



Bellevue Planning Commission

September 23, 2020

PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT

Final Review Study Session on 2020 privately-initiated Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments

STAFF CONTACT(S)

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Planning and Community Development

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.

- Introduction and Vision, Comprehensive Plan

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

Under the Growth Management Act (GMA), the Bellevue City Code permits property owners to propose site-specific Comprehensive Plan amendments, and for anybody to propose non-site-specific (i.e. text) amendments. These privately-initiated applications are accepted and reviewed annually; they are not part of a broader city initiative. Site-specific amendments approved by the City Council lead to rezoning, to ensure development regulations that are consistent with and [implement](#) the Comprehensive Plan. The city reviews these applications through a two-step process set forth in the Land Use Code at [LUC 20.30I](#).

The 2020 Threshold Review first step was completed with July 20 and August 3, 2020, City Council actions establishing the annual work program. Under the Final Review second step, the merit of each proposed amendment is evaluated using decision criteria to determine if the proposal should be adopted into the Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning Commission holds Final Review public hearings and makes recommendations. The City Council's subsequent action on those recommendations amends the Comprehensive Plan.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION



DIRECTION



INFORMATION ONLY



Request	Summary Guidance
1. Study and review the staff agenda memo.	See below and the applications page.
2. Set Final Review public hearing dates at the end of tonight's Study Session	<i>I move the commission set an October 28 Final Review public hearing date for the proposed plan amendments.</i>
3. Data related to the Final Review* public hearing	Answers will be in the Community Development staff report recommendation.

* Please be mindful that the amount and type of requested data is contingent upon availability of information and staff resources.

Conducted between staff and the Planning Commission, tonight's Final Review study session also provides opportunities for Commissioners to make information requests prior to publishing the Final Review staff recommendation on October 8. At the October 28 Final Review public hearings, the Commission will be asked to review the staff recommendations, hold the public hearings, and make a recommendation to the City Council on each proposed amendment, using the decision criteria set forth in [LUC 20.30I.150](#).

There are five proposed amendments in the 2020 Final Review work program. They include the privately-initiated 100 Bellevue Way SE, Safegard Self Storage, NE 8th Street Partners, and Glendale Country Club NE proposed amendments; all the subject of tonight's study session. The Planning Commission conducted a September 9, 2020 study session on the fifth, city-initiated Affordable Housing C-1 proposed amendment*.

2020 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments List of Proposed Amendments
See Attachment 1.

Proposed Plan Amendment	Site-specific Proposal	City Council action
100 Bellevue Way SE 20 102643 AC 100 Bellevue Way SE <i>Southwest Bellevue/ Downtown</i>	This privately-initiated application proposes a map amendment from a split Downtown (Mixed Use) DNTN-MU and Office (O) to a single DNTN-MU on a 0.87-acre site.	Included in the 2020 work program
Safegard Self Storage 20-102660 AC 20-102751 LQ 1015 164th Ave NE <i>Crossroads</i>	This privately-initiated application proposes a map amendment from Office (O) to Community Business (CB) on five parcels totaling 6.4 acres.	Included in the 2020 work program
NE 8th Street Partners 20-102741 AC 13635 and 13655 NE 8th Street <i>Wilburton/NE 8th St</i>	This privately-initiated application proposes a map amendment from Office (O) to Multifamily-High (MF-H) on two parcels on a nearly one-acre site.	Included in the 2020 work program
Glendale Country Club NE 20-102772 AC 13440 Main Street <i>Wilburton/NE 8th St</i>	This privately-initiated application proposes a map amendment from Single Family-Low (SF-L) to Multifamily-Medium (MF-M) on a 3.3-acre portion of the (currently undivided) Glendale Country Club property. The area is triangle-shaped and fronts on NE 8th Street.	Included in the 2020 work program
*Affordable Housing C-1 Strategy 20-20-112885 AC <i>citywide</i>	Prompted by passage of SHB 1377 this city-initiated proposed plan amendment would develop policy for an incentive-based approach for increasing affordable housing potential, consistent with Affordable Housing Strategy C-1: <i>Increase development potential on suitable land owned by public, non-profit housing, and faith-based entities for affordable housing.</i>	Initiated into the 2020 work program

It is worth noting that all five of the proposed plan amendments this year address housing capacity. Three of the four privately-initiated proposals are suggesting that Office designations represent housing opportunity based on location. The C-1 city-initiated amendment (studied on September 9 and

scheduled for further review on October 14) provides an affordable housing focus and bookend opportunity to compare to the market capacity (generally) proposed by the privately-initiated amendments.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

