



# Bellevue Planning Commission

March 27, 2024

## PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

### **SUBJECT**

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update: Staff Recommended Policy Changes in the Capital Facilities, Utilities, and Urban Design and the Arts Elements

### **STAFF CONTACTS**

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### **POLICY ISSUES**

Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan provides the roadmap for growth in the City. Washington State's Growth Management Act (GMA) directs counties and cities to periodically update their Comprehensive Plans. The update was launched February 28, 2022 and has included extensive public engagement. This memo focuses on staff-recommended updates to policies in the following elements:

- Capital Facilities
- Utilities
- Urban Design and the Arts

### **DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**ACTION**

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**DIRECTION**

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**INFORMATION ONLY**

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### **BACKGROUND**

A summary of the background and mandate for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update was included in the memos for the January 24 and March 13 Planning Commission meetings and is not reprinted here for brevity.

At this meeting, the Commission will review staff recommended updates to the policies based on Commission feedback, community engagement, potential mitigation measures and other

recommendations in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and study documents, and state and regional requirements. The update to the policies in these elements can be found in Attachment A and the glossary can be found in Attachment B.

In recent months, the City engaged with the community about the updates to the policies through a survey, two in-person events and visits to local middle and high schools. The results of this engagement are discussed in the sections below for each element.

## **POLICY UPDATES – CAPITAL FACILITIES**

The Capital Facilities element is about how the City plans for, acquires, and maintains public land, facilities, buildings, and other public property. Throughout the process, community members have emphasized the need for Bellevue to plan for facilities to keep pace with growth, especially Bellevue’s emergency services and the parks and community centers. The City has received input during Phase 3 of the update process through the online survey and in-person events. Respondents were supportive of updates to include sustainability considerations in this element. Some respondents desired the City to go further in its commitment to sustainability through the use of solar or in locating new facilities near transit. The suggestion that facilities be located near transit was also mentioned to increase multimodal access to public facilities. Some respondents expressed a desire for more explicit policies about siting facilities in areas that are expected to see significant growth such as Downtown, Wilburton and BelRed. In addition, there were some comments about adding policies for the creation of new facilities such as a performing arts center, a multicultural center or other community centers. All of the comments relating to the Capital Facilities element are included in Attachment C.

Staff do not recommend any additional changes to the policies based on this feedback at this time. The types of facilities mentioned above are generally planned for through parks and recreation planning processes or other complementary efforts. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space element does include a new policy (PA-16) to plan for facilities to meet the demand for recreation and leisure activities, which supports the investigation of the need for new facilities such as the ones mentioned.

Below, the policy updates in the Capital Facilities (CF) element are listed by subsection, highlighting the main changes in the subsection. Changes that are a clarification or a grammatical change are not included below. Attachment A contains the strike/underline of all policy changes in this element, including minor edits that are not highlighted in this memo.

### *Capital Planning*

In this subsection, policies focus on promoting technically sound and effectively coordinated capital planning processes in line with the Capital Facilities Vision.

- CF-2. Added to align with Countywide Planning Policy CPP-PF-2.

- CF-3. Updated to specify target service level.
- CF-5. DEIS mitigation measure (10.4). Clarified relationship to Land Use element. Combined with (old number) CF-4 and (old number) CF-6.
- CF-6. Updated to add condition and compliance.
- CF-8. Updated to include operations and maintenance.

### *High Performance Facilities*

In this subsection, policies focus on delivering excellent capital facilities that meet high facility-specific service standards, meet or exceed green certification standards, and support other community priorities, such as equity, health, financial stewardship, and environmental sustainability.

- CF-15. Updated to add climate impacts. Updated to clarify elements of the Response and Recovery Plan. Aligns with CPP-PF-25.
- CF-16. Added to align with CPP-PF-26.
- CF-17. Added to include climate impacts in assessments of existing public facilities.
- CF-18. Added to align with CPP-PF-25.
- CF-19. Added to address the gap in solid waste management at City facilities.
- CF-20. Recommendation from Stormwater Assessment.
- CF-21. Added to respond to state requirements for Energy Management Plans and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Plans for all City-owned buildings.
- CF-22. Added to align with CPP-PF-24.
- CF-23. Added to support the expansion of electric vehicle charging stations.

