



## Planning Commission

# TRANSMITTAL

DATE: June 29, 2016

TO: Mayor Stokes and Members of the City Council

FROM: Michelle Hilhorst, Chair  
Members of the Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Threshold Review Recommendation for 2016 **privately-initiated** site-specific Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPA): **Eastgate Office Park 16-123765 AC**

The Planning Commission recommends by a 6-0 vote (Commissioner Laing recused) that the City Council include the proposed Eastgate Office Park site-specific CPA in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Work Program and expand the geographic scope of the proposal to include two other similarly-situated properties directly to the east, and located at 15400 and 15500 SE 30<sup>th</sup> Pl.

### I. SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

16-123765 AC 15325-15395 SE 30<sup>th</sup> Pl - Eastgate Subarea

This site-specific application would amend the map designation on this 14-acre site from Office (O) to Office Limited Business (OLB). This site is developed with a 280,000 square feet of office in four buildings with surface parking.

### II. RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission finds that the Threshold Review Decision Criteria have been satisfied for this proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment as set forth in the Land Use Code in Section 20.30I.140 (Threshold Review Decision Criteria).

The Commission finds that whereas this area was part of the Eastgate Land Use and Transportation Study, the Comprehensive Plan amendments stemming from that initiative have already been adopted. If, as the applicant notes, the potential of the area was overlooked in that study, then there is no other ongoing venue for reviewing the designation of this site.

The Commission also finds that the proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions on the subject property or its surrounding area where such change has implications of a magnitude that need to be addressed for the Plan to function as an integrated whole. The changes in the Eastgate area that make this designation request timely include the establishment of OLB and OLB-2 designations allowing for more mixed use density as well as the establishment of a true Transit Oriented Development designation around the Eastgate Park and

Ride facility. Additional policies to increase mobility, access, and land use relationships to surrounding areas were adopted as well.

### **III. BACKGROUND**

The Office designation and zoning on this site have not previously been the subject of Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals.

### **IV. PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT**

The applications were introduced to the Planning Commission during study session on March 9, 2016. Notice of the Application was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on February 18, 2016, and mailed and posted as required by LUC 20.35.420. Notice of the June 1, 2016, Threshold Review Public Hearing before the Planning Commission was published in the Weekly Permit Bulletin on May 12, 2016, and included notice sent to parties of record. Information about the June 15, 2016, Planning Commission study session was provided to applicants, agents, parties of record, subscribers to the Planning Commission web page, and through the city's Next Door online neighborhood portal.

Comments were made at the public hearing. The applicant's agent reiterated the proposal about the property as being viewed now in light of the adopted Eastgate Vision or transit-oriented development around the college and infill development involving more retail and pedestrian uses along 156<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, with additional mobility connections and a pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Other testimony asked about allowed FAR under the OLB designation.

Written comments received prior to the hearing included a person describing their extensive walking in the area and that the area behind the Mormon property is a breeding ground for the great horned owl. The Department of Natural Resources, property owners of the sites recommended for expansion of geographic scope, also provided a letter to the file acknowledging their participation as part of the geographically-expanded process.

### **V. STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)**

The proposed amendment would be subject to State Environmental Policy Act review if included in the Annual Work Program. The Environmental Coordinator determines a Threshold Decision.

### **VI. REVIEW PROCESS AND APPLICATION OF DECISION CRITERIA**

The Threshold Review Decision Criteria for a proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment are set forth in the Land Use Code in Section 20.30I.140. A proposal must meet all of the criteria to be included in the annual CPA work program.

Based on the criteria, the Planning Commission recommends that the 2016 annual CPA work program include the proposed Eastgate Office Park privately initiated site-specific CPA. This recommendation is based on information in the application materials, the staff report, and testimony and material provided at the public hearing.

