

June 8, 2015

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT

Review of the recommended Comprehensive Plan update

STAFF CONTACT

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POLICY FOUNDATION

The *Bellevue Comprehensive Plan* is the foundational policy document that sets overall City policy direction on a wide range of topics, from growth and development to transportation, parks, utilities, economic development, human services, and other topics. The update responds to the state Growth Management Act requirement to periodically update the plan, and addresses local needs to ensure that the plan remains relevant and responsive to community values. The state deadline for adoption is June 30, 2015.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

☐ Action
☒ Discussion
☐ Information

This Study Session is intended to complete Council's first round review of individual Comprehensive Plan elements. This Study Session picks up where the Council left off on June 1 and continues review of the remaining sections of the plan: the Utilities, Environment, Human Services, and Urban Design and the Arts elements, and Volume 2, including recommendations from the Eastgate/I-90 project.

Additional Study Sessions are scheduled for June 15 and 22 for Round 2 to address those items specifically identified by Council prior to considering adoption on the plan on July 20. Attachment 1 summarizes the Comprehensive Plan review process.

Please bring your copies of the recommended Comprehensive Plan to the meeting. The Council may also want to bring your hard copies of the "policy review tables" (strike-drafts showing policy evolution), also available in your electronic document library.

BACKGROUND

The Comprehensive Plan captures the community's vision for the future of Bellevue, sets foundational policy that directs City actions and decisions, and helps guide capital investments. Every seven to ten years Bellevue is required to update its Comprehensive Plan to ensure continued compliance with the state Growth Management Act and, just as important, to ensure it reflects the dynamic changes and trends that affect the growth of the community. More than

meeting a state requirement, Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan has been a fundamental part of the community's vision for the future since the beginning of the City. The last major update of the Comprehensive Plan was in 2004.

Project Objectives

At initiation of the project, the City Council provided direction on the update to ensure that it:

- Fully captures the community's long range vision for the future
- Remains relevant to the community, decision makers and staff
- Comprehensively addresses long-term needs of the community, economy and environment
- Provides a strong policy foundation for City decisions and actions, especially related to infrastructure investments, neighborhoods, land use, environment and economic development
- Includes up to date information about the community
- Is consistent with state law, regional plans and court decisions.

Some of the components of the existing plan are relatively current and needed minimal updates. Other components were found to be significantly out of date and a number of changes are recommended. A key objective of the update is to make the whole plan more accessible and usable so that it remains an effective tool to guide growth.

Review of Board and Commission Recommendations

The Comprehensive Plan includes fourteen elements (or chapters) that include the vision and policies of the plan in Volume 1. Volume 2 includes subarea plans and a number of transportation facility plans. The update includes significant revisions to each of the general elements of Volume 1 and select changes to Volume 2 related to the Eastgate/I-90 project, the Downtown boundary, to the Surrey Downs Park Master Plan, and consolidation of the multiple transportation facility plans. The Council's review process, summarized in Attachment 1, provides for an overview and initial review of each chapter in Round 1 to identify questions and issues for greater exploration. This will be followed by Round 2 to explore the resolution to the short list of specific items identified by Council.

- Round 1 – Study Sessions introduce the draft updates and identifying questions and issues that warrant further review.
- Round 2 – Study Sessions will review those identified issues in greater detail and further consider specific changes to the plan.

This Study Session picks up where the Council left off on June 1 and continues review of the remaining sections of the plan: the Utilities, Environment, Human Services, and Urban Design and the Arts elements, and Volume 2. Summaries of the major changes to each element are included in Attachments 2-6.

This Study Session will conclude Round 1 and Councilmembers are asked to identify any additional Comprehensive Plan items that require further discussion or where Councilmembers

would like to proposed changes. To date, Councilmembers have identified the following topics for additional discussion:

- How diversity is addressed throughout the plan
- Growth targets
- Neighborhood area mapping
- Housing changes, including a reference to GMA and edits to HO-16, HO-23, HO-25, HO-27 and HO-X8
- Transportation changes, including the goal and TR-1
- Information about the transportation facility project list
- Utilities information about the transfer station

These items will be brought back for review during Round 2 at the June 15 and 22 Study Sessions.

State and Regional Review

As part of the Comprehensive Plan process under the Growth Management Act, draft copies of the plan were provided to the state Department of Commerce and the Puget Sound Regional Council for their review. While the state does not formally approve local Comprehensive Plans, the state has a review process to help ensure that local plans are consistent with the Growth Management Act. Somewhat similarly, the Puget Sound Regional Council does not have a formal approval authority, but does certify local plans to ensure consistency with GMA and the regional VISION 2040. If found inconsistent at either level, the City could risk qualifying for state or regional funding and be subject to legal risk.

Comment letters from Commerce and the Puget Sound Regional Council staff are provided in Attachments 7-8. Neither review found a significant deficiency in the draft. However, each made a few points and raised some questions. Staff is taking time to consider the comments carefully and may suggest a potential set of limited changes to Council at the next meeting that could address some of the questions raised.

Final Staff Edit

As the Comprehensive Plan works towards adoption, staff is continuing to review the plan for minor edits and corrections. While these are few, staff have noticed the occasional mistake. A list of corrections will be developed and provided for Council's review.

NEXT STEPS

The next Study Session on June 15 is intended to review the Round 2 items identified by the Council. This review will also incorporate the 2015 annual amendments. The June 22 Study Session is available to follow up on any of those items and wrap up review of the plan together with any other final review of the plan that is needed. Staff are available for briefings should that be helpful for any Councilmember in preparing for the June 15 and 22 follow-on discussions.

The anticipated date of adoption is July 20.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Comprehensive Plan Council Review Process
2. Utilities Element Summary
3. Environment Element Summary
4. Human Services Element Summary
5. Urban Design and the Arts Element Summary
6. Volume 2 Summary
7. Letter from the Washington State Department of Commerce dated May 28, 2015
8. Letter from the Puget Sound Regional Council dated May 13, 2015

Attachments 2-6 are the same as provided in the Council's June 1 meeting packet.

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL DOCUMENT LIBRARY

1. Draft Comprehensive Plan – Planning Commission Recommendation
2. Planning Commission Transmittal dated March 25, 2015
3. Letters and memos from the individual boards and commissions are attached to the Planning Commission transmittal.
4. Project Public Engagement Report
5. Public Review Draft Comments
6. Policy review tables