### *Essential Public Facilities*

In this subsection, policies focus on facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities, and state or regional transportation facilities as defined in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.06.140. These policies intend to improve coordination, decisions, and outcomes for the siting and management of these facilities.

- CF-25. Updated to include all stages of a building's life.
- CF-28. Updated to align with CPP-PF-24.
- CF-29. Updated language to include all types of residential districts.
- CF-30. Added to align with CPP-PF-24.

## **POLICY UPDATES – UTILITIES**

The Utilities element is about how the City manages and coordinates public water, wastewater, surface and stormwater systems as well as access to private utilities such as electricity, internet, and gas. The Environmental Services Commission has been engaged in the update of the

policies focused on City-managed utilities (policies UT-1 to UT-44) since the launch of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

At its March 7 meeting the Environmental Services Commission recommended the amendments to the policies relating to City-managed utilities in the Utilities element as part of the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan. A copy of the transmittal letter detailing their deliberation process and recommendation is included in Attachment D.

Throughout the engagement process, we have heard from the community about the importance of considering growth in planning for utilities to make sure that we are able to meet the needs of future residents of Bellevue. The feedback the City has heard through Phase 3 is consistent with this. There was support for updates that address environmental sustainability and climate change. There were some concerns in response to this element that utilities plan for emergencies so that they can continue service after a major disruption. In addition, there was some concern about maintaining competition in internet providers. The City has also heard calls to reduce the impact on the environment by Puget Sound Energy (PSE). Updates to this element include support for collaboration with PSE in planning for energy in the City. All comments related to the Utilities element are included in Attachment E.

Staff have incorporated community concerns about planning for utilities to meet the future service demands as the population expands and do not recommend additional changes to this element at this time based on the Phase 3 community feedback.

Below, the policy updates in the Utilities element are listed by subsection, highlighting the main changes in the subsection. Changes that are a clarification or a grammatical change are not included below. Attachment A contains the strike/underline of all policy changes in this element, including minor edits that are not highlighted in this memo.

### *General Utility System*

In this subsection, policies focus on the development, management and planning of the utility system as a whole.

- UT-1. Updated to broaden the policy to include more management concerns.
- UT-2. Updated to clarify policy intent.
- UT-13. Updated to reflect current state requirements and industry standards.

### *Utility Coordination*

In this subsection, policies focus on the coordination among many organizations necessary to provide reliable utility service.

- UT-14. Updated to clarify policy intent.
- UT-15. Updated to clarify policy intent and removed overlap with UT-14.

- UT-16. Updated to clarify conditions of utility extension.
- UT-17. Updated to remove overlap with UT-14 and UT-15 to focus on cost reimbursement.

### *Solid Waste*

In this subsection, policies focus on the safe disposal of solid waste in accordance with the King County Solid Waste Disposal Plan.

- UT-24. Updated to remove discussion. Will be addressed in narrative introduction.
- UT-26. Updated to include equity in elements to consider.

### *Wastewater Utility*

In this subsection, policies focus on the operation, maintenance, and extension of the sewage collection system to respond to the needs of residents and commercial establishments.

- UT-31. Updated to remove the word ‘reliable’ because it is addressed in UT-1, retained focus on public health, safety and the environment.
- UT-33. Updated to strengthen language around connection to wastewater systems consistent with CPP-PF-12. Clarified financial responsibility.

### *Storm and Surface Water Utility*

In this subsection, policies focus on developing and maintaining storm and surface water utility service to all properties in the City at the appropriate level of service to accommodate the City’s projected growth.

- UT-34. Updated to include maintenance. Updated to use more inclusive language.
- UT-36. Updated to remove subjective language.
- UT-38. Updated to reflect current state requirements and industry standards.

### *Water Utility*

In this subsection, policies focus on developing and maintaining water utility service to all properties in the City at the appropriate level of service to accommodate the City’s projected growth.

- UT-39. Updated to remove overlap with UT-41.
- UT-41. Updated to reflect system performance needs during emergencies.

### *General Non City-Managed Utilities*

In this subsection, policies focus on planning for adequate provision of utilities, taking into consideration the public service obligation of the utility involved.