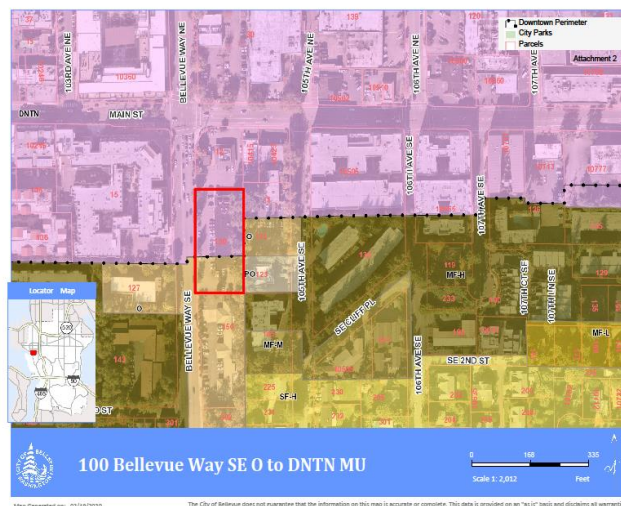
100 Bellevue Way SE - 20 102643 AC

This privately-initiated application proposes a map amendment from a split Downtown (Mixed Use) DNTN-MU and Office (O) to a single DNTN-MU on a 0.87-acre site. See Attachment 3.

Work Program

The City Council on August 3, 2020, accepted the Planning Commission's recommendation to advance the 100 Bellevue Way SE application to Final Review. See Attachment 7.

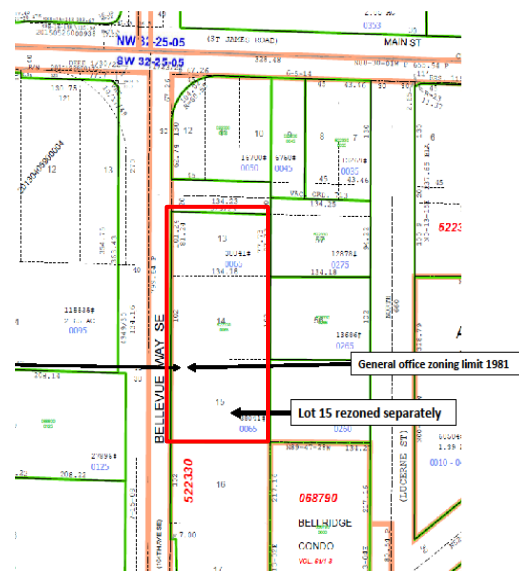
The Planning Commission found that the proposed amendment is appropriately addressed through the Comprehensive Plan—recognizing that amendments to the Downtown boundary are significant policy issues—and while previous amendment actions along Downtown Bellevue's southern boundary line established a consistent framework for addressing split-zoned parcels and acknowledged community interest in making the boundary more regular and in resolving some of the odd parcel configurations, this has established a significantly changed condition on plan intent realizing the land use vision for Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.



Site Analysis

How the Downtown boundary came to be on the site, and its ramifications based on the series of split-site plan amendment designations approved by City Council.

It is likely that this site was split because the part of this proposal designated Office was originally Lot 15 in series of platted lots known as Maxwellton Braes extending west from 106th Avenue to Bellevue Way, then south along Bellevue Way. At some point after the 1953 incorporation of the city, the three lots (13, 14 and 15) making up the site were combined, but a 1972 rezone to office distinguished the southernmost lot 15—and the portion split off from the rest—from the other two former parcels making up the site. Following the 1974 construction of the retail center on the combined parcel, the 1981 adoption of Downtown zoning in general (see below) stopped at the office zoning lines in this area that had been established previously, (also see below) regardless of property configuration. This history is consistent with the history of other lots split by the boundary and reconciled over the last five years of plan amendment actions by council.



Today's property boundaries derive from the original platting decisions during historical platting laid over the area south of Main Street, and by zoning decisions to define a growing business and commercial area developing in "old" Bellevue. This development saw Main Street as a *spine* rather than an *edge*, where the latter is typical for the other Downtown boundaries.

The first modern zoning of the evolving business district can be traced to 1953. As zoning changed so did the extent of the commercial district. By 1971 the commercial, business and office uses had solidified along Main Street and to the south. Rezoning in the area kept up in this decade as offices and apartments "layered up" approaching the southern edges of the commercial areas. Central Business District-Old Bellevue (CBD-OB) and Central Business District-Mixed Use (CBD-MU) zonings were established in 1981, after the 1979 establishment of the Downtown Subarea Plan.

