

Final Review Comprehensive Plan Amendment Recommendation
City Council-Initiated Amendment

BelRed Look Forward Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Staff recommends approving this proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) because it satisfies all Land Use Code decision criteria for Final Review of a City Council-initiated CPA in [LUC 20.30I.150](#). This CPA will update future land use designations in the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use map and policies within the BelRed Subarea Plan, part of Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan. Updates will increase capacity to meet new citywide housing and job targets, reflect new information, and strengthen and clarify policy direction for implementation.

Application Number: 24-101918-AC

Proposal: BelRed Look Forward Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Subarea Plans: BelRed

Final Review is the second step in Bellevue’s two-part plan amendment review process. Proposed amendments initiated by City Council go straight to this step and bypass Threshold Review, as the City Council’s decision to initiate validates the proposal as worthy of plan amendment consideration. Final Review evaluates the merits of proposed amendments included in the annual CPA work program. The Final Review evaluation and decision process includes staff review, Planning Commission study sessions, a public hearing and Planning Commission recommendation by resolution, and City Council action by ordinance.

PROPOSAL

The proposed plan amendment will amend future land use designations for the BelRed subarea in the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use map and amend goals and policies in the BelRed Subarea Plan.

Amendments to the Future Land Use map will increase development capacity within BelRed to include capacity for an additional 11,100 housing units and 950 thousand square feet of non-residential development. It is anticipated BelRed would gain another 8,100 housing units and 14,200 jobs by 2044 comprising 23 percent and 20 percent of the city’s overall housing and job growth targets respectively.

Amendments to policies within the BelRed Subarea Plan will update and streamline policy language by removing outdated and redundant information to clarify and strengthen direction for strategic implementation and achievement of the BelRed vision.

Work Program and Background

Initial Community Engagement

The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, which has been processed concurrently with and is complemented by the BelRed Look Forward CPA, was initiated by the City Council on February 28, 2022. The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update process began with public engagement related to Affirming the Vision for the city. A mailed questionnaire was sent to every Bellevue household to identify strengths the planning process should build upon and challenges it should address. Input gathered during this first phase was used to identify topic areas for further exploration during Phase 2. Key topics included: housing, sustainability, mobility, and placemaking.

During Phase 2, community members had opportunities to learn about key topics in a series of deep dive discussions where they considered trade-offs and provided feedback on how they felt the city should approach questions related to growth. During this phase, community members indicated they wanted to see the greatest increases in density in areas served by frequent transit, especially in

Bellevue’s existing growth centers like Downtown, BelRed, Wilburton, and Eastgate. In terms of housing, people expressed interest in having a variety of housing options within all parts of the city, and they supported the creation of family sized apartments that have two or more bedrooms per unit. In terms of neighborhood amenities, community members expressed interest in supporting the development of recreational opportunities, night markets, public plazas, art, urban gardens, street trees, etc. Input from this second phase of engagement was used to inform the development of growth options that eventually became the different future land use alternatives studied in the environmental review.

Environmental Review

During the scoping period for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton Vision Implementation environmental review process, community members, including property owners in BelRed, expressed interest in increasing allowed building heights and densities within BelRed to maximize capacity for housing development. In connection with this environmental review for the Periodic Update, Alternative 3 included the largest increases to development intensity within BelRed, and it received the most support from people commenting on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The City also studied a fifth alternative, called the Preferred Alternative, in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Periodic Update. This alternative focused the highest development intensities tightly around the light rail stations to allow for a greater diversity of housing within the station area nodes. Ultimately, the recommended Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use map consolidated highrise classifications into one highrise future land use designation allowing for greater flexibility in terms of upzoning to the higher land use classifications in the future.

Environmental impacts identified during the environmental review, and echoed by community members, included displacement impacts to existing local small businesses within BelRed and environmental health impacts to people resulting from exposure to high levels of air pollutants if residential development or other sensitive uses were located in close proximity to high volume roadways such as I-405 and SR 520.

To address displacement impacts, plan policies direct the city to:

- allow existing uses to remain while the BelRed area transforms gradually,
- tailor development standards to meet the needs of unique businesses in different parts of subarea,
- promote the preservation and/or relocation of existing small ethnic groceries and food services, and to
- incentivize the provision of affordable commercial space enabling existing businesses to relocate more easily.

To address environmental health impacts, future land use designations and policies focus residential uses in areas away from sources of air pollution.

In addition to the land use alternatives for BelRed analyzed during the environmental review for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton Vision Implementation, a subsequent State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Checklist was published with the Notice of Application for the BelRed Look Forward CPA in support of threshold review under SEPA for this particular action.

