

Nesse, Katherine

From: Parmacek (US), Brett <Brett.Parmacek@boeing.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2025 10:09 PM
To: Council Inquiry; Council; Robinson, Lynne; Malakoutian, Mo; Bhargava, Vishal; Lee, Conrad; Nieuwenhuis, Jared; Sumadiwiry, Claire; Hamilton, Dave
Cc: wilkelaurie@hotmail.com; coach.wilke@gmail.com; pm.murphy@siemens.com; karriemurp@msn.com; vparmacek@gmail.com
Subject: Response to Kirsten Mandt's -Senior Planner - : Submission of letter with regard to Middle Housing. - [#7335]
Attachments: Dear Mayor and City Council 5-13-25.docx; Letter to COB Mayor.pdf
Importance: High
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Some people who received this message don't often get email from brett.parmacek@boeing.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL Notice!] Outside communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.

Hi Kristen,

Thanks for your response, but we do not think you fully answered the questions posed in our original email.

Here are our thoughts.

We have taken some of the items in your response in red below to respond to more directly, but first, an overall statement.

The Planning Commission has not convinced us that it was necessary to be aggressive on middle housing. Adopting anything more than the State mandates is not justifiable. The speed and breadth of the plan are very uncomfortable. We anticipate Bellevue will grow, however, we want to assure it is good for the city and the communities that will be impacted. Again, all we are asking for is to plan the growth in a way that supports the current communities responsibly and strategically. We believe that starting with the state minimum, we can work to test out the processes for the rollout. By doing this in an orderly way, we can make sure we are growing in a sustainable way that keeps our communities vibrant and allows us to all learn how to best develop our city. It appears there is a growing reticence, or resistance, to doing the plan proposed by the planning commission. But it is your job to make sure that Bellevue grows in a way that creates a stronger Bellevue. You can create rules around how we grow our city. You can create a simple and phased approach, but it is apparent that you are not moving in this direction. We believe the Planning Commission recommendation is a shotgun approach and that it will lead to many unfortunate outcomes. Again, grow Bellevue in a phased and controlled approach, allowing for measures to be put in place that allow us to learn and grow from the early experiences. We have made many suggestions on how to do this. These documents are attached. We encourage all those Bcc'd to respond directly to the Bellevue City Council and others in the To: line to voice your concerns.

Here are the additional questions we have to your points in red from your response:

3. Citywide zoning changes are noted in the weekly permit bulletin. However, no rezones are required to implement the middle housing code changes.

Again, this sounds like a done deal. If a developer secures any Single-Family lot in Bellevue, they can build according to the middle housing plan you are promoting without the neighborhoods having any say. We are asking for a phased approach. Limit building to certain areas of neighborhoods as a starting point before allowing any lot to be developed. The starting point should be to **Prioritize Middle Housing at the entrances to Neighborhoods before moving them to the middle of a neighborhood.**

If Middle housing is built closer to the Main roads (entrances and exits), there will be better walkability to transit. The City of Bellevue would be better able to evaluate to see if it works, understand the challenges, and Middle Housing (multi-units) then implement any new rules for further expansion.

Example – In Chevy Chase Neighborhood, you could allow Middle Housing (multi-units) to be built within the first 3 lots, on both sides, of the entrance to the neighborhood. These lots would be closest to 148th Ave. Instead of a “puzzle pieced” development, this would allow the interior character of the neighborhood to be maintained, minimize interior traffic, and still allow for increased density for that neighborhood.

4. Land use change signs are not provided for citywide changes, only for area-specific rezones.

Any new building should not be a surprise. Any development in an established neighborhood, outside of a Single-Family home, should have some level of notice. It would allow our neighbors to prepare and have a voice.

6. New projects will be required to show compliance with traffic standards and requirements as applicable at the time of application. This may or may not require a traffic study, depending on the project and its location

We believe that this is critical, especially deep within established neighborhoods. Should be a requirement, as on-street parking will cause neighborhoods to lose walkability and create issues for bikes and pets. This should be an easy enough checklist item for the city. It makes our neighborhoods safe and allows us to track growth.

10. Staff is working on developing informational materials and opportunities for the community to learn more about the code changes with the land use staff once the code is adopted.

These materials need to be developed and handed out before development starts. This will allow residents to better understand the growth the city is championing.

11. No, applicants will need to provide as part of their permit submittal evidence that they meet the ½ mile walking distance standard to the relevant transit stop

Why is this not a requirement? The State limit is ¼ mile. But there should be evidence before the build. What kind of penalties will be assessed if the developers do not abide, as we know they will fudge numbers?

14. Development occurs on a project-by-project basis today. The city cannot require or preclude property owners from developing their property if they meet all the code and other development requirements, such as access to utilities, stormwater, etc.

Again, this is where the City could phase out how it meets the State requirements. The city has the responsibility to grow the city in an appropriate, strategic, and measured way. Not doing it in a phased approach is negligent. We again want to grow the city in a way that promotes what is already working and integrates new development where it works. Our city cannot afford a shotgun approach if we want to maintain the Bellevue of the future.

Other Items

- Where is the focus on the Trees. How do we protect them? Developers will likely request the removal of trees to maximize the use of their lots. In Bellevue, we have worked hard to protect our trees, and now with the new development code being pushed by the Planning Commission, it seems our trees may be in danger. What are we doing to ensure that Trees are protected? What restrictions and penalties (fines) will be levied if Trees are removed or damaged? How will we hold developers accountable?
- Please see the latest Article in the Urbanist Magazine “**Bellevue Councilmembers Twist Themselves in Knots Over Middle Housing Changes**”
<https://www.theurbanist.org/2025/05/21/bellevue-councilmembers-in-knots-over-middle-housing-changes/>

Lastly,

We fully support Mr. Bhargava’s request for specific performance parameters to evaluate real traffic, real infrastructure, real environmental concerns, and real Tree Canopy impacts. These should be written and then used to evaluate development in an “initial phase” of an amended LUCA. We concur with his analysis that implementing a more aggressive plan than the State requires will lead to more risk that potentially can’t be walked back. Mr. Lee suggested that Wilburton would be a good opportunity for a “pilot phase”. We agree with his idea to “try it there”. We also applaud Mayor Robinson’s suggestion that the individual characteristics of different neighborhoods should be considered as implementation takes place.

We expect a more assertive outreach from the city in the future on this and future changes impacting the city. The upzoning mandate is so broad that few citizens understand the concept. We were told it was on the website. Websites are a form of passive communication. The city has multiple tools at its disposal and needs to do a better job. Newspaper articles, signage, magazines, podcasts, and neighborhood Apps like “Next Door” or even real estate sites like Redfin, Zillow, and the like are effective ways of engaging the public. We deserve better communication.

Thank you,

The Members of the Rockwood/Lancaster Neighborhoods

From: Council Inquiry council-inquiry@bellevuewa.gov

Sent: Monday, May 19, 2025 2:07 PM

To: Parmacek (US), Brett Brett.Parmacek@boeing.com

Cc: wilkelaurie@hotmail.com; coach.wilke@gmail.com; pm.murphy@siemens.com; karriemurp@msn.com; vparmacek@gmail.com

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Submission of letter with regard to Middle Housing. - [#7335]

EXT email: be mindful of links/attachments.

