



# Bellevue Planning Commission

September 28, 2022

## PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

### SUBJECT

Summary of Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Phase 2 and discussion of growth alternatives to inform the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton Vision Implementation

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### POLICY ISSUES

As Phase 2a of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update wraps up, staff have developed a range of ideas to inform development of growth alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS. The alternatives are based on guidance from City Council, Planning Commission and other boards and commissions as well as community engagement. The growth alternatives are ways to achieve the City's vision and meet regional requirements under the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Vision 2050 and the King County Countywide Planning policies (CPPs) over the 20-year planning period (2024-2044).

### DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

**ACTION**

**DIRECTION**

**INFORMATION ONLY**

### BACKGROUND

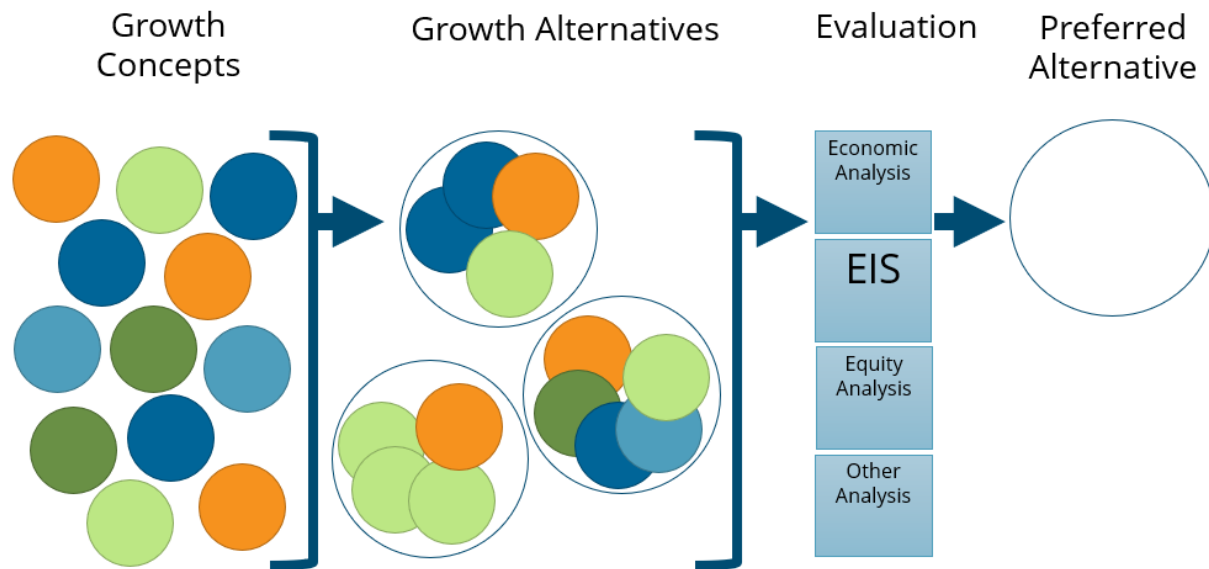
The Planning Commission has been guiding the Comprehensive Plan update since Council launched it on February 28, 2022. Staff has presented the overall scope of the update to Planning Commission (March 9) and asked for direction on the scope of the growth concepts under consideration (September 14). At this meeting, staff will present the three growth alternatives that are based on the growth concepts the Commission reviewed. These alternatives will be analyzed in the Environmental Impact statement (EIS) before decisions about the direction of growth are made. In addition, staff will summarize the progress made on

updates to specific elements in the Comprehensive Plan and briefly summarize the feedback from the community the city has received through outreach events and public comments.

The three growth alternatives include land use changes across various parts of the city as well as those that will be made through the Wilburton Vision Implementation Process. The land use changes in Wilburton and the city as a whole are inextricably linked and so the EIS will analyze the growth options under consideration in the Wilburton study area as a part of the overall growth strategy for the city. The Wilburton study area will be subject to additional analysis in the EIS.

### **GROWTH ALTERNATIVES**

The Growth Concepts were introduced to Council, Planning Commission and other boards and commissions. In addition, staff solicited feedback on topics related to the growth concepts from the community. Based on this feedback, they created three growth alternatives. These alternatives will be evaluated through the Environmental Impact Statement as well as in other ways. Based on this analysis and continued community input, the city will select a preferred alternative which will be planned for in the Comprehensive Plan. The process is shown in the graphic below.