This conclusion is based on the following:

- A. The proposed amendment presents a matter appropriately addressed through the Comprehensive Plan; and

*The question of the most suitable land use designation for the site is appropriately addressed through the Comprehensive Plan amendment review process.*

- B. The proposed amendment is in compliance with the three-year limitation rules set forth in LUC 20.30I.130.A.2.d; and

*The three-year limitation does not apply to this proposal. Since the site was not amended by actions through the Eastgate Land Use and Transportation Project (realized through the CPU) the proposal is in compliance with these rules.*

- C. The proposed amendment does not raise policy or land use issues that are more appropriately addressed by an ongoing work program approved by the City Council; and

*The policy or land use issues raised by the proposed amendment are not appropriately addressed by an ongoing work program approved by the City Council.*

*Whereas this area was part of the Eastgate Land Use and Transportation Study, the Comprehensive Plan amendments stemming from that initiative have already been adopted. If, as the applicant notes, the potential of this area is overlooked in that study, then there is no other ongoing venue for reviewing the designation of this site.*

*Should the site be designated OLB it will be able to align the Eastgate LUCA work program currently underway with Planning Commission review and hearing.*

- D. The proposed amendment can be reasonably reviewed within the resources and timeframe of the Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program; and

*The proposed amendment can be reasonably reviewed within the resources and timeframe of the Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program.*

- E. The proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions since the last time the pertinent Comprehensive Plan map or text was amended. Significantly changed conditions are defined as:

**Significantly changed conditions.** Demonstrating evidence of change such as unanticipated consequences of an adopted policy, or changed conditions on the subject property or its surrounding area, or 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. This definition applies only to Part 20.30I Amendment and Review of the Comprehensive Plan (LUC 20.50.046); and

*The proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions on the subject property or its surrounding area where such change has implications of a magnitude that need to be addressed for the Plan to function as an integrated whole.*

*The applicant states that the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Project visioning missed a major opportunity to incorporate the Project's transit-oriented, walkable and neighborhood-sensitive policies to add moderate density at the Eastgate Office Park.*

*The changes in the Eastgate area that make this designation timely include the establishment of OLB and OLB-2 designations allowing for more mixed use density as well as the establishment of a true Transit Oriented Development designation around the Eastgate Park and Ride facility. Additional policies to increase mobility, access, and land use relationships to surrounding areas were adopted as well.*

*Although the Eastgate Office Park site fell within the project study area, the applicant states that the Eastgate/I-90 economic analysis appeared to assume the project was not a viable candidate for redevelopment, so it was omitted from any serious evaluation of its potential for the transit-oriented office redevelopment that could support the City's vision.*

- F. When expansion of the geographic scope of an amendment proposal is being considered, shared characteristics with nearby, similarly-situated property have been identified and the expansion is the minimum necessary to include properties with those shared characteristics; and

*The Planning Commission recommends expansion of the geographic scope of the proposed Eastgate Office Park CPA.*

*The site is part of a cluster of Office-zoned properties in this portion of the Eastgate Subarea. In addition to this four-building office park there are two more single-building offices in this Office district filling in to the east adjacent to 156<sup>th</sup> Ave SE. These are similarly situated in regards to their site development status and relationship to the Eastgate Subarea's redevelopment focus. The city notified these properties of their inclusion in the proposal through the expansion of the geographic scope. Staff held a meeting with the property managers of the state-owned property and they acknowledge their participation in the review and amendment process.*

- G. The proposed amendment is consistent with current general policies in the Comprehensive Plan for site specific amendment proposals. The proposed amendment must also be consistent with policy implementation in the Countywide Planning Policies, the Growth Management Act (GMA), other state or federal law, and the Washington Administrative Code (WAC); or

*The proposal could be considered consistent with the intent of current general policies. Bellevue's land use pattern creates sufficient land capacity to achieve growth targets, while directing growth to appropriate areas. The growth strategy for Bellevue directs most of the city's growth to Downtown and other areas designated for compact, mixed use development*

*served by a full range of transportation options, such as BelRed and Eastgate; the latter called out in the Land Use Element as a designated mixed-use center (Land Use Element p. 45).*

*If advanced, the proposal would be examined under a potential OLB designation. Either of the zone districts being proposed in the Eastgate/I-90 Study implementation effort (OLB and OLB-2) would be consistent with the OLB Comprehensive Plan designation. The potential to mix commercial and residential uses allowed in both O and OLB districts would not be limited by the 50% by-right restriction of the O designation. The additional allowed height (30'-45') would be influenced by the 0.5 or 1 FAR limits, and this additional height could be an issue on the north portion of the site subject to Transition.*

and:

- H. State law requires, or a decision of a court or administrative agency has directed such a change.

*State law or a decision of a court or administrative agency has not directed the suggested change.*

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

The Planning Commission recommends by a vote of 6-0 the City Council include the proposed Eastgate Office Park site-specific CPA in the 2016 Annual CPA work program.

## **VIII. ATTACHMENTS**

- 3a. Proposed CPA site area
- 3b. Geographic expansion recommendation map