Public Review of Proposed Future Land Use and Subarea Plan Policy

Community members voiced general support for the proposed policy direction voicing strong support for policies encouraging mixed use development, increasing capacity for a broad range of housing, incentivizing incorporation of stream corridors, looking for opportunities for regional surface and stormwater facilities, incorporating parks, recreation, and natural amenities into public rights-of-way, emphasizing natural resource benefits to riparian corridors in the acquisition of land for parks and open space, promoting a safe, comfortable, integrated, and vibrant pedestrian experience, and for securing long-term affordable commercial space for arts and cultural organizations, as well as affordable housing for artists. Community members also voiced support for streamlining policy and removing redundant policies covered in Volume 1 to remove potential for conflicts in policy and to improve efficiency.

Planning Commission Review

Consistent with Part 20.301 LUC and the Process IV requirements in chapter 20.35 LUC, the Planning Commission has been involved in the review of the future land use designation and policy amendments to the BelRed Subarea Plan throughout the planning process. Below is a list of the meeting dates along with the topics reviewed and discussed:

- February 23, 2023: The scope and schedule of the BelRed Look Forward CPA was reviewed and discussed.
- June 21, 2023: A Preferred Land Use Alternative for review in the Final Environmental Impact Statement was reviewed, discussed, and recommended to City Council.
- September 27: Key policy moves on Open Space and Natural Systems were reviewed and discussed.
- December 13, 2023: Key policy moves on Cultural and Community Connections including Transportation, and on Land Use, Housing and Urban Form were reviewed and discussed.
- February 28, 2024: Draft Future Land Use designations and Land Use and Neighborhood District goal and policies were reviewed and discussed.
- April 10, 2024: A draft Vision and draft Environment, Parks and Open Space, Transportation, and Implementation goals and policies were reviewed and discussed.
- April 24, 2024: Draft General, Housing, Urban Design, and Arts and Culture goals and policies were reviewed and discussed.
- May 8, 2024: Recommended Future Land Use Map designations were reviewed, discussed, and direction was given to bring the map of Future Land Use designations forward to public hearing.
- May 22, 2024: Recommended BelRed Subarea Plan policies were reviewed, discussed, and direction was given to schedule a public hearing on bring the policies forward to public hearing.

Other Board and Commission Review

In addition to Planning Commission review, several other boards and commissions were involved in the review of goal and policy amendments providing direction per their areas of expertise and transmitting their recommendations to Planning Commission. Below is a list of the meeting dates and topics discussed:

- November 9, 2023: Transportation Commission: Introduction and review of proposed transportation goal and policy amendments.
- February 1, 2024: Environmental Services Commission: Review of proposed environmental goal and policy amendments related to surface and stormwater.
- February 13, 2024: Parks and Community Services Board: Review of proposed parks and open space goal and policy amendments.
- March 6, 2024: Arts Commission: Review and recommendation of arts, culture, and creativity goal and policy amendments.
- March 7, 2024: Environmental Services Commission: Review and recommendation of environmental goal and policy amendments related to surface and stormwater.
- March 12, 2024: Parks and Community Services Board: Review and recommendation of proposed parks and open space goal and policy amendments.

OVERVIEW OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This section of the report provides an overview of how this proposal satisfies the Final Review Decision Criteria for a CPA. The following section will provide a more detailed analysis. This proposal satisfies the Final Review Decision Criteria for a CPA as follows:

- √ *The proposed amendment is **consistent with the Comprehensive Plan** and other goals and policies of the city, the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP), the Growth Management Act and other applicable law because it expands development capacity for a broad range of residential and non-residential development near frequent transit to help meet the needs of Bellevue’s projected population and employment growth while minimizing the environmental impacts of new development.*
- √ *The proposed amendment **addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire city** because it concentrates increased development intensity near light rail optimizing recent investment, facilitates a better balance between jobs and housing, active transportation and use of public transit thereby, reducing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions and increasing access to opportunity.*
- √ *The proposed amendment **addresses significantly changed conditions (since the last time the pertinent map or text was amended)** including a tighter housing market, more frequent, intense, and longer lasting storm and heat events, and wider economic disparities, by increasing the supply of housing, increasing building and transportation energy efficiencies, increasing opportunities for on-site natural drainage and expansion of tree canopy, and increasing access to opportunity defined as a situation or condition that places individuals in a position to be more likely to succeed and excel. Areas considered high opportunity areas have relatively more resources than the regional average. A comprehensive index of opportunity groups indicators into five key elements associated with positive life outcomes: education, economic health, housing and neighborhood quality, mobility and transportation, and health and environment.*
- √ *Implicit in the proposed amendment is an expectation **of general conformance with adjacent land use and the surrounding development pattern**. The proposed CPA would provide for the continued redevelopment envisioned for the BelRed Subarea. However, this CPA is not a site-specific*

amendment in property terms as it would apply to properties across the Subarea. Therefore, this decision criterion for development suitability does not apply to this CPA.