Today's southern Downtown boundary generally occurs where business, commercial and residential zoning diverged from this historical development pattern.

This chart shows the impact on development potential of keeping the 100 Bellevue Way SE site split, and redeveloping it under a single designation (140,000 minus 78,000 square feet is roughly 62,000 square feet of unrealized capacity.) In a split situation, the challenge facing property owners is in realizing a development capacity expectation for each designation. In the absence of a cleanly assembled property, neither designation is effectively realized.

LUC Requirements		Site remains split	Site in single designation
Designation	Lot areas	Density	Density
Downtown MU portion	24,000 sf*	24,000 square feet @3.25 FAR = 78,000 square feet of building capacity within 70' height and 75% lot coverage limits	43,000 square feet @ 3.25 FAR = 140,000 square feet of building capacity within 70' height and 75% lot coverage limits
Office portion	14,000 sf	.5 FAR for non-Downtown Office = ca. 7,000 sf building capacity ¹	

*sf = square feet. FAR = Floor Area Ratio

¹The entire 38,000 square foot site currently has a 12,000 square foot retail building on it. Redeveloping just the 14,000 square foot Office-designated parcel would allow approximately 7,000 square feet of building capacity.

Suggested policy discussion questions and strategies

1. How would the proposal demonstrate a public benefit because the amendment acknowledges community interest in making the boundary more regular and resolves some of the odd parcel configurations while maintaining established policy direction of not extending Downtown development into the areas to the south.
2. What additional information is needed for the Commission to review a recommendation for this proposal?

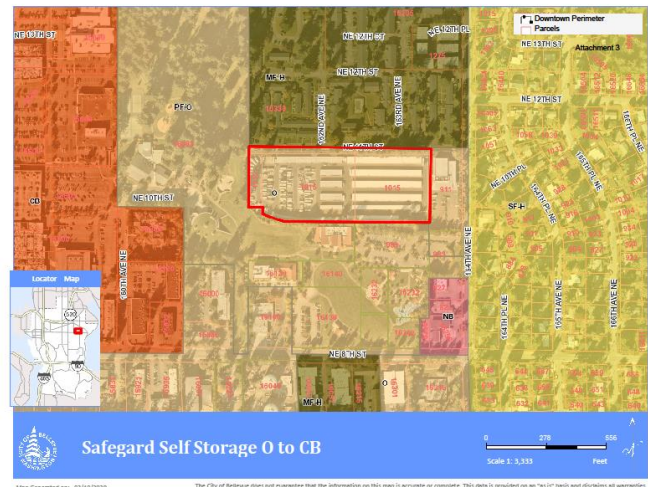
Safeguard Self Storage 20-102660 AC

This privately-initiated application proposes a map amendment from Office (O) to Community Business (CB) on five parcels totaling 6.4 acres. See Attachment 4.

Work Program

The City Council on August 3, 2020, accepted the Planning Commission's recommendation to advance the Safeguard Self Storage application to Final Review. See Attachment 7.

The Planning Commission found that 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 because the Crossroads Subarea Plan has been amended over the years to build in policy guidance regarding Crossroads' land use mix, with particular focus on multifamily buildout and opportunities for mixed use development and with an historically ongoing community focus as well.



Site Analysis

The commission also found that the proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions because 2008 Crossroads Subarea Plan amendments have redefined the shopping center's role in the community both as a revitalizing transit-oriented development and as a centerpiece for other elements including specialized housing types, social services for youth and the elderly, recreational and arts services, and of course the evolving role of Crossroads Park. Changing land uses around this site raises the question of whether the Plan and its amendments anticipated the effect of its own changes on the appropriate use of this site for other than Office.

LUC Requirements		Site remains O	Site becomes CB
Designation	Lot areas	Capacity	Capacity
Office	278,046 sf*	92,500 sf* of building capacity @.33 FAR	N/A
Office with residential		(No more than half allowed in residential) then 46,000 sf = 46 units at 1,000 sf size per unit	N/A
All residential		N/A	191 units with approximately 5,000 sf of ground floor commercial within 45' height limit

*sf = square feet. FAR = Floor Area Ratio

Based on the initial site study and analysis, the applicant estimates 190 market rate units, an additional 20 affordable units through existing code incentive, and 5,000-8,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space.