- UT-50. Updated to broaden the applicability to utilities beyond telecommunications.
- UT-53. Updated to include specific impacts.
- UT-54. Updated to add equipment support facilities to this policy from UT-77.
- UT-55. Updated to remove subjective language.
- UT-57. Updated to remove first sentence as it is redundant with TR-97. Focus on coordination.
- UT-59. Updated to specify conversion away from fossil fuels.
- UT-60. Updated to remove discussion section. It is redundant with CF-21.
- UT-63. Updated to add consideration for equitable impacts.

### *Power Utility*

In this subsection, policies focus on collaboration with utility providers to provide highly reliable service through the planning, siting, building and maintenance of an electrical system that meets the needs of existing and future development, including its undergrounding and incorporating emerging concepts that better address the community's interests.

- UT-67. Updated to clarify policy intent. Removed discussion.
- UT-69 & -70. Updated to split into two policies, UT-69 and UT-70.
- UT-76. Updated to broaden the application of the siting analysis. Removed discussion.
- UT-77. Updated to clarify that this applies to visual impacts.
- UT-80. Added to support planning for conversion to clean energy.
- UT-82. Added to support planning for climate change.

### *Telecommunications Utility*

In this subsection, policies focus on the provision of telecommunications services throughout the City and encourage new technology that is consistent with a balancing of costs and benefits of the following factors: health and safety, aesthetics, the environment and the economy.

- UT-85. Updated to broaden the language to include all impacts.
- UT-88. Updated to broaden policy to include the intent of UT-88, (old number) UT-65, and (old number) UT-83.
- UT-89. Updated to include all types of residential housing in residential areas and align with categories used in this update.
- UT-91. Updated to align with code authority and to specify that this applies to applicants for telecommunications permits.
- UT-92. Updated to broaden policy to focus on desired outcome.

## **POLICY UPDATES – URBAN DESIGN AND THE ARTS**

The Urban Design and the Arts element is about how the City provides a foundation for the continued development of the arts and the built environment. Arts and culture policies are a subset of policies within this element that seeks to foster a strong arts and cultural community through a wide range of artists, art and cultural institutions, privately and publicly owned artwork, and events. The Arts Commission has been engaged in the update of the policies focused on the development of BelRed Arts District (UD-28 and UD-29), arts and culture in Bellevue (policies UD-48 to UD-61), and historic resources and landmarks (UD-62 to UD-67) since the launch of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

At its March 6 meeting the Arts Commission unanimously recommended the amendments to the policies relating to arts and culture policies in the Urban Design and the Arts element as part of the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan. A copy of the transmittal letter detailing their deliberation process and recommendation is included in Attachment F.

Throughout the engagement process, the community has consistently communicated a desire for lively neighborhoods with a variety of activities for people of all ages. The feedback from the community during Phase 3 for the Urban Design and the Arts element included support for the BelRed Arts District. In addition, programs that build community like festival streets and the use of universal design also had a lot of support from respondents. Middle and high school students that participated in the activities around the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update through their schools often cited the desire for more things to do in Bellevue, especially low-cost activities, and the need for places that welcome youth with interesting programming and amenities where they can gather. Other respondents also called out a need for policies around developing programming and places to celebrate Bellevue's rich diversity, such as performing arts spaces for music, theater or dance. In particular, some respondents felt that there were not enough policies recognizing the contributions of older adults and the LGBTQIA+ community to the culture of Bellevue.

Staff is not recommending any additional changes to the Urban Design and the Arts element at this time. Staff recommended changes to policies in the BelRed Subarea Plan further support the development of a BelRed Arts District. The development of arts and cultural activities happens in many ways. The city has supported the development of new cultural events such as "Paws and Pride Dog Jog and Walk" sponsored by the Bellevue Downtown Association in 2023. New policies in the Urban Design and the Arts element such as UD-57, UD-59 and UD-60 will support a larger city role in the development of future cultural activities and events.

