



# Bellevue Planning Commission

November 7, 2018

## PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

### **SUBJECT**

Final Review Public Hearings: 2018 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments – City Council-Initiated Amendments

### **STAFF CONTACT(S)**

Emil King, Strategic Planning Manager, 425 452-7223

Terry Cullen AICP, Comprehensive Planning Manager, 425-452-4070

Community Development (CD)

### **POLICY ISSUES**

*The Comprehensive Plan is Bellevue's foundational policy document which guides the nature and intensity of development in the City and sets out the community's vision for the future, provides policies to guide city actions, and provides a framework to allow the city and community organizations to work towards common goals. An amendment to the Plan is a mechanism by which the City may modify its land use, development, or growth policies.*

*- Land Use Code (LUC) 20.30I.120 - Purpose*

Pursuant to the state Growth Management Act (GMA) and the Bellevue City Code, proposals to amend the Comprehensive Plan may be made by the City Council at any time. These proposals are reviewed annually; they are not part of a broader city initiative. Proposed amendments approved by the City Council can lead to future regulatory actions including code amendments, rezoning, and other discretionary review, to ensure development regulations that are consistent with and [implement](#) the Comprehensive Plan.

These proposals are reviewed by the Planning Commission and acted upon by the City Council through the Final Review process set forth in the Land Use Code at [LUC 20.30I](#). Final Review evaluates the merits of proposed amendments included in the annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment work program. Final Review evaluation and decision includes staff review, a Planning Commission public hearing and recommendation by resolution, and City Council action by ordinance.

The Planning Commission holds tonight's Final Review public hearings for the East Main and Grand Connection proposed amendments, each followed by a study session tonight to make recommendations. The Commission's recommendations are conveyed to City Council in resolution form (attached).

### **DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

<b>ACTION</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>DIRECTION</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>INFORMATION ONLY</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
Request	Summary Guidance	
1. Conduct a Final Review public hearing for each proposed amendment	Direct staff to first review and present the staff recommendation, then open the public hearing and accept public testimony. Close the public hearing.	
2. Conduct a study session following each public hearing to make a recommendation	Review the application, staff recommendation, public record, and testimony. Ask questions of staff, applicants and persons giving testimony; review the proposed resolution.	

[2018 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments List of Proposed Amendments](#)

<i>CPA</i>	City Council-initiated Proposal <i>Subarea</i>	Staff Recommendation
<b>East Main</b> <i>18-103885-AC</i>	Amend Comprehensive Plan maps and text with new designations, definitions, and policies for development of zoning districts to reflect the vision of the East Main Station Area Plan process <i>Southwest Bellevue</i>	<a href="#"><u>Approve</u></a>
<b>Grand Connection Framework Plan</b> <i>18-103888-AC</i>	Amend the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate the Grand Connection's high-level vision as a memorable place-making element along its entire corridor length <i>Downtown, Wilburton</i>	<a href="#"><u>Approve</u></a>

\*Click on the 'Approve' links above in the Staff Recommendation column to access the full staff report for each amendment.

**RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY**

The Final Review Decision Criteria for a proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment are set forth in the Land Use Code in Section 20.30I.150. Based on a review and application of the criteria, and using a process as described in 2018 study sessions before the Planning Commission, Community Development staff developed Final Review recommendations.

Staff recommendations for the City Council-initiated 2018 proposed amendments are in the Recommendations Summary (below). The full reports are available [online](#); in detail in the report materials provided to Commissioners along with the October 18, 2018, notice of Final Review public hearing; and they can be requested in print. Both versions include the staff recommendation, the application materials, public comment summary, and a site map.

**Summary Recommendation: East Main 18-103885 AC**

The proposal would adopt East Main policies into the Land Use Element and Map, the Glossary, and the Southwest Bellevue Subarea plan and include a generalized street diagram and a generalized open space diagram in the East Main Station Area section of the Southwest Bellevue Subarea plan.

Staff recommends approving this proposed amendment because the application satisfies all Land Use Code decision criteria for Final Review of a City Council-initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendment (LUC 20.30I.150.) Specifically, the proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions since the last time the pertinent Comprehensive Plan map or text was amended, in the form of the extension of East Link light rail through the City of Bellevue.

**Summary Recommendation: Grand Connection Framework Plan 18-103888 AC**

This proposal would adopt Grand Connection policies into the Urban Design and the Arts Element, and policies and maps into the Downtown and Wilburton/NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Subarea plans.