The growth alternatives are:

1. Emphasizing housing for families within existing mixed use centers and across the city
2. Providing a wider range of housing typologies, particularly in areas with good access to transit and jobs, to meet needs of more residents
3. Emphasizing providing a variety of housing types for all income levels in all neighborhoods to allow residents of all backgrounds options throughout their lives

These alternatives, also referred to as action alternatives, will be evaluated against a no action alternative (Alternative 0) in the EIS. The first step is to establish the scope of the analysis. Planning Commission will be alerted to the notice when it is published that will include detailed description of the alternatives. The scoping is followed by the analysis and subsequently the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). After a comment period that may result in amendments to the EIS, the City will release a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

The citywide EIS will include necessary environmental review for the Wilburton Vision Implementation on three Wilburton-specific action alternatives evaluated against a no action alternative (Alternative 0). It will update the previous Wilburton environmental analysis to consider additional housing growth beyond the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)'s Preferred Alternative based on Council and Planning Commission guidance. The updated EIS will also assess the impacts of Wilburton's growth within the context of citywide growth. The City will be analyzing impacts to both the overall City and the Wilburton study area in one EIS, with additional detail analyzed in the Wilburton study area.

### *EIS Scoping Process*

A citywide EIS will analyze three action alternatives in order to inform the choice of a preferred alternative that will be incorporated into the recommended Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update package. The action alternatives are a combination of changes to the City's land use map and policies that will determine where there is capacity for future growth in jobs and housing. This is needed to ensure there is capacity to carry out the City's vision for the future and meet the job and housing targets set in the Countywide Planning Policies and ratified by City Council as well as the affordability targets currently under development at the state and county levels. The policy and map changes could have either positive or negative impacts on the environment by changing the location, type or amount of growth. An EIS will be used to analyze the alternatives and how they compare against a scenario where no additional action is taken. The EIS will inform the City decision makers and public about the environmental consequences and opportunities for natural lands, wildlife, traffic, and other areas.

Scoping is the first step in the EIS process. Scoping helps focus the EIS by identifying specific elements like carbon emissions, wildlife habitat or resident displacement that might be affected by the proposed growth alternatives. During scoping members of the public have the opportunity to learn more about the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and the draft growth alternatives. As part of the process members of the public can raise any concerns about potential environmental impacts of each proposal. If it is determined that the concerns raised are significant, then they are analyzed in the EIS.

The community and organizations with an interest in the future growth of Bellevue have the opportunity to comment on the scope of the analysis during a 30-day comment period. The City will issue a Determination of Significance (DS) and request for comments on the scope of the EIS on September 29, 2022. The 30-day public comment period begins 8:00 AM on Thursday,

September 29, and ends at 4:30 PM on Thursday, October 29, 2022. The City will accept comments through an online portal, by email, by mail, or verbally at two public meetings in October:

- October 13, 2022 – virtual public meeting
- October 18, 2022 – in-person meeting at City Hall

The City will then review the comments received and determine which topics will be included in the EIS. In addition to environmental topics, displacement analysis, housing affordability impacts, equity analysis and an economic analysis will be incorporated into the EIS and each of the alternatives will be assessed with an equity framework. Following scoping, the growth alternatives will be finalized in the fall so that they can be analyzed in the EIS.

### **POLICY UPDATE PROGRESS**

The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update has just concluded Phase 2a: Explore Livability and Draft Growth Alternatives. As described at the project launch, this phase includes ensuring the public understands goals and targets related to growth, building understanding of key data and trends, collecting input to be used to develop EIS alternatives and policies for Land Use, Housing and Transportation elements in particular.

#### *Community Engagement*

Four events have been held with the community focused on Sustainability, Placemaking, Mobility and Housing. Staff is currently processing all of the feedback and will write a thorough report summarizing the input received through these events. The feedback has already influenced the growth alternatives and will also be incorporated into proposed policy changes.

#### *Scope of Comprehensive Plan Policy Changes*

Each element of the Comprehensive Plan includes introductory narrative text and policies that are divided into topical sections. The introductory text gives some history of the city, provides the planning context, and an explanation of the policy direction that the city is taking. Draft updates to this section will be completed in 2023. Currently, staff are considering the detailed scope of changes for the policies. Such changes include:

- **Addition of new policies:** Adding policies that are needed because of changed conditions or future needs.
- **Repeal of policies:** Repealing policies that are no longer relevant, in conflict with state, regional, county or city direction, or redundant with other policies.
- **Modification of policies:** Modifications could include minor text edits to correct typos or awkward wording or major edits that reflect the revised policy intent and that impact the application of the policy.