- √ *The proposed amendment **demonstrates a public benefit and enhances the public health, safety and welfare** because it increases opportunities for active transportation, which promotes healthy exercise and reduces harmful emissions to air and water. It would also increase capacity for job and housing growth, and increase the diversity of housing types, sizes, and costs, thereby increasing the number and diversity of people who would have convenient access to well-paying jobs, affordable housing, high quality schools, parks, and frequent transit service. It would also build resilience to impacts of climate change by restoring streams and their riparian corridors, reducing impervious surface, promoting low-impact development, and expanding tree canopy.*

FINAL REVIEW DECISION CRITERIA

The six Final Review Decision Criteria for a proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment are set forth in the Land Use Code in Section [20.30I.150](#). A proposal must meet all applicable criteria to be recommended for approval. For this CPA proposal, only four criteria are applicable. Based on the criteria, Community Development Department staff recommends **approval** of the proposed amendment:

Final Review Decision Criteria	Meets/ Does Not Meet
A – Obvious technical error	N/A
B1 – Consistent with Plan, other goals and policies, CPPs, GMA and other law	Meets
B2 – Addresses interests and changed needs of entire city	Meets
B3 – Addresses significantly changed conditions	Meets
B4 – Could be suitably developed	N/A
B5 – Demonstrates a public benefit	Meets

This conclusion is based on the following analysis:

- A. There exists obvious technical error in the pertinent Comprehensive Plan provision, or**
No technical error exists in the current BelRed Subarea Plan. Therefore this is not applicable to this proposal.
- B1. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other goals and policies of the city, the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP), the Growth Management Act and other applicable law; and**

Comprehensive Plan

This proposal is consistent with Bellevue’s current Comprehensive Plan, including policies in the Land Use, Neighborhoods, Housing, Capital Facilities, Utilities, Transportation, Economic Development, Environment, Parks, Recreation and Open Space, Human Services, and Urban Design and the Arts elements. While the policies referenced below are being updated currently through the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update process, the proposed amendment is expected to be consistent with any and all modifications made as part of that process, particularly given that

the city is processing the Periodic Update and BelRed Look Forward CPA concurrently and in harmony.

Land Use

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Land Use Element policies around meeting the needs of projected job and housing growth through compact, walkable, mixed use districts oriented around high capacity transit.

LU-1. Promote a clear strategy for focusing the city’s growth and development as follows:

1. Direct most of the city’s growth to the Downtown regional growth center and to other areas designated for compact, mixed use development served by a full range of transportation options.
2. Enhance the health and vitality of existing single family and multifamily residential neighborhoods.
3. Continue to provide for commercial uses and development that serve community needs.

LU-3. Promote a land use pattern and an integrated multimodal transportation system.

LU-5. Accommodate adopted growth targets of 17,000 additional housing units and 53,000 additional jobs for the 2006-2031 period and plan for the additional growth anticipated by 2035. (Note: New growth targets of 35,000 housing units and 70,000 jobs between 2019 and 2044 were adopted in the Countywide Planning Policies)

LU-9. Work with regional partners to achieve a mix of jobs and housing that makes it possible for people to live closer to where they work.

LU-15. Provide, through land use regulation, the potential for a broad range of housing choices to meet the changing needs of the community.

LU-16. Encourage adequate pedestrian connections with nearby neighborhood and transit facilities in all residential site development.

LU-17. Maintain areas for shopping centers designed to serve neighborhoods, recognizing their multiple roles: serving residents’ needs, acting as community gathering places, and helping to establish neighborhood identity.

LU-18. Encourage new neighborhood retail and personal services in locations that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, allow for ease of pedestrian access, and enhance neighborhood character and identity.

LU-21. Support development of compact, livable and walkable mixed use centers in BelRed, Eastgate, Factoria, Wilburton and Crossroads.

LU-22. Monitor trends in Bellevue’s job centers and consider land use changes, if needed, to maintain the vitality of these centers.

LU-28.1 Provide for a mix of housing, office, service and retail uses in a compact walkable development pattern that optimizes the benefits of transit investment in Bellevue’s transit-oriented development areas.