Hi Brett,

Thank you for taking the time to reach out to the city regarding this project. Below provides responses to the questions provided, however we would like to note that many of the questions touch on topic areas that are regulated outside of the scope of the land use code, such as fire department requirements. If

you would like to connect directly to staff in those departments we would be happy to work on connecting them.

1. Frontage improvements, which include upgrades to sidewalks, will be required of new development except for ADUs which are exempt from frontage improvements per state law.
2. Setbacks are measured from the property line, which is typically the back line of the sidewalk
3. Citywide zoning changes are noticed in the weekly permit bulletin. However, no rezones are required to implement the middle housing code changes.
4. Land use change signs are not provided for citywide changes, only for area specific rezones.
5. When possible, the fire department requires turnarounds at the end of long dead-end roads. Depending on the existing conditions upgrades may be needed, which will rely on how much right-of-way is available. Ultimately, if needed, new projects will require sprinkler systems.
6. New projects will be required to show compliance with traffic standards and requirements as applicable at time of application. This may or may not require a traffic study depending on the project and its location
7. Staff is beginning work on pre-approved plans for detached ADUs and Council may consider extending this project to include cottage structures.
8. All projects are required to comply with stormwater management standards that are developed by the county in coordination with the state. This typically includes groundwater monitoring and soil testing to understand the site-specific soil infiltration. Projects must show how they will manage their storm water in order to gain approval. Projects will also have to demonstrate compliance with the tree code.
9. Our utilities department coordinates with Republic Services as the city's contractor for solid waste and recycling pick-up throughout the city including responding to customer inquiries
10. Staff is working on developing informational materials and opportunities for the community to learn more about the code changes with the land use staff once code is adopted.
11. No, applicants will need to provide as part of their permit submittal evidence that they meet the ½ mile walking distance standard to the relevant transit stop
12. City staff continue to coordinate with PSE as they develop their feasibility study work.
13. Staffing considerations are made when the department reviews the budget. Departmental leadership continues to monitor staffing and workload levels, along with budget, to determine if staffing changes are needed.
14. Development occurs on a project by project basis today. The city cannot require or preclude property owners from developing their property as long as they meet all of the code and other development requirements, such as access to utilities, stormwater, etc.
15. The current recommended draft includes a minimum parking space of one spot per unit, and any existing restrictions on parking on public streets will remain and continue to be managed by our Transportation Department.

Trees?



Kirsten Mandt (She/Her)

Senior Planner, Code and Policy

Development Services, City of Bellevue

[425-452-4861](tel:425-452-4861) | kmandt@bellevuewa.gov | BellevueWA.Gov

On Fri, 9 May at 12:05 PM , Parmacek (US), Brett <brett.parmacek@boeing.com> wrote:

[EXTERNAL EMAIL Notice!] Outside communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.

Dear City Council Members,

Upfront, we would ask that you read our letter with the understanding that we are just ordinary residents with no ties to Developers or any of the Special Interest Groups. Developers seek greater profit. They have unlikely supporters from the non-profit realm who hold a misplaced belief that increased density will result in affordable housing. Even cursory financial analysis demonstrates how unrealistic this is. We understand that the City of Bellevue (referred to as City going forward) must respond to the ambitious Washington State Mandates. However, we see no need to exceed State requirements since it will not result in Affordable Housing, and it will place excessive strain on our existing infrastructure.

As we listened to the April 23rd Planning Commissions' deliberations, we appreciated hearing Vice-Chair, Ms. Khanloo, state "This is not affordable housing!" The Commission acknowledged that as of November 2024, the cost for a 500 square foot studio in Bellevue was \$500,000. With prices continuing to rise, how can construction of even that size unit be affordable? Ms. Ferris conceded that although it won't be affordable housing, at least there will be more housing.

We've all heard from many people who, currently "can't afford to live in Bellevue but want to raise their family here". In community discussion, the hope was expressed that if the inventory of new houses increases then "supply & demand dynamics" would work to make housing more affordable. Yet can anyone name a recent time when dynamics of supply & demand in homes in Bellevue resulted in a reduction in price per square foot?

We do understand the need and mandate for additional housing. What we are asking the Council to consider is a phased approach that allows adequate time to integrate City Departments and utilities for deployment of necessary infrastructure updates to support the proposed growth. There are still many unknowns. It is fortunate that Mr. Bhargava is now a part of the Council. Our transcription of his remarks highlights our greatest concerns and frustration if this moves ahead without more planning.

Mr. Bhargava stated: "This is a large-scale densification of Bellevue. However, we apply it, and however we do the magic of making sure it's very thoughtful and lightening for the structure that the city has for water, sewer.... think of any infrastructure component required for densification of the city. Is the city confident and do we have a clear, thoughtful approach to make sure that it's not going to become a bottleneck in any way as this starts to execute? And that's not a here and now snapshot, because just like everything, infrastructure evolves as well. Is there a plan...?"

Kirsten Mandt replied. At the conclusion of her answer, Mr. Bhargava's response was "So, not convincing the way you framed it right now..." That is our response as well!

The Middle Housing proposal recommendation that you are deciding on has the potential to impact all of us in significant ways. We hope that the City doesn't begin the process in a manner that jeopardizes the existing unique and diverse neighborhoods that include mature trees and people (i.e. retired folks on fixed incomes) by making mistakes that cannot be undone or that result in unnecessary litigation.

As lay people, we don't have the knowledge or background to speak about our concerns in any sort of "polished" manner. However, our hope is that through this document, and the attached list of additional questions, we have outlined concerns which are common to many in the "silent majority". It's notable that they

are silent because of the minimal "outreach" which City Staff conducted. A slide from 4/23 Study Session indicated that there were only six Public Information Sessions. There was additional outreach to Developers, Special Interest groups, and stakeholders that desire maximum density. We first learned of the development of the proposal in front of you in March 2025. The only reason we even knew to begin investigating the implications of it was via a Nextdoor post.

In closing, we want to state that we fully support densification. Yet efficient implementation of a new plan requires solid information, not a "wait and see" approach to infrastructure. We implore you to make certain that there are sufficient communication, data, resources, processes, procedures, personnel, accountability and enforcement measures in place that can be tested in prioritized phases.

We have attached a list of questions yet to be answered that the City must answer prior to moving forward with broader plan. We will participate in the May 13th council meeting.

Respectfully,

A growing number of neighbors in the Rockwood and Lancaster Neighborhoods are listed below. The boundaries of our neighborhood are NE 8th, 140th, Bel-Red Road, and 148th.

Thank you,

Brett Parmacek
Lancaster/Rockwood Neighborhoods

My name is Laurie Wilke and my husband Gary and I live in the Rockwood/Lancaster neighborhood. We appreciate your personal response to the neighborhood email which was sent to the City Council on 5/9. We were also encouraged to hear you, Mr. Lee, and Mr. Bhargava ask hard questions on Tuesday. You were clear about specifics for Staff to analyze and report on prior to the Council moving forward with a decision. We listened as you acknowledged having said many things, and you asked Staff if they needed an email from you and Mr. Bargava. They responded that they were confident in their “fast notes” and didn’t need additional emails.