- **Move policies:** Occasionally, there are policies that fit better in another element or within a different section of the same element.

In addition to updating the policies themselves, changes may also be made to the organization of the policies. The introductory text will be updated to reflect the current planning context and the content of the policies.

Below is a summary of the scope of the updates for each element. The Transportation Commission and the Environmental Services Commission have reviewed the scope for their respective elements in September. Additional review by Boards and Commissions will take place in November. Additional policy amendments may emerge from the analysis in the EIS and continued community engagement.

#### Across all elements

- A focus on equity and sustainability
- Stronger ties between the elements on interlocking issues
- Removing redundancy, unclear wording, or unnecessary features

#### Citizen Engagement Element

- Rename to reflect the broader range of community members to be engaged
- Emphasize equitable and representative engagement
- Encourage innovative strategies to reach more community members that have often been excluded from or had a limited role in the planning process

#### Land Use Element

- Reflect the chosen growth strategy following the analysis of the growth alternatives through the EIS process and adopted growth targets
- Describe new Countywide Centers (update the existing mixed use center section)
- Considerations for displacement
- A more consistent reflection of Bellevue’s current and future mix of urban and suburban neighborhoods

#### Neighborhoods Element

- Represent neighborhoods of all types, including both low-density residential, high-density residential and mixed-use neighborhoods
- Improvements to the Neighborhood Area Planning process
- Stronger ties between this element and the Housing Element

#### Housing Element

- Significant amendments in order to meet the state, regional, and county requirements around housing types and affordability
- Record and address past discriminatory or inequitable practices
- Broader housing choices and affordable housing approaches and priorities
- Approach policies that give preferential treatment to some areas or residents over others with an equity lens
- Address homelessness and tie it to policies regarding deeply affordable units and policies found within the Human Services Element

#### Capital Facilities Element

- Incorporate policies regarding more sustainable practices throughout this element in collaboration with Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) staff
- Align policies with other functional and implementation plan updates

#### Utilities Element

- Update language to reflect current tools and technology
- Coordinate across the Utilities, Environment and Parks elements to manage stormwater effectively
- Clarify policies around the extension of utilities in the remaining Potential Annexation Area
- Coordinate across the Utilities and Environment element for consistent policies for green building and low impact development

#### Transportation Element

- Update policies to reflect the completion of key projects
- Update language to reflect the city's use of a multimodal concurrency framework

#### Economic Development Element

- Update language to reflect the new job target
- Anticipate changes in the future of how and where people work

#### Environment Element

- Support future ESI work and innovative strategies
- A new section on climate resilience

## Human Services Element

- Tie more closely to the Housing Element
- Discuss the link between human services and addressing homelessness
- Review alternate approaches to representing the range of work to display the full continuum of services that are needed
- Address specific areas such as transportation for low income and senior residents
- Better representation of the regional approach to human services

## Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element

- Update language to reflect the evolving use of parks and open space
- Coordinate issues that intersect with the Environment, Utilities and Neighborhoods elements

## Urban Design and the Arts Element

- Streamline this element to better tie it to city processes around design review, street improvement and maintenance prioritization, and other implementation approaches
- Better integrate arts, culture, and history into placemaking qualities across the city.
- Add additional policies in support of tribal coordination, historic preservation and cultural resources to align with Vision 2050

## The Shoreline Management Element

- Coordinate on issues that intersect with the Environment Element.

## **SCHEDULE & NEXT STEPS**

The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update is moving on to Phase 2b. During this stage, the growth alternatives will be analyzed and staff will identify areas of needed policy changes in each of the elements. Wilburton Vision Implementation is moving on to its next scope phase. Wilburton study area's growth alternatives will be analyzed, and staff will inventory policy issues related to Wilburton to be incorporated into the EIS analysis and policy development. Staff will be providing an update to Council on Dec 3, 2022. Any direction Planning Commission gives to staff will be incorporated into the management brief for Council. Staff will return to Planning Commission in January to report on the progress of the updates to the Elements.

## **OPTIONS**

1. Information only

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Project Timeline