LU-28.2 Provide walking and bicycle routes in the station area that are accessible, safe and convenient, and that connect to destinations, transit and surrounding bicycle and pedestrian networks.

LU-28.3 Ensure that transit-oriented land use and development is responsive to the type of transit facilities and services provided and the context of surrounding area.

LU-28.4 Consider a land use incentive system that offers additional floor area in exchange for infrastructure and amenities that contribute to the public good.

LU-30. Recognize the placemaking value of arts and cultural facilities and work to site them throughout the city as a means to enhance neighborhoods.

LU-32. Acquire and maintain a system of parks, open space and other landscaped areas to perpetuate Bellevue's park-like setting and enhance the livability of the city's neighborhoods.

LU-33. Preserve open space and key natural features through a variety of techniques, such as sensitive site planning, conservation easements, transferring density, land use incentives and open space taxation.

Neighborhoods

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Neighborhoods Element policies around promoting distinctive neighborhood districts and opportunities for community connection.

N-5. Promote community connections that strengthen the social fabric of neighborhoods, including support for local neighborhood associations, community clubs, community centers, school organizations and non-profits that invest in building community.

N-9. Preserve and develop distinctive neighborhood character within Bellevue's diverse neighborhoods.

N-11. Enable neighborhood-tailored solutions to localized issues while ensuring that they meet citywide responsibilities.

N-12. Periodically assess and update neighborhood area plans and adapt plans to changing conditions.

Housing

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Housing Element policies around developing greater housing opportunities for a broad range of household incomes and sizes.

HO-2. Promote quality, community-friendly single family, multifamily and mixed use development, through features such as enhanced open space and pedestrian connectivity.

HO-7. Encourage the development of affordable housing through incentives and other tools consistent with state enabling legislation.

HO-9. Encourage development of appropriate amenities for families with children throughout the city through investments, development regulations and incentives.

HO-11. Encourage housing opportunities in mixed residential/ commercial settings throughout the city.

HO-12. Provide incentives to encourage residential development for a range of household types and income levels in multifamily and mixed use commercial zones.

HO-23. Encourage the development of affordable housing through incentives and other tools consistent with state enabling legislation.

Capital Facilities

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Capital Facilities Element policies around providing for adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of projected growth and coordinating investments between departments.

CF-1. Ensure that capital facilities necessary to meet level of service standards are provided within a reasonable amount of time.

CF-9. Coordinate planned capital investments across departments.

Utilities

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Utilities Element policies around promoting the use of natural drainage practices, regional facilities, and facilities that achieve multiple benefits.

UT-9. Encourage the joint use of public facilities such as the development of a storm and surface water detention area as passive recreation.

UT-13. Consider Low Impact Development principles to minimize impervious surfaces and native vegetation loss on all infrastructure improvement projects.

UT-34. Provide a storm and surface water system that controls damage from storms, protects surface water quality, provides for the safety and enjoyment of citizens, supports fish and wildlife habitat, and protects the environment.

UT-38. Encourage the use of low impact development and stormwater best management practices to manage stormwater runoff, which may result in smaller facilities constructed on- and off-site for flow control, conveyance, and water quality.

Transportation

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Transportation Element policies around supporting growth, access to transit, active transportation, and coordination with regional and state agencies, as well as those calling for achieving multiple outcomes in transportation facilities including recreation, placemaking, and environmental outcomes.

TR-3. Direct transportation investments and service to support the Urban Centers growth strategy of the Countywide Planning Policies.

TR-4. Incorporate transit-supportive and pedestrian-oriented design features in new development through development review.

TR-21. Ensure that the transportation system infrastructure in Bellevue provides mobility options for all modes, and accommodates the mobility needs of everyone, including underserved populations.

TR-22. Coordinate improvements and operations among travel modes and provide facilities to support people who are making connections between modes.

TR-25. Increase system connectivity for all modes by providing for vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycling facilities to create a Complete Streets network throughout the city.

TR-26. Design, implement, and maintain transportation system improvements and deliver transportation services and programs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

TR-33. Plan for transportation system projects to accommodate the forecast demand and to meet Performance Targets in each update of the Transportation Facilities Plan.

TR-62. Develop and implement an arterial street plan, addressing the nature and conditions of arterials, and establishing guidelines for the design of these streets to be compatible with the abutting uses.

TR-70. Support a frequent transit network in Bellevue that serves transit hubs and population and employment centers with reliable commuter and all-day service and seamless interface between transit routes, East Link, and other modes.

TR-72. Coordinate with private developers and transit providers to integrate transit passenger information and facilities, pedestrian connections and weather protection, and bicycle access and parking into new development and redevelopment.