The Grand Connection is planned to start at Meydenbauer Bay Park, connect to the Downtown Park, integrate with the Pedestrian Corridor, and terminate at the Eastside Rail Corridor in Wilburton. Staff recommends approving this proposed amendment because the application satisfies all Land Use Code decision criteria for Final Review of a City Council-initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendment (LUC 20.30I.150). Specifically, the proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions: with City Council's decision to advance the Grand Connection as the city's signature gathering space (Council Vision 2018-2020: [Great Places Where You Want to Be](#)) a gap was identified in policy cross-connections. These need changes to the pertinent plan map and/or text so that the Grand Connection can serve as a unique and signature element to Bellevue's urban landscape.

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Consideration of proposals to amend the Comprehensive Plan is limited to an annual process under the state Growth Management Act. The City Council initiates Final Review proposals into its establishment of the 2018 annual CPA work program.

#### *Threshold Review*

1. City Council action on Planning Commission Threshold Review\* recommendations to establish the annual work program, including Council-initiated proposals (July);

#### *Final Review*

2. Planning Commission study sessions and public hearings to consider and recommend on proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments (September, October, and November);
3. City Council action by ordinance on Planning Commission recommendations (late fall).

*\*Threshold Review applies to privately-initiated amendments*

### **REVIEW AND PUBLIC NOTICE**

#### *Grand Connection Review*

The 2018 annual proposed Grand Connection amendments were introduced to the Planning Commission with an April 4 overview study session highlighting the work associated with proposed plan amendments, Land Use Code updates, and design guidelines. A May 9 study session followed, where staff reviewed with the Commission draft policy language, graphics, and map amendments. The Planning Commission finished its pre-hearing review with a September 26 study session including proposed changes to existing policy, and addition of new policy in the Urban Design and the Arts Element as well as Downtown and Wilburton/NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Subarea plans, updated Grand Connection narrative for the general plan, and maps showing the route.

#### *East Main Review*

The East Main Study Area is currently zoned Office Limited Business (OLB) with a seventy-five-foot height limit and a 0.5 maximum floor area ratio (FAR). The proposed amendment is based on recommendations from the Citizen Advisory Committee's *Bellevue East Main Station Area Plan*. One of those recommendations is to permit consideration of buildings up to 4.0 and 5.0 FAR (floor area ratio) with heights of 200' and 300' in various parts of the study area. That represents up to a 10-fold or 1000% percent increase in potential FAR entitlements for various parts of the study area. The policy amendment up for consideration does not include the specific FAR and heights but those will be included in the land development code amendments which will follow in the upcoming month. This Final Review Public Hearing: 2018 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments

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plan amendment sets the framework for creating a Transit Oriented District, the first of its kind in Bellevue. The Planning Commission held several study sessions on the East Main plan amendment including:

- January 10, 2018: Overview of the East Main project, including a description of the Comprehensive Plan amendments and Land Use Code (LUC) amendments needed for implementation
- February 28, 2018: Discussion of placemaking elements in the context of transit-oriented development, an interactive mapping exercise, and discussion of preliminary policy concepts
- February 9 and March 31: Conducted two walking tours of the East Main area
- March 28, 2018: Discussion of the characteristics of example transit-oriented developments and guidance on draft Comprehensive Plan amendments
- May 16, 2018: Discussion of recommended best practices for LUCA review, with application to the East Main Transit Oriented District
- July 11, 2018: Guidance on draft Comprehensive Plan amendments and a 3x side-by-side review comparison of the draft plan policies, existing plan policies, and the original recommendations made by the East Main Station Area Plan Citizen Advisory Committee.
- September 26, 2018: Final review and guidance on draft Comprehensive Plan amendments prior to November 7 public hearing

#### *Notice*

Notice of the Applications was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on February 22, 2018 and mailed and posted as required by LUC 20.35.420. Notice of the October 24, 2018, Final Review Public Hearings before the Planning Commission was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on October 18, 2018, and included notice sent to parties of interest. For both notices, owners, and residents within the 500-foot noticing perimeter of each site received official notice as did people signed up to receive such notices.

#### **EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, OUTREACH AND PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Applicants, residents, and communities are engaging across a variety of media in proactive public participation during the 2018 annual CPA review process. The city's early and continuous community engagement includes:

- ✓ Responsive early outreach to requests for information and to become parties of interest
- ✓ Responding to each written public comment submitted and returning phone calls
- ✓ Expanded web page material at Comprehensive Plan Amendments with the review schedule, the applications list, and a "What's Next" timeline
- ✓ Multiple study sessions for each of the applications
- ✓ Official Weekly Permit Bulletin notice as required

Public comments come in throughout the process. All written comments are included in the public record, for reference and for use by decision-makers. At the various steps, the comments are included in their original form to the Planning Commission as attachments to staff report recommendations.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Planning Commission Resolution for Grand Connection
2. Planning Commission Resolution for East Main
3. East Main Public Comments