Thus, we were stunned to hear from our neighbor, Brett Parmecek, following his attendance at Wednesday’s Planning Commission “Study Session”. Before continuing, I’d like to give you a bit of background. I first moved to Bellevue, from Seattle, in 1978. In the ensuing years, I’ve owned homes in three different Bellevue neighborhoods before settling, 27 years ago, into our current neighborhood. When Gary and I married 17 years ago he sold his home in Mill Creek and became a part of our vibrant neighborhood. I’ve appreciated and *trusted* the thoughtful and well-planned manner by which our City has undergone the transformation from suburb to Major City. Until this time, I’ve never worried about decisions being made by the City because overall, I was so satisfied. I ran my business from a Bellevue office for 28 years, and am an active volunteer in the community. March (‘25) was the first time I’d even heard or read anything about the Proposed LUCA. The April 9th Planning Commission Public Hearing marked the *first time in 47 years* that I got involved in Bellevue politics.

With that background, please also hear how overwhelming it is to try and get transparent answers from the City. My naïveté led me to be encouraged as I listened to the Council meeting Tuesday. You indicated that you don’t want to see a “broad brush” approach. That you’d like to see the City approve a plan that incorporates State minimums by July. Thereby allowing time for testing and learning using performance parameters. This data will guide more strategically expanded development going forward. We totally agree with the approach you suggested. We’re particularly concerned that the number of homes impacted

within a 1/2 mile (rather than 1/4 mile) of transit is *quadruple* the State requirement! Yet, the very next night, at the Planning Committee meeting, Dr. Kate Nesse responded to our neighbor Brett, and he sent neighbors the following message:

Kate responded that it is already decided. "The Planning commission has already made their choice and presented it to the Council." After the meeting I walked out with Mo and I told him that I was looking forward to the Commission getting back to the council with the questions the council had asked the day before. Mo looked at me and said he doubted if they would.

Perhaps due to our inexperience in City matters, we don't understand the CoB process. Is that how it works? Are we supposed to appreciate all of their hard work and can ask for further analysis and clarification. They nod their heads and say the right words, and then City **Staff** will basically downplay citizen concerns and the further analysis that our **elected Mayor** and **Council** ask for? Perhaps they're assuming they can shuffle some existing research around and re-present that back to the Council?

Tuesday night you shared that, in the eleven years that you have been on the City Council, this is one of the biggest decisions you've ever made. We're currently in CA visiting family but would appreciate an opportunity to have a phone conference. Is that possible?

Respectfully,
Laurie & Gary Wilke
1001 141st Pl. NE
(425)444-8018

Sent from my iPad

Dear Mayor and City Council,

We are residents of “Rockwood/Lancaster” neighborhood. Coincidentally, our neighborhood was used as an example in the Planning Commission Presentations (slide attached).

Our goal is to provide changes per the “bullets” below:

- **Deploy a “phased implementation plan”.** Some residential neighborhoods sit within existing multi-use areas, in Transition Zones, or near Mix-Use Urban Centers such as the Spring District and the forthcoming Wilburton District. These should be a low (high) priority for the implementation of the Proposed Codes. Our neighborhood is an excellent example of this. The recently named “Bel-Red Look Forward” District is @1/8 mile from our neighborhood’s northern boundary. 148 th Ave NE runs along our eastern border. Stevenson Elementary, commercial office buildings, a new Memory Care residential community, a church, and a gas station comprise our south border. Our western border is 140h Ave NE which is comprised of office buildings, duplexes, and multiple apartment complexes which include subsidized housing.
- **Implement the State Plan first.** Start with density of six units/lot within ¼ mile walking distance from major transit (per HB1110) rather than the proposed 1/2 mile for the right to build 6 units in residential neighborhoods. Per the Bellevue Plan, neighborhoods that are within 1/2 mile of major transit will have zero off-street parking requirements under the new mandate. Garbage trucks already have difficulty navigating in numerous neighborhoods due to congested street parking and tight radius cul-de-sacs. If a single home is replaced with a six-plex that has no on-site parking, there likely will be additional ramifications for the residents, Fire Trucks and Emergency Vehicles.
- **Maintain a minimum setback of 20 feet and maximum building height of 30 feet** (the current limit for lots with an R-20 designation). This integrates better with existing front yard setbacks for SFR and does not include the sidewalk easement. Therefore, aligns teardowns/re-development with existing structures.
- **Do Infrastructure studies of each neighborhood.** Without infrastructure impact studies, the LUCA should note actual implementation of the plan may require revision. Does not make sense to build before we know if the lot can support the change.
- **Traffic studies a must.** As an example, for our Rockwood Lancaster neighborhood, there are only 2 Entrance/Exits to the neighborhood. These Entrances/Exits are on 140th Ave and 148th Ave, which are very busy roads. Even now getting out of the neighborhood is a challenge during rush hours, but with more density it will be even more difficult. The Chevy Chase Neighborhood has only one Entrance and Exit onto 148th and there they can only turn right onto 148th. We need to make sure that when we add density to an already established area, we look at how the traffic for the neighborhood will be affected and what projects would be needed to make it work. New Traffic Lights, Widening of the streets, and infrastructure changes.
- **Develop a plan for established existing established neighborhoods.** Reduce the unit density to 2 units where the neighborhood is all already Single-Family Homes (SFH). This allows Density growth without impacting Traffic, Infrastructure, or character of the neighborhood. But it does create density. This could be done with SFH lots adding a DADO, ADU or Apt on the property. By limiting the number of Units in established Neighborhoods where multiple units can reside will help keep the character of the neighborhoods intact. One option is to also allow the building of these multi units closer to the Main roads (entrances and exits) to the neighborhoods. Example – In Chevy Chase Neighborhood you could allow Multi units to be built within the first 3 lots, on both sides, of the entrance to the neighborhood. These lots would be closest to the main road and in this case, it would be 148th Ave. This way the character of the neighborhood is not lost, and the density increases for that neighborhood.
- Look at current Density surrounding neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods are already surrounded by Apts, Condos, Businesses, Commercial and Townhouses like Rockwood. There are also current areas within these areas outside of the neighborhoods where more density can be created, and where it would have infrastructure already in place.
- On page 3 of the City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan you say the following.

“The diversity of Bellevue’s neighborhoods is a city treasure—the unique look and feel of each neighborhood depends on its location, history and natural and built environment.”

https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/2024/cdd-23-673-cp-neighborhoods_0.pdf

Page 4 outlines the factors influencing the future of neighborhoods. **Let’s keep these neighborhoods unique.** Let’s find a way to do this with the least disruption to these “City Treasures”.