TR-81. Develop and maintain safe and convenient pedestrian access to transit stops and stations, through shared responsibility with transit providers, that:

1. Provides short, direct routes within a ten-minute walk;
2. Designs the pedestrian environment to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptation;
3. Maximizes safety for pedestrians at street crossings; and
4. Gives priority to pedestrian access and safety.

TR-110. Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities along with other mobility options in scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating and maintaining the transportation system.

TR-125. Encourage the Washington State Department of Transportation to enhance freeway access to serve Downtown Bellevue, Wilburton, BelRed, Eastgate and Factoria.

TR-143. Develop the transportation system in Bellevue to minimize environmental and neighborhood impacts, while addressing the city's long-term transportation and land use objectives.

TR-146. Avoid, minimize or mitigate significant adverse impacts to air quality, noise, light/glare and other elements of the environment in planning and implementing transportation projects.

Economic Development

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Economic Development Element policies around diversifying Bellevue's economy through promotion of distinct economic centers and the inclusion of amenities, including arts and culture.

ED-2. Promote local businesses and locally-produced goods and services.

ED-5. Develop and maintain regulations that allow for continued economic growth while respecting the environment and quality of life of city neighborhoods.

ED-14. Recognize the economic development benefits of city and private sector investments in urban amenities like arts and culture, open space and recreational facilities, and high quality urban design. Strengthen the city's assets in these areas as an explicit component of the city's economic development strategy.

ED-15. Encourage high quality design and urban amenities for public and private development, maintaining development standards to recognize that a quality built environment helps attract the talented workers who will sustain economic growth.

ED-16. Encourage development of a range of housing opportunities to accommodate Bellevue's growing workforce.

ED-21. Support economic development in the city's commercial areas.

ED-22. Support efforts that promote tourism, hotel, retail and arts businesses.

ED-23. Emphasize the value of a range of commercial centers to provide opportunities for a diverse range of businesses.

ED-31. Maintain and update integrated land use and transportation plans to guide the future of the city's major commercial areas and help them respond to change.

ED-35. Promote and nurture entrepreneurial development in Bellevue by exploring ways to retain or create areas where small or emerging businesses can develop and flourish.

Environment

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Environment Element policies around restoring streams and their riparian habitats, reducing impervious surface and using natural drainage practices, as well as expanding tree canopy within dense urban areas.

EN-5. Protect air, water, land, and energy resources consistent with Bellevue's role in the regional growth strategy.

EN-7. Develop and implement climate change adaptation strategies that create a more resilient community by addressing the impacts of climate change to public health and safety, the economy, public and private infrastructure, water resources, and habitat.

EN-20. Maintain surface water quality, defined as meeting federal and state standards and restore surface water that has become degraded, to the maximum extent practicable.

EN-23. Retrofit public storm drainage systems and prioritize investments where there is a significant potential for restoring surface water quality important to preserving or enhancing aquatic life.

EN-24. Reduce runoff from streets, parking lots and other impervious surfaces and improve surface water quality by utilizing low impact development techniques in new development and redevelopment.

EN-44. Provide land use incentives to minimize the amount of impervious surface area below that allowed through prescriptive standards, in new development, redevelopment, and existing development citywide.

EN-46. Make low impact development the preferred and commonly-used approach to site development to minimize impervious surfaces, native vegetation loss, and stormwater runoff.

EN-60. Identify, prioritize and implement public projects to improve habitat.

EN-63. Preserve and maintain fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas and wetlands in a natural state and restore similar areas that have become degraded.

EN-64. Manage aquatic habitats, including shoreline and riparian (streamside) habitats, to preserve and enhance their natural functions of providing fish and wildlife habitat and protecting water quality.

EN-66. Give special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous salmonids, recognizing that requirements will vary depending on the aquatic resources involved, including differing stream classification, and that additional efforts may be identified in the regional salmon recovery planning process.

EN-86. Facilitate the transfer of development potential away from critical areas and the clustering of development on the least sensitive portion of a site.

EN-89. Explore opportunities for public acquisition and management of key critical areas of valuable natural and aesthetic resources, and fish and wildlife habitat sensitive to urbanization through a variety of land acquisition tools such as conservation easements and fee-simple purchase.

Human Services

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Human Services Element policies around providing for inclusive neighborhoods that expand access to opportunity.

HS-8. Make Bellevue a welcoming, safe and just community marked by fairness and equity provided to those disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and victimization.

