



Bellevue Planning Commission

January 12, 2022

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT

Overview of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Process

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POLICY ISSUES

Staff will present an overview of the process and framework for Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Periodic plan updates are a state Growth Management Act (GMA) requirement and need to be completed no later than June 2024. The project is expected to be formally launched by Council in the coming months. The specific policy issues to be discussed as part of that update will be presented at a subsequent study session with the Commission.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION

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DIRECTION

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INFORMATION ONLY

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No direction is needed at this time. Staff will present an overview of the process framework this evening. A separate study session is scheduled for March to introduce the Commission to the scope and engagement plan for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING OVERVIEW

Comprehensive Planning is a key process used in long-range planning to distribute growth, accommodate new trends, and provide a comprehensive approach to coordinated change over time. The Comprehensive Plan captures the City's vision for the future of Bellevue, sets policy that directs City actions and decisions, and guides capital investments. This periodic update will plan through the year 2044, consistent with the King County Growth Targets time horizon.

The Planning Commission plays a key role in the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Staff will review the overall approach with the Commission at the onset of the project, provide updates for feedback throughout the process, and work with the Planning Commission to draft final policy language. Ultimately, the Commission's recommendation will be provided to the City Council for review prior to final adoption.

State Requirements

Within the State of Washington, a specific framework is utilized to ensure consistency and coordination between jurisdictions. The majority of this framework is outlined in [RCW 36.70](#) and [36.70a](#).

Based on these state regulations, certain counties and cities must plan under the GMA. King County and all cities within its boundaries qualify. Conceptually, the GMA provides a framework for distributing growth, directs it towards urban areas and employment centers in particular, protects rural, critical and natural resource areas, and requires that the process be made public.



State Planning Framework. (Source: PSRC.org/vision)

One of the key requirements under the GMA is the maintenance of a Comprehensive Plan. Specific requirements exist for these plans, such as the need for the following specific elements (similar to chapters): Land Use, Housing, Utilities, Transportation, Economic Development, and Park and Recreation. Comprehensive Plans must be updated every eight years, with different deadlines for each region allowing for staggering of updates. The current cycle was extended by one year, so the Puget Sound region's last Periodic Update occurred in 2015 and the next is due in 2024. The plans include 20 years of planning, so this update will extend through the 2044 time horizon.

Regional Requirements

While the state provides the framework for planning that must be followed by counties and cities, the region gives that framework additional specificity and applies more focused requirements that must also be taken into account as part of the Periodic Update.

Each Region has its own growth strategy framed by state requirements and the GMA. Our region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), which plans for the area including King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. PSRC's recently adopted VISION 2050 encompasses these planning efforts alongside the Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs). These provide a framework for a regional growth strategy to accommodate a total of 5.8 million people by 2050 while ensuring a robust and equitable economy, ongoing environmental protection, and an effective transportation system.

GMA also requires counties to adopt Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), which must in turn align with the MPPs. The King County CPPs create a shared framework for managing growth for all jurisdictions in King County. In doing so, they address policies for planning issues of a Countywide nature; establish criteria for defining urban centers; establish and revise urban growth area boundaries; provide guidance for Comprehensive Plans; and establish population and employment targets that must be incorporated into each jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan. The King County CPPs were approved by the County Council in December 2021 and will be brought to individual City Councils, including Bellevue, in the early part of 2022 ratification. These CPPs will be summarized by staff at the Commission's March study session and an overview of the CPPs including background and context will be provided by King County staff at the

next meeting. In addition to typical varied updates, the new CPPs include major edits to the Housing section and new requirements related to both equity and climate action and preparedness throughout. In addition, an emphasis on improving the balance between jobs and housing growth is key to supporting regional mobility, access to living-wage jobs, and affordable housing. VISION 2050 focuses on housing growth near job centers to address risk of displacement. A balance between jobs and housing is a significant consideration in developing growth targets.

In addition to CPPs, counties also define the area's Urban Growth Area (UGA) and growth targets. These targets, combined with the county CPPs, are the major elements of countywide planning that will inform the upcoming 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update. All areas of Bellevue are within the UGA for King County. Housing and jobs targets for each jurisdiction within the region have been set. Bellevue must accommodate 70,000 additional jobs and 35,000 additional housing units beyond 2019 numbers by 2044. This is significantly higher than the City's previous 25-year housing target of 17,000 new units for the period between 2006-2031, allowing the City to better balance new jobs with more housing units. This cycle's targets provide a 2:1 jobs to housing unit ratio for the 2019-2044 Bellevue growth increment, thereby achieving a more equitable balance between jobs and housing.

Upcoming Milestones

With the next Periodic Update due no later than June 2024, staff plan to launch active work on the effort with the City Council next month. A study session with the Planning Commission in March will follow, reviewing the overarching schedule, approach, and scope including accommodation of growth targets, updates to enact the Council Vision, and incorporation of the CPPs.

Several ongoing parallel efforts may impact the next couple years of work updating the Comprehensive Plan. Ongoing legislation, particularly regarding the introduction of a new Climate and Resiliency Element, may impact the baseline state requirements. In addition, legislation passed during the last state session changed the requirements for the Housing Element. Rulemaking for this legislation is ongoing. Staff will provide additional detail at subsequent study sessions highlighting the schedule and potential impacts for this ongoing work.

ATTACHMENTS

N/A