Below, the policy updates in the Urban Design and the Arts element are listed by subsection, highlighting the main changes in the subsection. Changes that are a clarification or a grammatical change are not included below. The largest change in this element was a reorganization of the policies so that it is clear to what geography they apply (for example,

mixed use areas) and to make the policies easier to find and understand. Attachment A contains the strike/underline of all policy changes in this element, including minor edits that are not highlighted in this memo.

### *Citywide Public Experience*

In this subsection, policies focus on providing a design framework for community development and guidelines that reinforce and enhance the City's positive characteristics and honor each of its unique neighborhoods.

- UD-1. Updated to combine (old number) UD-6 and UD-1.
- UD-5. Updated to remove subjective language.
- UD-6. Updated to combine (old number) UD-85 and UD-6.
- UD-9. Updated to combine (old number) UD-55 and UD-9.
- UD-11. Added to support design of inclusive spaces.

### *Mixed Use Areas*

In this subsection, policies focus on design qualities applicable to Bellevue's mixed-use areas, including Mixed Use Centers and Neighborhood Centers, that contribute to the City's urban form, address potential impacts to surrounding areas, and provide variety in building, site, and streetscape design.

- UD-13. Updated to combine (old number) UD-44, (old number) UD-49, and UD-13.
- UD-14. Updated to combine (old number) UD-61 and UD-14.
- UD-20. Updated to combine (old number) UD-75 and UD-20.

### *Mixed-Use Center*

In this subsection, policies focus on supporting the functionality and livability of Mixed-Use Centers through high quality urban design reflective of neighborhood identity, and complementary to its surroundings.

- UD-22. Updated to combine (old number) UD-33, (old number) UD-40, and UD-22.
- UD-28. Added to support the BelRed Arts District.
- UD-29. Added to support the BelRed Arts District.

### *Neighborhood Center Design*

In this subsection, policies focus on the design and future development of our neighborhood centers as mixed-use neighborhood places that are walkable and serve as gathering space for residents.

- UD-30 and 31. Updated to apply specifically to Neighborhood Centers.



### *Street and Corridor Experience*

In this subsection, policies focus on connecting different parts of the City through streets and corridors by design as streetscape elements can contribute to an area's design identity.

- UD-34. Updated to describe appropriate tree species and to detail sidewalk conditions.
- UD-37. Updated to combine (old number) UD-79 and UD-37.

### *Pedestrian Experience*

In this subsection, policies focus on enhancing the pedestrian experience through integrating amenities into both private development and public places to create a distinct sense of community and place.

- UD-40. Updated to combine (old number) UD-60 and UD-40.
- UD-41. Updated to combine (old number) UD-72 and UD-41.

### *Sustainable and Environmental Design*

In this subsection, policies focus on enhancing sustainability and the City's commitment toward environmental stewardship in the design of both the built environment and open spaces.

- UD-44. Updated to combine (old number) UD-37, (old number) UD-38 and UD-44.
- UD-46. Added to encourage education around sustainable design.

### *Arts and Culture*

In this subsection, policies focus on fostering and supporting a strong arts and cultural community and their integration into the built environment.

- UD-48. Updated to combine (old number) UD-17 and UD-48.
- UD-55. Updated to focus on City role.
- UD-57. Added to include Neighborhood Centers specifically.
- UD-58. Added to support broader arts and cultural program.
- UD-59. Added to support broader arts and cultural program.
- UD-60. Added to support broader arts and cultural program.
- UD-61. Updated to use more inclusive language.

### *Landmarks and Historic Resources*

In this subsection, policies focus on the identification and preservation of a range of landmarks and historic resources as Bellevue develops.

- UD-62. Added to support consideration of a future historic preservation program. DEIS mitigation measure (Appendix D, 5.1).

- UD-63. Updated to broaden focus of policy to include all historically significant sites.
- UD-64. Updated based on a mitigation measure identified in DEIS and a recommendation in Climate Vulnerability Assessment.
- UD-65, 66 and 67. Added to support consideration of a future historic preservation program.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update: Proposed Amendments
- B. Glossary
- C. Capital Facilities Element Questionnaire Responses
- D. Environmental Services Commission Transmittal Letter
- E. Utilities Element Recommended Questionnaire Responses
- F. Arts Commission Transmittal Letter
- G. Urban Design and the Arts Questionnaire Responses