Page 6 **“Success will require balancing the needs of the whole city while avoiding a “one size fits all” approach to neighborhood planning that undermines neighborhood distinctiveness.”**

Page 7 **“The city understands that not every neighborhood-specific concern is a citywide issue: some matters are best approached at a neighborhood-area”**

- Affordable Housing is a nice idea but will not work in practice. Multiple developers have already weighed in on that in previous Council and Planning Commission meetings. The focus on Affordable Housing will not bear out to be true. It is a nice idea in practice there is a clear reality. As Bellevue grows, so will the prices. Developers are only building for profit and will not give any of that away. The fee that is charged to the city by the developer in lieu of building affordable housing is a pittance that every developer will rather pay to maximize their profit. Also, we need to remember that this plan is over a 20 year period. The prices you are thinking about today for Middle Housing will not stay affordable for long. If you look to the San Francisco Bay area, LA, or Portland where this has been attempted, you will find that it does not work. Again, great idea, but not something that will work here. The only way to have affordable housing is if the City or State buys the property, builds the units and then, Sells the units with covenants or rents them. I imagine the Affordable housing units will be coveted like the Rent Controlled apartments in New York. People will never leave those units and currently those units are passed down to family members.
- As a tongue and cheek comment, I want to live in affordable housing in Beverly Hills. Imagine the issues with placing several 6 plex’s in the middle of the Beverly Hills neighborhood to create density. What would that do to the neighborhood?

All we are asking for is thoughtful consideration of how and where these middle housing units can go within a neighborhood. A measured and careful approach will allow us to see impacts and make updates. Allowing **any** Single-Family Lot to be bought, cleared, and built upon, is a shotgun approach. It invites a mess that we will need to move backward on. Let’s move forward in steps. It allows us to test the process, validate what works and build out the best Bellevue we can.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Your Neighbors from the Rockwood, Lancaster Neighborhood

Neighborhood representatives

Brett and Victoria Parmacek, Pat and Karrie Murphy, Andrea and Yumiko Orimoto, Laurie and Gary Wilke, Mirali, and Naga, Munugeti, Amber and Ray Lee. Bruce and Shulan Trinh. Michelle and John Kaplan.....

Nesse, Katherine

From: Evan Lee <evnl.business@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 24, 2025 8:03 AM
To: Council; PlanningCommission
Subject: Local streets and street level activation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from evnl.business@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I think it was mentioned that removing the 16 feet of on street parking would affect street level activation. If removing on street parking results in more housing units, how much would those units affect street level activation? Could it be more than the on street parking spaces?

<https://bellevue.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=14224113&GUID=12276702-94A7-4244-8628-99E949A1F55B>

Nesse, Katherine

From: Seattle King County REALTORS® <REALTOR@NWREALTOR.COM>
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 9:01 AM
To: PlanningCommission
Subject: You're invited to Seattle King County REALTORS® Housing Issues Briefing

You don't often get email from realtor@nwrealtor.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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REGISTER

Join us for Seattle King County REALTORS®' annual **Housing Issues Briefing**. We'll explore key policies, trends, and challenges shaping the future of our region. This is a unique opportunity to hear directly from decision makers and experts, gain valuable insight, and connect with elected officials, REALTORS®, and community stakeholders.

Event Details

Location: Benaroya Hall, Seattle
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025
Time: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM (Doors open at 11:00 AM)
Complimentary Lunch & Parking Provided

Parking Instructions

You're invited to park in the Benaroya Hall garage, located on 2nd Ave just past Union Street. Parking is complimentary.



Featured Speakers

Welcome:

The Honorable Bruce Harrell, Mayor of Seattle



Keynote:

Christine Gregoire, CEO of Challenge Seattle & Former Governor of Washington State

We look forward to seeing you there!

Event Contact: Stephanie Margenats | smargenats@nwrealtor.com



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Nesse, Katherine

From: Fay Hou <fayhou@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 12:48 PM
To: PlanningCommission
Cc: ouncil@bellevuewa.gov; Shelton, Ryan; Smith III, Dwight; Uzunow, Savina
Subject: Public Comment – CAO LUCA – Need for Stronger Enforcement & Hydrology Protections

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Dear Planning Commission Members,

I'm writing as a longtime Bellevue resident directly affected by a development project that has violated core grading and drainage principles — with real impacts on surrounding properties.

This is why the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) matters.

The developer next door removed over 350 inches of protected tree DBH, installed an unpermitted 5-foot rockery, raised the backyard with undocumented fill, and destroyed native soils used in stormwater modeling. These actions fundamentally changed the site's hydrology and slope behavior. The original drainage plan is no longer valid.

The result?

I now face mold in my basement, excessive water along my fence, and destabilized ground. The City issued a Stop Work Order, but enforcement has been slow and inconsistent — and no revised stormwater or grading plan has been required to reflect the as-built conditions.

As you consider CAO updates, I urge you to:

1. Strengthen requirements for post-construction elevation surveys and stormwater plan revisions when site conditions change.
2. Require re-evaluation of infiltration rates when native soils are altered or removed.
3. Enforce accountability and interdepartmental coordination for grading and stormwater violations — not just in critical areas, but in adjacent parcels where cumulative impacts occur.
4. Close loopholes that allow developers to “build now, revise later.”

Protecting critical areas isn't just about wetlands or steep slopes — it's about understanding and regulating the full system of water movement, trees, soils, and topography before damage occurs.

Please don't treat this LUCA as a procedural update. Treat it as a chance to restore integrity and resilience in how Bellevue manages development around sensitive and interconnected areas.

Sincerely,

Nesse, Katherine

From: Barb Braun <bbraun@live.com>
Sent: Friday, May 30, 2025 8:53 AM
To: Council; PlanningCommission; Mandt, Kirsten
Cc: Barb Braun
Subject: Please Modify Middle Housing Proposal
Attachments: Middle Housing Bellevue.pdf

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Middle Housing LUCA

Mayor, Duty Mayor, Council Leaders, Planning Commissioners and City Leaders,
As a long-time resident of Bellevue, I am writing to oppose the overly aggressive Middle Housing Code being proposed by the Planning Department and advocated for by the development community.

Bellevue does not need to go beyond the State Requirements of HB1110 to meet its 2050 housing goals. The highest density should be concentrated in the planned transit centers as per the comprehensive plan. The voters do not want to maximize a mishmash of housing to satisfy developers and tax coffers. What the Planning Department is proposing is unreasonable.

State Requirements	Bellevue Proposals
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow four housing units per lot in all residential zones• Allow two bonus housing units if at least two of the units are affordable housing.• Allow two bonus housing units near major transit stop• Allow at least six out of the nine listed types of middle housing• Unit lot splits ADU State Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow two Accessory Dwelling units, including building new or converting a structure.• Reduce parking requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Six units per lot allowed throughout single-family residential areas• Higher heights: 38 feet or 4 stories• Increased lot coverage and decreased setbacks on lot perimeters• Up to nine housing types can be combined on the same lot• Decreased trees• Reduced off-street parking requirements• Two units attached to a home that don't count toward the buildable square footage = up to 8 units per lot• All of these new homes are likely to be market-rate, i.e., not affordable to most of us

Going above the state requirements will not reduce house prices but will:

1. Drive up property taxes for all
2. Drive up traffic and congestion problems
3. Unnecessarily decrease the tree canopy
4. Accelerate the unnecessary urbanization and blight of Bellevue
5. Increase heat and pollution
6. Create undue burden on roads and other infrastructure
7. Drive up the cost of city maintenance and services

8. Drive up transit costs
9. Decrease the quality of life in Bellevue

Please bring us back to a more reasonable compromise that at least tries to preserve our beautiful peaceful Bellevue.

