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WHEREAS, Comprehensive Plan Policy CL-88 supports preservation and enhancement of native vegetation in Critical Area buffers and integrate suitable native plants in urban landscape development, considering species' climate resilience; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Plan Policy CL-100 directs the use of prescriptive development regulations for critical areas based on the type of critical area and the functions to be protected; and as an alternative to the prescriptive regulations, allow for a site specific or programmatic critical areas study to provide a science-based approach to development that will achieve an equal or better result for the critical area functions; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Plan Policy CL-106 facilitates the transfer of development potential away from critical areas and the clustering of development on the least sensitive portion of a site.; and

WHEREAS, Section 3.64.070 Bellevue City Code and section 20.35.410 Land Use Code establishes the powers and duties of the Planning Commission to act in an advisory capacity to the City Council by holding public hearings, advising, and making recommendations to the City Council on land use ordinances and regulations to implement the comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Development Services Department encouraged public participation and provided information on the land use code amendment on its website; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held study sessions on April 23, 2025, May 28, 2025, June 25, 2025, July 23, 2025, and September 24, 2025, to discuss the proposed Critical Areas Ordinance Update Land Use Code Amendment; and

WHEREAS, after providing legally required public notice, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 22, 2025, for the proposed Critical Areas Ordinance Update Land Use Code Amendment; and

WHEREAS the Planning Commission finds that the proposed amendments meet the decision criteria of LUC 20.30J.135 and are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, enhance the public safety and welfare, and are not contrary to the best interest of the citizens and property owners of the City of Bellevue; now, therefore,

THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDS TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT IT ADOPTS THE CRITICAL AREAS ORDINANCE UPDATE LAND USE CODE AMENDMENT (FILE NO. 25-116714 AD).

Negin Khanloo, Chair

Date

Thara Johnson, staff liaison

Date