For comparison, the Uptown at Crossroads Village project has 176 units and 15 retail spaces (roughly 78,000 square feet of commercial space) on a 338,019 square foot (7.8 acre) site.

Suggested policy discussion questions and strategies

1. How would this proposal address the interests and changed needs of the entire community, within the framework of the Crossroads Subarea Plan. The plan has been amended over the years to build in policy guidance regarding Crossroads' land use mix by redefining the shopping center's role in the community both as a revitalizing transit-oriented development and as a centerpiece for other elements addressed by the application.
2. What additional information is needed for the Commission to review a recommendation for this proposal?

NE 8th Street Partners 20-102741 AC

This privately-initiated application proposes a map amendment from Office (O) to Multifamily-High (MF-H) on two parcels on a nearly one-acre site. See Attachment 5.

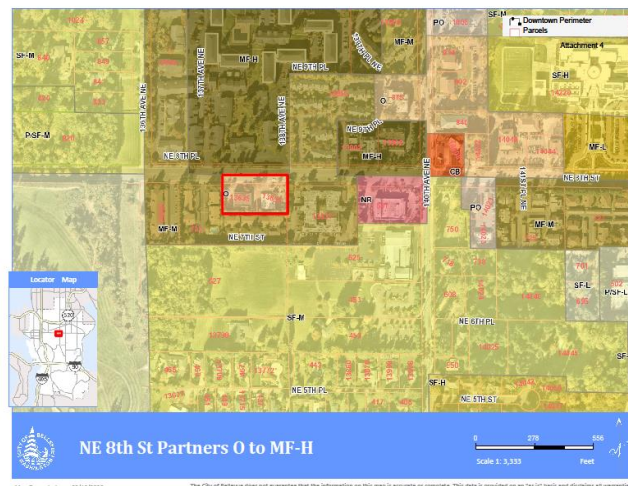
Work Program

The City Council on August 3, 2020, accepted the Planning Commission's recommendation to advance the NE 8th Street Partners application to Final Review. See Attachment 7.

The Planning Commission found that the proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions where higher density multifamily development and the potential for redevelopment has emerged as a major residential land use pattern in the areas west and east of this site along NE 8th Street, itself the recipient of an increasing transit focus. A number of neighborhood service and convenience uses have been developed within close proximity.

Site Analysis

The existing two-parcel site at 40,750 square feet represents nearly an acre. VCA Veterinary Hospital is in a 3,600 square foot building. About 7,600 net square feet of the 12,800 square foot, two-story office building is in office (the balance is parking) Tenants who have used the address include: The Cryptic Club – puzzle room; RoboKids – STEM education; American Academy of Fine arts –



ART Education; NIKA International Dance Sport Academy- Dance Education; El Mundo Communications - Print Media; Chiropractic Physicians; and Ireland Insurance Association.

LUC Requirements		Site remains O	Site becomes multifamily
Designation	Lot area	Capacity	Capacity
Office	40,570 sf*	20,000 square feet of building capacity @.5 FAR 10 units of residential capacity (half the allowed floor area) at 1,000 square feet size per unit	
Multifamily Medium			18 units
Multifamily High			28 units

*sf = square feet. FAR = Floor Area Ratio

Both Multifamily-Medium (R-15 and R-20) and Multifamily-High (R-30) have comparable site dimensional requirements such as setbacks and height.

Suggested policy discussion questions and strategies

1. How should the Comprehensive Plan's balancing responsibilities address local business retention?
This is an older development not within an employment center but which has served a role for small businesses to provide local services. The Land Use (growth) Strategy seeks to enhance the health and vitality of existing neighborhoods while providing for commercial uses and development that serve community needs.
2. What additional information is needed for the Commission to review a recommendation for this proposal?

Glendale Country Club NE 20-102772 AC

This privately-initiated application proposes a map amendment from Single Family-Low (SF-L) to Multifamily-Medium (MF-M) on a 3.3-acre portion of the (currently undivided) Glendale Country Club property. See Attachment 6.

Work Program

The City Council on August 3, 2020, accepted the Planning Commission's recommendation to advance the Glendale Country Club NE application to Final Review. See Attachment 7.

The Planning Commission found that the proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions where higher density multifamily development has emerged as a major residential land use pattern in the areas west and east of this site along NE 8th Street, itself the recipient of an increasing transit focus. A number of neighborhood service and convenience uses have been developed within close proximity.