Thank you,
Barbara Braun
13609 SE 43rd Place

Middle Housing LUCA

Good evening, Mayor, Duty Mayor, Council Leaders, Planning Commissioners and City Leaders,

As a long-time resident of Bellevue, I am writing to oppose the overly aggressive Middle Housing Code being proposed by the Planning Department and advocated for by the development community.

Bellevue does not need to go beyond the State Requirements of HB1110 to meet its 2050 housing goals. The highest density should be concentrated in the planned transit centers as per the comprehensive plan. The voters do not want to maximize a mishmash of housing to satisfy developers and tax coffers. What the Planning Department is proposing is unreasonable.

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Nesse, Katherine

From: Parmacek (US), Brett <Brett.Parmacek@boeing.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 1, 2025 8:47 PM
To: Parmacek (US), Brett
Subject: Bellevue Discussion: Taller, 4-6 Family Homes Next to You

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from brett.parmacek@boeing.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL Notice!] Outside communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.

Please come join the discussion tomorrow. I am forwarding this invite to the Summerset neighborhoods conversation on Middle Housing.

“Why should I attend?”

1. Councilmembers will be attending. The more residents that show up, the more impactful this meeting will be on the City Council middle housing vote.
2. During a recent Council study session, the Mayor discussed tailoring the middle housing land use code to avoid a blanket approach, but not all Councilmembers were in agreement on the final code. In fact, the current Staff and Planning Commission recommendation is going further than the state’s baseline. This SCA-sponsored meeting is your opportunity to advocate for our neighborhood's specific needs and concerns.

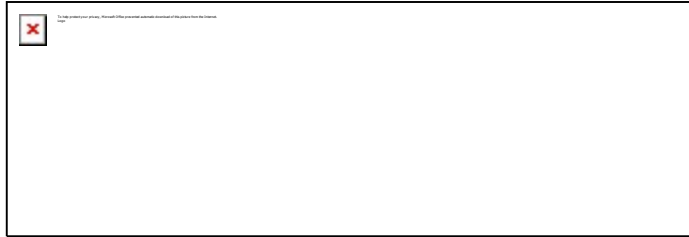
“How will Bellevue’s decisions on Middle Housing affect me?”

1. The current proposal includes middle housing allowances for taller homes (up to four stories) and increased density with four-plexes and six-plexes. This will affect views. The House Bill does not make allowances for height. Increasing height maximums is not a state requirement for middle housing. In addition, the City goal of 40% tree canopy would be affected with setback allowances.
2. While Somerset currently has single-family and view restrictions that bar middle housing, there have been past attempts by the state legislature to override such covenants. Are you okay with the current Bellevue proposal for Somerset?
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This SCA-sponsored event will bring together city leaders and residents for a vital conversation. Don't let this critical moment pass without making your voice heard.

Don't Miss Your Chance to Shape Bellevue's Future!

[View this email in your browser](#)



REMINDER! Join the Conversation about Middle Housing with City Council and Planners at Somerset Elementary

Monday June 2, 6:30 PM, Somerset Elementary Gym

Learn about the city reclassifying our neighborhoods from Residential to **Middle Housing**

The agenda includes a short SCA presentation with Q&A, City Planner Presentation with Q&A, and an Open Mic Discussion.

City Planners have requested that some questions be submitted in advance.

You will also have the opportunity to ask additional questions, raise concerns, and offer suggestions during the meeting as well.

[Click Here to Submit Your Questions in Advance](#)

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To catch up on the current Middle Housing discussions, please review the [video](#) and supporting [Middle Housing documents](#) from the recent City Council LUCA meeting, as well as additional [FAQs](#) from the city.

ATTN neighborhood association leads: Please share this invite with your neighborhood and email info@somerset98006.org if you plan on attending to represent your neighborhood. To help SCA prepare for your attendance, [please fill out this short survey](#).

How does “Middle Housing” affect my property and neighborhood?

If you own a home in a single-family land use district (R-1 through R-7.5), once the regulations are in effect **you may be able to have multiple units on your lot. This could include the addition of one or two ADUs with your primary home, or any other combination of units and structure types that works with the space you have** and your needs. If you prefer to keep your property as-is that is also allowed under the new regulations. There is nothing in the bill or the anticipated code changes that would require someone to change their property.

What is Middle Housing?

“Middle housing” or “middle-scale housing” is a term used to refer to residential developments that are more dense than single-family housing and less dense than a typical midrise apartment building, but similar in scale to single-family homes. Middle housing types are determined by the form of the structure and the number of units within the structure and/or development.

Densities included in this definition that describe units per structure include:

Duplexes, Triplexes, Fourplexes, Sixplexes

Building structure types included in this definition are: **Townhomes, Stacked flats, Cottages, Courtyard/garden style apartments**

When will the new regulations go into effect?

The city is required to adopt regulations consistent with HB 1110 and 1337 **by June 30, 2025.**

What if my lot has covenants?

The city does not enforce private covenants or Homeowners Association (HOA) requirements. Covenants are private legal agreements—typically recorded in county real property records—that impose restrictions on land use. Many covenants prohibit the construction of any type of dwelling unit besides a single-family dwelling, which is the primary topic of discussion we have heard regarding covenants and middle housing. **These covenants are contracts, and both the Washington State Constitution and the United States Constitution limit the extent to which government can interfere with previously executed contracts.**

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Thank you,

Brett Parmacek –
Rockwood/Lancaster Neighborhood Representative

Nesse, Katherine

From: Parmacek (US), Brett <Brett.Parmacek@boeing.com>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 2:16 PM
Subject: Reminder: Bellevue Discussion: Taller, 4-6 Family Homes Next to You

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Hi Guys

Just a reminder that if you want to ask a question please click on the link below. Only Questions submitted in writing will be answered at tonight's Somerset meeting.

[Click Here to Submit Your Questions in Advance](#)

Thank you,

Brett Parmacek - 

Senior Electrical Systems Integrator – VC-25B Program

Email - Brett.Parmacek@Boeing.com

Cell - 425-269-0202 Cell phone

Hire for Fit, Train for Competence, Coach for performance, Reward for results

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Somerset Community Association PO Box 40531 Bellevue, WA 98015-4531 USA

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Thank you,

Brett Parmacek –
Rockwood/Lancaster Neighborhood Representative

Nesse, Katherine

From: phyllisjwhite@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 2:54 PM
To: Council; Hamilton, Dave; Lee, Conrad; Nieuwenhuis, Jared; Sumadiwirya, Claire; Robinson, Lynne; Malakoutian, Mo; Bhargava, Vishal
Cc: PlanningCommission; Environmental Services Commission (ESC)
Subject: Bellevue Needs Equitable Growth and Infrastructure

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL EMAIL Notice!] Outside communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.