HS-9. Improve access to services throughout the community by removing physical and systemic barriers and empowering individuals to overcome other barriers that may exist.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element policies around establishing connected greenways, protecting natural features and wildlife habitat, and providing equitable access to a diversity of park and open space.

PA-1. Establish a coordinated and connected system of open space and greenways throughout the city that provide multiple benefits including preserving natural systems, protecting wildlife habitat and corridors, and providing land for recreation.

PA-2. Obtain land throughout the community to meet present and future parks and open space needs.

PA-3. Equitably distribute a variety of parks, community centers and other indoor and outdoor recreation facilities throughout the city.

PA-4. Connect Bellevue's parks and trails to the regional system of nearby state, King County and neighboring city parks, greenways, trails and facilities.

PA-5. Obtain, for preservation, natural areas that are sensitive to urbanization or represent a valuable natural and aesthetic resource to the community.

PA-7. Maximize use of public lands by collaborating with other City projects and programs to incorporate utility, storm drainage, underutilized right-of-way and other public lands into the parks and open space system.

- PA-10.** Pursue private dedication of land and funds for park related purposes through a variety of methods such as purchase, donation, easement, and land use code incentives.
- PA-11.** Encourage privately funded recreational and cultural facilities throughout the city, especially in major employment centers.
- PA-12.** Develop pedestrian and bicycle linkages between neighborhoods and major natural areas, recreation facilities, schools and commercial centers.
- PA-13.** Collaborate with King County, Sound Transit and neighboring jurisdictions in the planning and development of the regional Eastside Rail Corridor trail system.
- PA-14.** Encourage the linkage and access of private facilities with those in the public system.
- PA-19.** Provide opportunities for individuals to develop a sense of community through services and programs including programs that encourage intercultural interaction.
- PA-21.** Use parks to celebrate, promote and preserve Bellevue’s history, cultural arts and local heritage when consistent with the park’s design and programming.
- PA-25.** Promote partnerships with public and private service providers to meet cultural, recreational, and social needs of the community.
- PA-29.** Design, construct, operate, and maintain parklands and facilities to preserve the ecology of natural systems on parklands.

Urban Design and the Arts

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Urban Design and the Arts Element policies around making BelRed’s districts distinct and inspiring places to be with safe, attractive, welcoming, and connected corridors throughout the subarea.

- UD-5.** Support community efforts to develop art that enhances neighborhood character, builds community, and engages residents in the artistic process.
- UD-12.** Enhance and support a safe, active, connected and functional pedestrian environment for all ages and abilities.
- UD-13.** Support and encourage art and arts programs that facilitate involvement, engagement, communication, understanding, and respect among the city’s diverse population.
- UD-14.** Support and encourage development, display and performance opportunities for a wide range of artistic expression throughout the city.
- UD-17.** Support and encourage a variety of artwork in public places, such as parks, public buildings, and plazas.
- UD-19.** Support artists and arts groups working in the community through city programs and private partnerships.
- UD-20.** Support and encourage the development of affordable space for artists and arts groups to practice, create, teach, perform, and present their art.
- UD-28.** Encourage private and public developers to integrate art into the design of the public areas of their projects.
- UD-58.** Provide a system of public places of various sizes and types throughout the community with a variety of experiences and accommodations.

UD-70. Enhance neighborhood shopping streets to act as the local “main street” with exceptional landscaping, increased pedestrian and bicycle facilities and neighborhood specific character elements. (See Map UD-2)

UD-82. Preserve, enhance and interpret Bellevue’s historical identity.

State Growth Management Act

The proposal is consistent with GMA planning goals (RCW 36.70A.020), which encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner; efficient multimodal transportation systems that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicles miles traveled; housing affordable to all economic segments of the population at a variety of residential densities and housing types; retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses; enhanced recreational opportunities, enhanced of fish and wildlife habitat, development of parks and recreation facilities; and adaptation, mitigation, and resiliency to the effects of a changing climate.

Multicounty Planning Policies

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with Multicounty Planning Policies around increasing capacity for housing near high capacity transit to improve the jobs housing balance, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to increase access to opportunity.

MPP-RGS-11. Encourage growth in designated countywide centers.

MPP-En-4. Ensure that all residents of the region, regardless of race, social, or economic status, have clean air, clean water, and other elements of a healthy environment.

MPP-DP-1. Develop high-quality, compact urban communities throughout the region’s urban growth area that impart a sense of place, preserve local character, provide for mixed uses and choices in housing types, and encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use.

MPP-DP-2. Reduce disparities in access to opportunity for the region’s residents through inclusive community planning and targeted public and private investments that meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.

