



Bellevue Planning Commission

April 4, 2018

PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT

Grand Connection Comprehensive Plan Amendments, Land Use Code Update, and Design Guidelines introduction.

STAFF CONTACT(S)

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POLICY ISSUES

The Wilburton-Grand Connection planning initiative has been identified as a Council Priority. In December of 2017, Council adopted the *Grand Connection Framework Plan* and initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendments, Land Use Code updates, and the development of Design Guidelines for the Grand Connection.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION



DIRECTION



INFORMATION ONLY



Staff will provide an introduction and background information on the Grand Connection. This will include changes to the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Code, and development of new Design Guidelines.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

In December of 2015, the City Council approved the work plan for the Wilburton-Grand Connection planning initiative, and identified it as a Council Priority. The Grand Connection is intended to establish a vision for a non-motorized corridor that connects from Meydenbauer Bay, through Downtown Bellevue, and to the Wilburton Commercial Area and Eastside Rail Corridor. It will serve as a unique and defining urban experience in Downtown while catalyzing a new urban design vision for the Wilburton Commercial Area. The Wilburton Commercial Area planning effort is currently underway, and will establish a new land use and transportation vision in support of the investment in the Grand Connection. The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) vision for the Wilburton Commercial Area is expected to be presented to Council in summer of 2018.

In April of 2016, the city began the visioning process for the Grand Connection. The scope of the visioning process included:

- Defining the route
- Establishing an overall identity
- Developing cohesive design strategies
- Development of an art & culture plan in support of the cohesive design strategies

- Identify and recommend improvements to existing and new public spaces
- Improve mobility and connectivity of pedestrians and cyclists
- Establish three (3) alternatives to cross Interstate 405 to the Wilburton Commercial Area.

The scope of work was separated into two sequences; the first addressing changes and improvements to existing infrastructure between the intersection of 100th Avenue NE and Main Street and the Civic Center District, the second addressing the crossing of Interstate 405 and its interface with Downtown, the Wilburton Commercial Area, and Eastside Rail Corridor.

In December of 2017, Council adopted the *Grand Connection Framework Plan: Sequence One* which established the high-level vision for the corridor between Meydenbauer Bay and the Civic Center District. Upon adoption, Council initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendments, Land Use Code amendments, and the development of Design Guidelines, and approved funding for implementation strategies as part of Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) No CD-44.

The *Grand Connection Framework Plan* establishes the foundation and guiding concepts to realize the full vision of the Grand Connection while informing future policy and design work. The Comprehensive Plan Amendments will integrate the Grand Connection as a key strategy for placemaking, economic development, public space improvements, mobility and connectivity, and urban design for the city of Bellevue. Updates to the Land Use Code will include the floor-area-ratio system. New Design Guidelines will expand, update, and replace the existing Pedestrian Corridor Design Guidelines.

Staff last presented to the Commission on July 26, 2017. The presentation was part of the announcement of the release of the *Draft Grand Connection Framework Plan* for public review and comment, as well as updates on the visioning of the Interstate 405 crossing alternatives.

The purpose of tonight's study session is to provide an overview of some of the key strategies and improvements as part of the Grand Connection. Staff will also outline the scope of potential policy changes as they relate to the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Code, and Design Guidelines including remaining design refinements. Staff will also present a proposed high-level timeline and expected engagement with stakeholders and the public.

The anticipated timeline for the project is as follows:

- Introduction – April 2018
- Study Sessions - May and July 2018
- Final Study Session – September 2018
- Final Review Public Hearing – October 2018
- Land Use Code and Design Guidelines – First Quarter of 2019

The *Framework Plan*, establishing the foundation and guiding vision for this work, can be found at: <http://www.bellevuegrandconnection.com/online-open-house>

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Grand Connection Route Map