Dear Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Malakoutian, and Members of the City Council,

As a resident of the Wilburton neighborhood, I urge you to reconsider the intense concentration of housing growth planned for our area. While I support Bellevue's efforts to plan for future growth and diversify housing opportunities, the current strategy places an outsized burden on Wilburton—an already transitioning community—without proportionate infrastructure investment or equitable geographic distribution.

The scale of what is proposed is striking:

- **Wilburton** is planned for about **14,800** new housing units.
- **BelRed** is projected to add between **5,000 and 9,000** housing units.
- **The Spring District** includes over **1,500** residential units.

All of these developments are within roughly a **2-mile radius** centered around our Wilburton neighborhood. Today, Wilburton has just under **4,000** housing units. This means our neighborhood could be absorbing over **25,000 new units**, multiplying our housing density six-fold—without the infrastructure to support it.

Our roads are increasingly strained with traffic. Our streams—like Kelsey Creek and Goff Creek—are registering higher levels of pollution with salmon populations diminishing, and tree canopy loss is accelerating. Wilburton experienced the greatest tree canopy loss of any Bellevue neighborhood in recent years, compounding stormwater runoff and heat island effects.

I request that Council give thoughtful consideration to our wildlife corridors to help prevent further fragmentation of one of the city's most ecologically rich areas—home to century old trees, bald eagles, blue herons, hawks, salmon, frogs, bobcats, owls, bats, deer—species seldom found in urban environments.

Beyond livability, there's also a question of fairness and function. A disproportionate share of growth is being funneled into Wilburton not because this is where most people work, but because it's where zoning allows it. Many essential workers in Bellevue—nurses, educators, public safety workers, tradespeople, service employees—do not work near light rail or other major transit stops. There is no public parking near many of the metro transit stops. Those who work in schools, hospitals, warehouses, utility yards, and neighborhood retail, are scattered across Bellevue or live in other cities.

I urge Council to consider the following options:

1. **Distribute new housing more broadly** across the city—especially near hospitals, schools, and employment centers.
2. **Invest in infrastructure upgrades** in before centralizing upzoning.
3. **Protect local streams and tree canopy**, and include strong environmental mitigation in any future rezonings. Once replaced with buildings, Wilburton's priority species land **animals are displaced** and **endangered salmon** natural habitats are permanently altered.
4. **Start with the state minimum housing** in the Wilburton district and other similar growth districts, until Bellevue demonstrates that supporting infrastructure and appropriate wildlife connected habitats are developed and protected.

Concentrated, unchecked growth risks straining Wilburton beyond its capacity, but also failing to meet our broader housing goals in an equitable, sustainable, and effective way.

I request Council to support growth that is not just dense—but with data that supports the community's quality of life and meets its goals with balanced, reasonable outcomes.

Best regards,

Phyllis White
Wilburton Resident

Nesse, Katherine

From: Heidi Dean <technogeekswife@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 4:52 PM
To: Robinson, Lynne; Malakoutian, Mo; Lee, Conrad; Nieuwenhuis, Jared; Hamilton, Dave; Bhargava, Vishal; Sumadiwiry, Claire
Cc: Horner, Rebecca D; Mandt, Kirsten; Whipple, Nicholas; Chloe Chen; Ann Brashear; Fay Hou; Frank Klein; Carlson, Diane (she/her); Tanus, Trisna; PlanningCommission
Subject: Question for Middle Housing session (Somerset)- June 2

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Hello all:

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With that said, I wish to share the question I put into the Survey Monkey link that I received today, as it's likely to NOT be addressed by city staff:

My family is facing \$40K in foundation repair & crawlspace work (drain installation, sump pump, encapsulation) due to changes in water drainage associated with teardown/regrade/rebuild of a very large MN Custom Home built next to us in 2022. Sadly, I'm hearing stories like mine from homeowners across Bellevue.

If tearing down a SFH home to regrade the hell out of a lot and rebuild a much larger SFH can cause this much damage to neighboring properties, then imagine what will happen when parcels are covered with multiple housing structures, built up to the lot lines, and have almost no pervious surface left for drainage.

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INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT DURING AND AFTER CONSTRUCTION HAS

POSITIVELY SUCKED. WHY SHOULD WE TRUST DEVELOPMENT SERVICES NOW?

See you tonight,

Heidi Dean
Newport Hills

Copies sent to:

Newport Hills Community Club Board
Save Bellevue Neighborhoods Strategy Team
Neighborhood Associations List

Nesse, Katherine

From: Chloe Chen <chloejchen@outlook.com>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 5:07 PM
To: Heidi Dean; Robinson, Lynne; Malakoutian, Mo; Lee, Conrad; Nieuwenhuis, Jared; Hamilton, Dave; Bhargava, Vishal; Sumadiwiry, Claire
Cc: Horner, Rebecca D; Mandt, Kirsten; Whipple, Nicholas; Ann Brashear; Fay Hou; Frank Klein; Tanus, Trisna; PlanningCommission; Carlson, Diane (she/her)
Subject: Re: Question for Middle Housing session (Somerset)- June 2

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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You don't often get email from chloejchen@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi Heidi,

SCA was requesting questions prior to the meeting to help staff prepare a handout. It is our understanding that staff will be addressing questions from the floor too via written format.

We will be having an open mic discussion after the city staff portion too. Please forward this to whoever you heard this from to clear up the misunderstanding. Thanks!

Chloe
Sent from my phone

From: Heidi Dean <technogeekswife@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 4:52:08 PM
To: Lynne Robinson <lrobinson@bellevuewa.gov>; Deputy Mayor Mo Malakoutian <mmalakoutian@bellevuewa.gov>; Conrad Lee <clee@bellevuewa.gov>; Jared Nieuwenhuis <jnieuwenhuis@bellevuewa.gov>; Councilmember Dave Hamilton <dhamilton@bellevuewa.gov>; Vishal Bhargava <vbhargava@bellevuewa.gov>; Claire Sumadiwiry <csumadiwiry@bellevuewa.gov>
Cc: Rebecca D. Horner <rdhorner@bellevuewa.gov>; kmandt@bellevuewa.gov <kmandt@bellevuewa.gov>; Nicholas Whipple <nwhipple@bellevuewa.gov>; Chloe Chen <chloejchen@outlook.com>; Ann Brashear <abrashear@comcast.net>; Fay Hou <fayhou@gmail.com>; Frank Klein <waterdog_fk@outlook.com>; Carlson Diane (she/her) <dcarlson@bellevuewa.gov>; Trisna Tanus <ttanus@bellevuewa.gov>; planningcommission@bellevuewa.gov <planningcommission@bellevuewa.gov>
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From: Heidi Dean <technogeekswife@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 5:28 PM
To: Robinson, Lynne; Malakoutian, Mo; Lee, Conrad; Nieuwenhuis, Jared; Hamilton, Dave; Bhargava, Vishal; Sumadiwiry, Claire; Chloe Chen
Cc: Horner, Rebecca D; Mandt, Kirsten; Whipple, Nicholas; Ann Brashear; Fay Hou; Frank Klein; Tanus, Trisna; PlanningCommission; Carlson, Diane (she/her)
Subject: Re: Question for Middle Housing session (Somerset)- June 2
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Brett Parmacek of Rockwood/Lancaster Homeowners Association sent out an email this afternoon urging residents to submit comments via the Survey Monkey link as only pre-submitted comments would be addressed by staff during the meeting.