MPP-H-1. Plan for housing supply, forms, and densities to meet the region’s current and projected needs consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and to make significant progress towards jobs/ housing balance.

MPP-Ec-1. Support economic development activities that help to recruit, retain, expand, or diversify the region’s businesses, targeted towards businesses that provide living-wage jobs.

MPP-Ec-12. Identify potential physical, economic, and cultural displacement of existing businesses that may result from redevelopment and market pressure. Use a range of strategies to mitigate displacement impacts to the extent feasible.

MPP-T-8. Strategically expand capacity and increase efficiency of the transportation system to move goods, services, and people consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy. Focus on investments that produce the greatest net benefits to people and minimize the environmental impacts of transportation.

Countywide Planning Policies

Proposed policy amendments are consistent with the following King County Countywide Planning Policy around accommodating growth through land use patterns and practices that create vibrant, healthy, and sustainable communities:

EN-5. Ensure all residents of the region regardless of race, social, or economic status have a clean and healthy environment. Identify, mitigate, and correct for unavoidable negative impacts of public actions that disproportionately affect those frontline communities impacted by existing and historical racial, social, environmental, and economic inequities, and who have limited resources or capacity to adapt to a changing environment.

DP-3. Develop and use residential, commercial, and manufacturing land efficiently in the Urban Growth Area to create healthy, vibrant, and equitable urban communities with a full range of urban services, and to protect the long-term viability of the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands. Promote the efficient use of land within the Urban Growth Area by using methods such as:

- a) Directing concentrations of housing and employment growth to high opportunity areas like designated centers and transit station areas, consistent with the numeric goals in the Regional Growth Strategy;
- b) Encouraging compact and infill development with a mix of compatible residential, commercial, and community activities;
- c) Providing opportunities for greater housing growth closer to areas of high employment to reduce commute times;
- d) Optimizing the use of existing capacity for housing and employment;
- e) Redeveloping underutilized lands, in a manner that considers equity and mitigates displacement; and
- f) Coordinating plans for land use, transportation, schools, capital facilities and services.

DP-6. Adopt land use and community investment strategies that promote public health and address racially and environmentally disparate health outcomes and promote access to opportunity. Focus on residents with the highest needs in providing and enhancing opportunities for employment, safe and convenient daily physical activity, social connectivity, protection from exposure to harmful substances and environments, and housing in high opportunity areas.

DP-39. Evaluate the potential physical, economic, and cultural displacement of residents and businesses in regional growth centers and high-capacity transit station areas, particularly for Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color communities; immigrants and refugees, low-income populations; disabled communities; and other communities at greatest risk of displacement. Use a range of strategies to mitigate identified displacement impacts.

H-15. Increase housing choices for everyone, particularly those earning lower wages, that is co-located with, accessible to, or within a reasonable commute to major employment centers and affordable to all income levels. Ensure there are zoning ordinances and development regulations in place that allow and encourage housing production at levels that improve jobs-housing balance throughout the county across all income levels.

EC-3. Support industry clusters and their related subclusters that are integral components of the Regional Economic Strategy and King County's economy. Emphasize support for clusters that are vulnerable or threatened by market forces, provide middle-wage jobs, play an outsized role in the local economy, or have significant growth potential.

EC-29 Stabilize and prevent the economic displacement of small, culturally relevant businesses and business clusters during periods of growth, contraction, and redevelopment. Mitigate displacement risks through monitoring and adaptive responses.

T-12 Prioritize funding transportation investments that support countywide growth targets and centers framework, and that enhance multimodal mobility and safety, equity, and climate change goals.

B2. The proposed amendment addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire city as identified in its long-range planning and policy documents; and

The proposed amendment addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire city because it provides for increased capacity to meet the city's new housing and job growth targets in areas well served by public transit. It expands capacity for efficient housing development to address the widening gap in the overall supply of housing, especially affordable housing. It also supports diversification of the city's economy to strengthen economic resilience.

B3. The proposal addresses significantly changed conditions since the last time the pertinent Comprehensive Plan map or text was amended. See LUC 20.50.046 (below) for the definition of "Significantly Changed Conditions:"

Significantly changed conditions. *Demonstrating evidence of change such as*

- 1) unanticipated consequences of an adopted policy, or*
- 2) changed conditions on the subject property or its surrounding area, or*
- 3) changes related to the pertinent Plan map or text; where such change has implications of a magnitude that need to be addressed for the Comprehensive Plan to function as an integrated whole.*

Since adoption of the BelRed Subarea Plan in 2009, the following conditions have changed:

- the city has been allocated new housing and job targets to meet the needs of projected growth out to 2044.
- costs of construction have increased,
- construction techniques have improved allowing for development of taller midrise buildings,
- light rail stations have been completed and the 2 Line has begun service on the eastside,
- the supply of housing has not kept pace with job growth contributing to higher housing costs, less housing affordability, and less access to opportunity for households with lower household incomes,
- opportunities for community connection have been reduced due to the COVID pandemic, and
- the frequency, intensity, and duration of storm and high heat events has increased due to climate change.