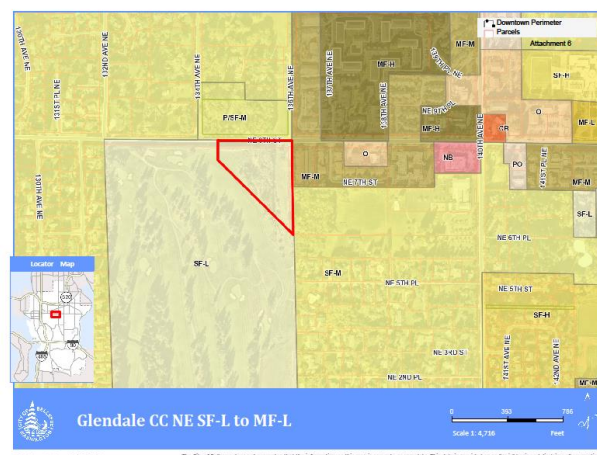
Site Analysis

The application states that this portion of their property is not critical to the golf club's daily operations and that it is encumbered by critical areas on the western side abutting the club fairway and by utility lines to the east. This means for the applicant that the area is not suitable for golf course use.

First, the presence of steep slopes and wetlands critical areas and their associated buffers constrain potential housing capacity (see chart below.) The applicant has stated that the application could potentially yield up to 32 new homes along a key transit corridor. Development feasibility and site access then are issues that will be addressed in the staff recommendation.

Second, the site's non-suitability for golf course use may be appropriate from a financial perspective. It is less clear how this definition of suitability is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Isolating the site for purposes of housing potential also has the effect of isolating the site from the environmental and open space benefits it currently provides to the neighborhood and area.

A critical land use nexus or connection between the site and remaining golf course should be established using environment, parks and open space, and land use Comprehensive Plan policy. It should address



concerns expressed in the city’s land use strategies about ensuring that new infill development appropriately fits into existing neighborhoods—including access. It should affirm the appropriate role of other parks and open space in city policy.

Establishing this nexus in the context of the long range Comprehensive Plan will determine whether isolating this site from a financial perspective for purposes of additional housing is consistent with either the citywide Environment Vision or Land Use Vision, or both, or neither:

ENVIRONMENT

Bellevue embraces its stewardship of the environment by protecting and retaining natural systems, and building for a sustainable future. As growth and development occurs, Bellevue is working to build a healthier, greener and more sustainable future for generations to come. New buildings are designed to protect and even restore natural systems. The community highly values and celebrates the results, such as reduced energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, increasing tree canopy and more salmon in local creeks.

LAND USE

Bellevue grows in a manner that enhances the livability of the community, while maintaining the elements that residents cherish. Growth in Bellevue is focused in denser mixed use centers, like Downtown, BelRed and Eastgate, while maintaining the city’s outstanding natural environment and the health and vitality of established residential neighborhoods.

The proposed amendment highlights the issue of balancing environmental preservation with efficient land use development, and poses the question of whether it is possible to balance both environmental preservation and land use development.

LUC Requirements		Site remains residential
Designation	Lot area	Capacity
Single family Low	145,733 sf*	3 units
Multifamily Medium		Critical areas represent 63.2 per cent of the site; the density-intensity calculation capacity estimate is 25 units
Multifamily High		Critical areas represent 63.2 percent of the site; the density-intensity calculation capacity estimate is 37 units

Suggested policy discussion questions and strategies

1. How would a land use nexus established through policy analysis frame the isolation of this site—intended for financial purposes—from an environment or land use perspective captured through plan amendment action?
2. What additional information is needed for the Commission to conclude a recommendation for this CPA?

WHAT’S NEXT

After the Planning Commission provides policy direction regarding tonight’s policy discussion items, staff will develop a Final Review recommendation. This recommendation will be published and made available on October 6 for an October 28 public hearing (for each of the five proposed 2020 plan amendments.) The NE 8th Street Partners and Glendale Country Club NE privately-initiated proposed amendments, as well as the city-initiated Affordable Housing C-1 Strategy policy amendment, will be presented to the East Bellevue Community Council (EBCC) in an October 6 courtesy hearing. EBCC member comment will be provided to the Planning Commission record.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. 2020 annual work program as adopted by City Council on July 20 and August 3
2. City map of 2020 proposed plan amendment applications
3. 100 Bellevue Way SE map location
4. Safegard Self Storage map location
5. NE 8th Street Partners map location
6. Glendale Country Club NE map location
7. August 3, 2020 City Council Agenda minutes (2020 work program action)