I will inform him he's incorrect in his understanding of how tonight's meeting will work.

However, I do want to ensure this issue & question gets in front of our councilmembers. I think it's important for them to consider as they deliberate the Planning Commission's and staff's recommendation.

I also want the Planning Commission to understand the gravity of what their recommendation will do to Bellevue property owners adjacent to parcels redeveloped for Middle Housing.

Finally, I wanted to ensure that what's happened to my home/property, to Fay Hou, and to others is documented in the public record (Planning Commission packet) for all to see. The decisions of Development Services staff have important consequences for many of us in the city.

Thank you,

Heidi Dean
Newport Hills

On Monday, June 2, 2025 at 05:06:34 PM PDT, Chloe Chen <chloejchen@outlook.com> wrote:

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DEVELOPMENT SERVICES HAS INAPPROPRIATELY ALLOWED MUCH LARGER STRUCTURES TO BE BUILT THAN WHAT THE PERMIT ALLOWED- SEE FAY HOU & HOME AT 12554 SE 52ND ST IN NEWPORT HILLS.

INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT DURING AND AFTER CONSTRUCTION HAS

POSITIVELY SUCKED. WHY SHOULD WE TRUST DEVELOPMENT SERVICES NOW?

See you tonight,

Heidi Dean
Newport Hills

Copies sent to:

Newport Hills Community Club Board
Save Bellevue Neighborhoods Strategy Team
Neighborhood Associations List

Nesse, Katherine

From: Kian <kiandbradley@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 10:38 PM
To: Council
Cc: PlanningCommission
Subject: Please approve the Planning Commission middle housing recommendations!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from kiandbradley@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello Council,

Please vote FOR increasing zoning density in current single-family only zones of Bellevue!

I understand Bellevue intends to go beyond the basic minimum requirements of HB 1110. This is a great thing. More housing supply means we can rein in the rising cost of housing- like many things, housing cost is a function of supply and demand.

I understand Mayor Lynne and several councilmembers had concerns around approving the Planning Commission's recommended middle housing LUCA. It's very important we **go beyond the bare minimum**: if we are only *reactive* instead of *proactive*, we will be dealing with rising housing prices and the second order effects (homelessness, high cost of living) for decades to come.

I live in nearby Mercer Island- another housing-restricted city with a very high cost of living. I'm advocating for housing here, as well. It's important that all cities in the region work together on this.

Thanks for reading,
Kian Bradley

Nesse, Katherine

From: Jared Sager <jaredscottsager@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 6:06 PM
To: Council; PlanningCommission
Subject: Please adopt the proposed Middle Housing Land Use Code Amendment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Counselors and planning commission,

I would like to add my support to the proposal for Bellevue to increase housing densities beyond the state mandate.

I feel strongly that the incredible demand for housing in the region presents a high priority problem and an opportunity to create a vibrant, affordable, and connected Bellevue.

I don't want to see our neighborhoods flooded with McMansions that only the most well-to-do residents can dream of, tucked away in a car-dependent suburb. Let's create sustainable, connected, and smart density instead.

Thanks,
Jared Saget

Nesse, Katherine

From: Evan Lee <evnl.business@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 7:41 PM
To: Council; PlanningCommission
Subject: Middle housing is a big opportunity

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Middle housing is a big opportunity for many potential homeowners in Bellevue. Since middle housing is easier to build compared to denser options, we can expect faster production at a lower cost. The fast production and low cost are keys to delivering relief and stability to the Bellevue residents most impacted by the housing crisis. We may see a boom in housing similar to when undeveloped land became single family homes. You may be wondering whether limiting ourselves to middle housing would repeat history. At some point, we may need to go denser. I say build middle housing in the short term and plan for denser projects in the long term.

Nesse, Katherine

From: Parmacek (US), Brett <Brett.Parmacek@boeing.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 8:54 PM
To: Parmacek (US), Brett
Subject: Middle Housing: Updated frequently asked questions
Attachments: [EXTERNAL] Appeal against Bellevue upzoning in Rockwood, Crossroads area

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Updated Info

Please see the updated [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) for the City's Plan for Middle Housing at the link. Please also see the questions and responses from yesterday's Somerset Neighborhood meeting [here](#).

I have attached an email from one of our neighbors with his permission. I wanted to let you know that this is an email he sent directly to the council members and Mayor. Please also make your voices heard by sending your thoughts to the City Council. Please write them and let them know how you feel. Please also make sure that other Neighbors and Friends who live in Bellevue are aware.

Council and Mayor Contact Data

Council Inquiry council-inquiry@bellevuewa.gov; Council Emails Council@bellevuewa.gov; Mayor Lynn Robinson lrobinson@bellevuewa.gov; Deputy Mayor Mo Malakoutian Mmalakoutian@bellevuewa.gov; Vishal Bhargava VBhargava@bellevuewa.gov; Conrad Lee cleee@bellevuewa.gov; Councilmember Jared Nieuwenhuis jnieuwenhuis@bellevuewa.gov; csumadiwirya@bellevuewa.gov; , "dhamilton@bellevuewa.gov; "City of Bellevue" <bellevuewa@public.govdelivery.com>;l "Sumadiwirya, Claire" <csumadiwirya@bellevuewa.gov>

The Council is going to vote on this soon and we need to make sure our objections and ideas are heard. Please attend in person the June 10th City Council Meeting. The agenda will be on Middle Housing. We need to come together with one voice.

Thank you

Brett Parmacek –
Rockwood/Lancaster Neighborhood Representative

Nesse, Katherine

From: Murali Munugeti <murali3m@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 4:38 PM
To: Council; Malakoutian, Mo; Robinson, Lynne; Hamilton, Dave; csumadiwiria@bellevuewa.gov; Nieuwenhuis, Jared; Lee, Conrad; Bhargava, Vishal
Cc: Shalini Munugeti; Parmacek (US), Brett; Betsi Hummer
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Appeal against Bellevue upzoning in Rockwood, Crossroads area

EXT email: be mindful of links/attachments.

Hi

This is Murali here & I am a resident of the Rockwood neighborhood in Bellevue's Crossroads area, and I am writing to express my **strong and personal opposition** to the proposed upzoning.

This Is Personal – and It Wasn't Done Lightly

I have been a resident of this city since 2011, living with my wife and two kids. Fortunate to be in a city where my children have received a wonderful education.

We purchased our home in 2014 in the Rockwood area. After seven moves worldwide, we finally made the decision to settle down in Bellevue and build our dream home.

