



DATE: November 2, 2023

TO: Chair Stash and members of the Transportation Commission

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SUBJECT: BelRed Subarea Plan Policy Amendments

DIRECTION REQUESTED

- Action
- Discussion/Direction
- Information

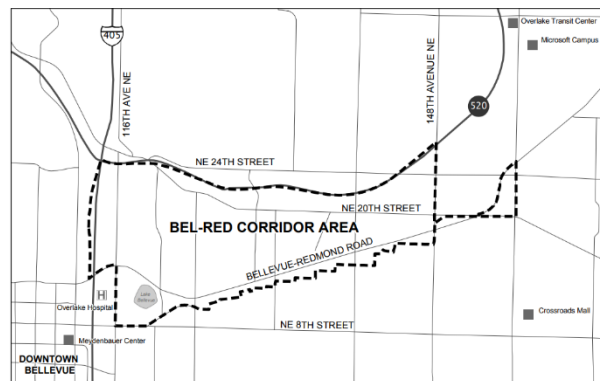
Staff will provide a review of the BelRed Look Forward initiative and will present a preliminary recommendation of draft transportation policy amendments (Attachments A and B) for the BelRed Subarea Plan. These preliminary policy recommendations are being prepared in the context of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, and they may be modified after the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Comprehensive Plan is released early in 2024.

Staff request that the Transportation Commission discuss and provide suggestions on these draft transportation policy amendments. On December 13, 2024 at the Planning Commission, staff will share these policy recommendations as amended to include Transportation Commission input.

No Action from the Transportation Commission is requested at this time.

BACKGROUND/INFORMATION

In 2009, after a multi-year planning process, the City Council adopted a new [BelRed Subarea Plan](#). Similar to the Wilburton Commercial Area Study of 2018, the Bel-Red Corridor work program engaged a Steering Committee, appointed by the City Council in 2005. This committee included former City Council members, representatives from the Planning Commission, Transportation Commission, and Parks & Community Services Board, and representatives from the area and surrounding community.



Supported by staff and a consultant team, the Steering Committee prepared a final report that formed the basis for the BelRed Subarea Plan and the Land Use Code. These documents articulate and implement the vision to transform the BelRed Subarea from a declining light industrial area into an area with “thriving businesses”, “livable neighborhoods”, and a “multimodal transportation system that connects the area to the greater city and region”. A significant amount of added development capacity was envisioned in the BelRed Subarea Plan, and it is being implemented through the provisions of the Land Use Code specific to BelRed, the BelRed [Land Use Code Chapter BCC 20.25D](#).



Many changes have taken place in BelRed under those new subarea plan policies and land use regulations. New offices and residential buildings form the core land uses in nodes around new light rail stations. Since 2009, over 2,100 housing units and 2.2 million square feet of non-residential space have been developed, and another 3,100 housing units and 1.3 million square feet of office development are in the pipeline, indicating that BelRed is on track to meet the 5,000 housing unit and 10,000 job growth projected for the subarea by 2030.

New and extended arterials and local streets support this land use and provide access for all modes. Where there were once “grey” parking lots, there are now a few “green” open spaces.

Staff have shared the story of the BelRed transformation at various local, state and national conferences, and the BelRed plan itself has won awards, including the Governor’s Smart Communities Award in 2010, and the Puget Sound Regional Council Vision 2040 Award in 2010.

Now, after more than a decade of experience implementing BelRed policies and the Land Use Code, the City Council has directed that the BelRed policies be refreshed to reflect changed circumstances, and that this work be done in concert with the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. This is the BelRed Look Forward initiative.



POLICY ISSUES

In the BelRed Subarea Plan, amendments to transportation policies – along with other policy topics- are recommended. While several policies will continue to provide support and direction for years to come, amendments to other policies are needed due to changed circumstances, and some policies are recommended to be repealed because the policy topic is covered elsewhere, or the policy is not needed because the project or implementation strategy to which it refers is complete. Policy amendments or new policies across several topic areas including transportation may be informed by the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

In Attachment A, staff has compiled the BelRed Subarea Plan transportation policies and has provided a recommendation to retain, to repeal, or to amend that policy, together with a brief explanation. No new transportation policies are recommended at this time. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (release anticipated Q1 2024) may reveal some policy gaps that will be addressed.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will share draft BelRed Subarea transportation policies with the Planning Commission in December. After the Final Environmental Impact Statement has been released, staff will return to the Transportation Commission with any new transportation policy amendments that are informed by the FEIS document and analysis. Then the Transportation Commission will transmit a final recommendation to the Planning Commission.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A. Preliminary Staff Recommendations for Transportation Policy Amendments in the BelRed Subarea Plan (Legislative mark-up version)

Attachment B. Preliminary Staff Recommendations for Transportation Policy Amendments in the BelRed Subarea Plan (Clean version)