



Bellevue Planning Commission

January 24, 2024

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update: Staff Recommended Policy Changes in Community Engagement and Economic Development 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:

- Community Engagement
- Economic Development

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION

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DIRECTION

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INFORMATION ONLY

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BACKGROUND

The state GMA directs cities and counties to update their comprehensive plans every 10 years (RCW 36.70A). The current update must be adopted by December 2024. Within the state of Washington, the GMA framework outlined in RCW 36.70 and 36.70a ensures consistency and coordination between jurisdictions. Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan is guided by policies in King County's Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) and Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC's) Vision 2050 and Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs). The Planning Commission is directed by city code to review, consider amendments and make recommendations to the City Council on the Comprehensive Plan (Bellevue City Code 3.64.070). Other boards and commissions are

directed to participate in the process with the Planning Commission responsible for making the ultimate recommendation to Council.

The Planning Commission was introduced to the overall scope of the Comprehensive Plan update on March 9, 2022. Staff provided the expected scope of the updates to the specific plan elements on September 28, 2022. Commissioners supported the overall scope of the updates and encouraged staff to engage in robust community engagement throughout the process and pay particular attention to sustainability in updating the plan. Staff shared a progress report to the Commission on the update to each element on February 22, 2023. Commissioners again encouraged the staff to continue with robust community outreach around the plan. The Commission reviewed the key policy updates to Community Engagement and Economic Development on September 27, 2023. Commissioners expressed support for a more inclusive definition of the Bellevue community, including visitors and specifically reaching out to people who prefer to communicate in other languages. Commissioners also expressed support for expanding policies around tourism in Bellevue to include areas outside of Downtown.

At this meeting, the Commission will review staff recommended updates to the policies based on Commission feedback, community engagement to date, potential mitigation measures and other recommendations in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and study documents, and state and regional requirements. The Comprehensive Plan addresses programs, activities and initiatives of citywide scope, therefore the plan update has been heavily coordinated across departments.

The City is continuing to engage with the community about the updates to the policies, including the policies in these elements. The current policy engagement period will close on February 16. Staff will bring community feedback to the Commission during review of the complete draft plan.

The glossary is included as attachment B. It has not been updated since the last commission meeting but staff continues to note needed additions. The commission will have the opportunity to review the updates to the glossary at a future date.

POLICY UPDATES – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Below, the policy updates in the Community Engagement (CE) 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.

Building Community Capacity

All policies in this subsection are new and focus on supporting the relationships, education and connections that make transparent and productive dialog between the City and the community possible.

- CE-1. Added to focus on building relationships with people and groups in the community.
- CE-2. Added to focus on building community leaders.
- CE-3. Added to support community education of civic activities.

Planning for Engagement

This subsection focuses on the planning and analysis leading up to engagement with the community and other stakeholders including.

- CE-4. Combined with another policy and updated to ensure that impacts are assessed, particularly for historically underserved communities.
- CE-5. Combined with another policy and updated to ensure equitable engagement and broaden the tools available for engagement.
- CE-6. Updated to be more specific about including the community at the appropriate level for the project.
- CE-7. Updated to be more specific about meeting the community's needs in a culturally relevant manner.
- CE-8. Added to ensure broad representation of the community in engagement.

Engaging the Community

The policies in this subsection are focused on the practices of engagement and how the City engages with the community.

- CE-9. Added to ensure the City uses writing style and design that is understandable by a broad array of community members.
- CE-10. Added to define the community broadly.
- CE-11. Added to create conditions for meaningful community engagement.
- CE-13. Added to support equitable engagement by reducing barriers.
- CE-14. Added to support equitable engagement by expanding opportunities for engagement.
- CE-16. Added to support equitable engagement by setting metrics for engagement.
- CE-17. Added to support continuous communication with the community.

Supporting Good Relationships between City and Community

In this subsection, policies focus on guiding how the city interacts with the community.

- CE-18. Added in response to several CPPs that added tribal governments to existing coordination policies.
- CE-20. Added to support continuous communication with the community.

POLICY UPDATES – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Below, the policy updates in the Economic Development (ED) 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.

Business Development

Policies in this subsection focus on how the city can provide support for the growth of businesses in the city.

- ED-15. Added to provide support for the continued growth of arts organizations.

Community Livability

This subsection focuses on direction to develop and support the amenities that make Bellevue a great place to live and work.

- ED-18. Updated to give the City a more active role in the development of housing to support Bellevue workers.
- ED-22. Updated to give the City a more active role in strengthening destination retail.
- ED-27. Removed limiting list and broadened to include all areas, not just commercial areas in decline.

Education

This subsection contains policies related to education at all stages of life.

- ED-34. Added to support the recruitment of a four-year research institution.

Economic Implementation

Policies in this subsection provide direction for the City in the implementation of economic policy.

- ED-46. Added to support city assistance in locating space for displaced businesses.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update: Proposed Community Engagement and Economic Development Policies
- B. Glossary