Five years ago, I made the most significant financial decision of my life: to demolish an old home and rebuild from the ground up. I **invested all of my savings into building a new home** in Rockwood. This was not done on a whim — it was a carefully considered and painstaking choice.

I **poured over Bellevue's 20-year comprehensive plans**, zoning maps, and long-term development forecasts before committing. I trusted that the city's promises about stable zoning, neighborhood preservation, and managed growth would hold.

I am still managing the weight of that investment, but I did it with pride and purpose. This is my dream home, in what I believed would be a stable, protected neighborhood.

Now, the proposed upzoning threatens to undo everything — **undermining my investment, disrupting my street, and violating the long-term vision the city once stood behind.**

The City's Contradiction: From Opposing Boarding Houses to Promoting the Same Impacts

Several years ago, Bellevue rightly **opposed boarding houses (or “co-living” arrangements)** in single-family neighborhoods. The city cited **neighborhood disruption, parking overflow, and incompatibility with single-family character** as key reasons for pushing back on these conversions.

Those were valid concerns then — and they still are.

Yet today, the city is proposing upzoning that would lead to **similar or even more disruptive outcomes**: multi-unit buildings in formerly single-family areas, with **little to no parking requirements**, transient tenants, and infrastructure strain.

This is a direct contradiction. If boarding houses were too disruptive to the neighborhood fabric, **how can large-scale, high-density upzoning be justified in the same areas?**

You can’t claim to protect neighborhood integrity in one policy and bulldoze it in another.

Negative impacts of upzoning:

The consequences as I foresee will include:

- Loss of naturally affordable homes, as older properties are demolished and replaced with expensive new developments.
- Increased traffic and congestion due to higher density without matching transit or road improvements.
- Parking overflow and conflicts, as reduced parking requirements do not reflect actual car ownership.
- Overburdened aging infrastructure, including water, sewer, drainage, and electrical systems, which are already strained and costly to maintain.
- Rising utility costs, further eroding affordability for all residents.
- Erosion of community character, as multi-generational, long-term homeowners are displaced or marginalized.

Affordability is a myth

1. New units are not built for affordability — they’re built for profit

Developers build **at the highest price point the market will bear**, unless the city imposes **income-restricted mandates**(which Bellevue largely has not). So the result is:

- High-end condos
- Luxury townhomes
- Expensive rentals

2. Filtering takes decades (if it happens at all)

Trickle-down affordability is a **long, slow process** that can take 20+ years, if ever — and assumes older housing isn’t torn down or flipped. In desirable cities like Bellevue, it’s often

the **older, more affordable homes that are demolished first** to make way for new luxury construction. Refer to article here from San Francisco: <https://shelterforce.org/2016/10/12/the-filtering-fallacy/>

3. No affordability mandates = no affordable housing

Without clear rules like **inclusionary zoning** (e.g., “X% of new units must be below market rate”), there is **no guarantee** that any new construction will be affordable to low- or even middle-income residents.

4. High land value = high final costs

Upzoning increases the value of the land itself — and that higher land cost gets baked into final housing prices. This can **accelerate speculation** and **raise average housing costs**, not lower them.

This isn’t housing justice — it’s displacement disguised as progress.

Myth on transit usage from Rockwood

Upzoning presumes residents will use transit and walk more, but:

- Rockwood is not near light rail, and the B-Line bus does not connect effectively to major employment centers.
- Transit trips involve multiple transfers and long wait times, discouraging use and increasing reliance on cars.
- The neighborhood lacks a true retail core or walkable amenities to support high-density living.

This disconnect will increase car dependency, traffic, and parking pressures — exactly the opposite of the city’s stated goals.

Myth vs. Reality

Topic	City’s Claim	Reality
Affordability	More units will lower prices	New units are mostly high-end; older affordable homes will be demolished
Transit Use	Residents will use transit	Transit connections are poor; commutes become longer and less practical
Infrastructure	City is prepared	Infrastructure is aging and overstressed; higher

		density will increase costs
Parking	Less parking needed	Residents own cars; parking demand and neighborhood spillover will increase

Optics around the process:

Many residents I interacted within my community feel this process is less about genuine engagement and more about checking a box on public input before pushing forward a predetermined plan.

- Legitimate concerns from long-time homeowners appear to be dismissed or minimized.
- Developers and speculators seem to be prioritized over community stability and equity.
- The optics suggest the city is asking those who followed all rules and invested here to accept sudden change that contradicts decades of prior planning. This feels like a betrayal, not a partnership.

No Metrics, No Transparency, No Plan

There is no clear public framework for how this upzoning's success will be measured or monitored. Without defined goals and transparency, it risks:

- Increasing displacement without creating affordable housing.
- Overburdening infrastructure and services.
- Degrading neighborhood quality without recourse.

A Better Way: Phased Growth with Accountability

Not saying Bellevue shouldn't grow. We are saying it must grow **intelligently, inclusively, and transparently**.

Here's what should happen instead:

1. **Start with a phased pilot** in areas with vacant land or redevelopment potential — not where stability is being sacrificed.
2. **Establish clear success metrics:** How will we know this is working? Who is responsible if it fails?

3. **Honor the existing plan:** Residents like me made life decisions based on what the city promised. Those promises must matter.
4. **Update aging infrastructure before adding pressure:** Don't overburden already stressed systems.

Respect the Residents Who Trusted You

I followed the rules. I reviewed the city's long-term plans. I built a life and home here with full faith in Bellevue's vision. This proposal undercuts everything I stood by and everything the city once claimed to value.

I urge the city to **pause this plan** and instead pilot any growth in neighborhoods with more available land and infrastructure capacity, paired with real transit investments and clear accountability.

Please listen to your community and **vote NO on the current upzoning proposal** in Rockwood. Let's plan growth **with accountability, fairness, and care** — not shortcuts and contradictions.

We owe much of Bellevue's success to the vision and discipline of past leaders who carefully planned this city into the thriving, livable community it is today. They protected neighborhood character, invested in infrastructure, and made thoughtful choices that allowed families like mine to build a future here. **Now, as we stand at a critical crossroads, it is our responsibility not to undo their legacy, but to uphold it — and build upon it.** We should strive to make Bellevue even better, not by discarding what works, but by honoring what was built and improving it with care, balance, and integrity.

1. I urge the Bellevue City Council and Planning Commission — as stewards of our city's future — to remember that real progress builds upon the sacrifices and efforts of those who already invested their lives here, not at their expense. **History will not forgive us if we erase what generations have built under the promise of stability.**

2. Please stand with the families who worked hard, followed the rules, and poured everything into building a better life — not to see it dismantled, but to help make this place better than where they started. **Turning our backs on them now would be a failure of leadership history will remember.**

3. Growth should not come by displacing those who already built a thriving, stable neighborhood. Instead, let's grow in a way that honors their efforts and strengthens Bellevue's legacy. **If we fail to protect what's been carefully built, history will not look kindly on the choices we make today.**

4. I respectfully ask decision-makers to lead with empathy, foresight, and integrity — to uplift rather than uproot the communities that already make Bellevue strong. Our decisions now will define how this era of leadership is remembered.

Thanks & Regards

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