This proposed amendment would address significantly changed conditions by:

- increasing the capacity for residential and non-residential development,
- providing for a broad range of housing development with the highest intensities focused around light rail stations,

- supporting the diversification of Bellevue’s economy through development of distinct neighborhood districts,
- supporting the use of natural drainage practices and restoration of streams and their riparian corridors,
- supporting the development of community spaces for public gathering and interaction, and by
- providing for parks, open space, and trail connections across the subarea.

B4. If a site-specific proposed amendment, the subject property is suitable for development in general conformance with adjacent land use and the surrounding development pattern, and with zoning standards under the potential zoning classifications; and

Not applicable to this proposal.

B5. The proposed amendment demonstrates a public benefit and enhances the public health, safety and welfare of the city.

The proposed amendment demonstrates a public benefit and enhances the public health, safety, and welfare through policies that support:

- a broad range of housing at various levels of affordability,
- a vibrant economy including a diverse mix of commercial uses,
- a distinctive and sustainable urban form and design including:
 - a nodal land use pattern,
 - a sense of place with a unique cultural environment,
 - an appropriate scale of development, and
 - mixed use, walkable neighborhoods,
- a comprehensive, connected parks and open space system,
- environmental enhancements including:
 - stream corridor restoration and use of natural drainage practices,
 - expanded tree canopy, and
 - environmentally sensitive design, and
- a complete, connected, and well-balanced multimodal transportation system that contributes to BelRed's sense of place and sustainability.

In summary, the proposed amendment is consistent with state, regional, county and city long range plans and policies; it addresses the interests and changed needs of the city; it addresses significantly changed conditions since the last pertinent plan update; and the proposed amendment demonstrates a public benefit that will enhance public health, safety, and welfare for Bellevue residents for years to come. Staff therefore recommends approving the proposed amendment.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT

Required Public Notice

Notice of Application for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on May 19, 2022. Notice of Application on the BelRed CPA was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on March 13, 2024 to ensure public awareness of the specific update to the BelRed Subarea Plan. Notice of Public Hearing and SEPA Threshold Determination was published on June 6, 2024, along

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with availability of this Staff Report/Recommendation. People signed up to receive such notices were also notified. The public hearing on this CPA is scheduled for June 20.

Department of Commerce Notice

Pursuant to the Washington State Growth Management Act, a city proposing to adopt a Comprehensive Plan Amendment must notify the Washington State Department of Commerce of its intent to adopt the Amendment. The required notice to the Department of Commerce and the initial draft Plan will be transmitted at least 60 days prior to adoption.

Public Comment

The city accepts public comments throughout the CPA process. All comments, written and oral, are included in the public record for reference and for use by decision-makers. At the various steps, comments are included in their original form to the Planning Commission as attachments to staff report recommendations. They are also posted on the project web site.

To date, comments have focused on the importance of:

- Focusing increased capacity for population and job growth around light rail stations.
- Increasing capacity for a broad range of housing types at various price levels and sizes to meet the broad range of projected household needs in areas away from high levels of pollution.
- Allowing for a mix of uses in close proximity to one another to reduce vehicle miles traveled.
- Developing ample infrastructure and facilities to serve BelRed's growing population.
- Incorporating restoration of natural features into redevelopment to improve ecological function, build resilience to impacts of climate change, enhance livability, and to provide equitable access to nature and recreational opportunities.
- Reducing displacement of local businesses with redevelopment.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

The Environmental Coordinator for the City of Bellevue has determined that this proposal does not have a probable significant adverse impact upon the environment. Following adoption of this proposed CPA and subsequent LUCA, project level SEPA review will be required for any non-exempt project proposed during the land use review process.

NEXT STEPS

A public hearing on the proposed amendment is scheduled for June 20 after which the Planning Commission can adopt a resolution recommending City Council take action on the proposed amendment.

ATTACHMENTS

- [Recommended BelRed Subarea Plan Policy Amendments](#)
- [Draft BelRed Subarea Plan](#)
- [Draft Future Land Use Map](#)
- [Comprehensive Plan Glossary](#)