

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

September 10, 2024  
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Malakoutian and Councilmembers Hamilton, Lee, Nieuwenhuis, Stokes and Zahn

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

Mayor Robinson said individuals are not allowed to disrupt the meeting, which includes talking out of turn or without permission, interrupting or making sounds while another person is speaking, and approaching Councilmembers or City employees during the meeting. She encouraged everyone to express themselves without name-calling, taunting or disparaging others.

2. Roll Call; Flag Salute

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo called the roll and all Councilmembers were present. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis led the flag salute.

(a) Hunger Action and Awareness Month Proclamation

Councilmember Stokes read the proclamation recognizing September 2024 as Hunger Action and Awareness Month in Bellevue and urged all residents to support local food banks and our neighbors who are hungry by donating and volunteering.

Leslie Koutroulis, Chair and President of the Board of Directors for Bellevue LifeSpring and Vice President of Finance with T-Mobile, thanked the City for its partnership with Bellevue LifeSpring and support of other nonprofit organizations. She said childhood hunger is a critical issue facing the community.

Jennifer Fischer, Executive Director, Bellevue LifeSpring, thanked the Board for working to ensure that every child in Bellevue has access to proper nutrition to succeed in the classroom and in life. She said 4,300 students in the Bellevue School District are at risk of hunger on a daily basis. She said Bellevue LifeSpring is currently supporting 3,200 of those students. She noted the organization's commitment to working with the City, nonprofit community partners and other individuals to build a community where no child or person experiences hunger.

Khizer Sheriff and Nicky Sheriff, Co-Founders of MAPS-MCRC resulting from the merger of the Muslim Association of Puget Sound and the Muslim Community Resource Center (MAPS-MCRC), thanked the Council for the proclamation. Mr. Sheriff commented on their efforts to serve the less fortunate in the greater Seattle area. He said they do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender or any other differentiator in providing a network of interconnected services. He said the core pillar of their services is their food program, which served more than 7,500 families last year through the distribution of food. They served approximately 3,500 hot meals across multiple shelters and homeless encampments last year and provide food cards for individuals needing access to food. Last year, the organization distributed \$75,000 in food cards. Mr. Sheriff said they are experiencing an increased demand for food assistance, especially for socially and culturally appropriate foods. He thanked the City for supporting their efforts.

(b) National Service Dog Month Proclamation

Councilmember Lee read the proclamation recognizing September 2024 as National Service Dog Month in Bellevue and encouraged everyone to celebrate these task-trained service animals and to respect the rights of individuals who lead more independent lives through their assistance.

Amy Sherlock and her daughter Blakely said they are training their first service dog after seeing the positive impact of a service dog paired with a disabled boy. Ms. Sherlock said they want to help enhance the independence of people with disabilities by training service dogs that are provided at no cost to the new owners.

(c) Teen Mental Health Awareness Day Proclamation

Councilmember Hamilton read the proclamation recognizing September 10, 2024 as Teen Mental Health Awareness Day in Bellevue and encouraged everyone to do their part in increasing awareness and support for teen mental health needs.

Anisha Vaish, a Tesla STEM High School student, thanked the Council for the proclamation. She said many teens experience anxiety and depression, especially as they navigate physical and emotional changes. She noted the pressures to succeed academically, athletically and socially. She said emotional struggles often go unnoticed. As a phone worker at Washington Teen Link, a peer-to-peer phone support center, she has seen how teens repress some of their hardest mental struggles from those closest to them. Anisha said it is important to break the stigma around mental health and to foster open conversations to create an environment of understanding and empathy.

Rithika Binu, an Interlake High School student, said that when teens feel safe, it eases their emotional burden and empowers them to recognize and address mental health struggles in themselves and others. As they realize they are not alone and learn coping mechanisms and strategies, the potential to save lives increases significantly. Rithika said suicide is the third leading cause of death among individuals ages 15-19.

Liya Sebastian, a Tesla STEM High School student, said it is important to foster open communities to address teen mental health. She said she noticed that people were more willing to discuss their struggles after receiving a positive note in a group setting during a mental health cookie sale she organized. Liya said proactive efforts to address teen mental health can help to prevent crises. She thanked the Council for the proclamation.

3. Approval of Agenda

→ Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

4. Oral Communications

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo said the total time for oral communications is for a period not to exceed 30 minutes and topics must relate to City of Bellevue government. Persons speaking to items on the agenda will be called first and if time remains, others will be called. The presiding officer is authorized to give preference to individuals who have not spoken to the Council within the past 60 days or who are speaking to items that will come before the Council in the upcoming 60 days.

- (a) Heidi Dean thanked Emil King, Director of Community Development, for his prompt response to residents' concerns regarding public noticing of the Comprehensive Plan periodic update on tonight's agenda. She asked the Council to schedule another study session prior to giving staff direction to bring back an ordinance to adopt the update. She thanked the Planning Commission for their robust and thoughtful June public hearings and their discussion on July 10. On behalf of many of her Newport Hills neighbors and others citywide, Ms. Dean expressed support for the Planning Commission's recommendation regarding neighborhood centers and the zoning of those parcels. She said Newport Hills residents are aware of the efforts of the owners of the neighborhood shopping center in advocating for a modification to the plan that would result in a higher density designation for their property. She said the designation reflected in the proposal has not been studied. She said she would be emailing the Council within a couple of days with additional comments.
- (b) Michelle Wannamaker, an Eastgate resident, recalled the extensive work years ago on the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Study. The study focused primarily on commercial properties in the Eastgate transit-oriented development (TOD) area. The study specified that the rest of Eastgate's business properties were to be zoned for more modest growth. She said King County has indicated that growth should be focused on activity centers instead of neighborhood centers. She said the recommended future land use map shows most of Eastgate's business properties as having the same density as the TOD, which includes mid-rise buildings (6-10 stories) in the neighborhood center at Eastgate Plaza. She said many of the proposed buildings are directly adjacent to single-family homes. She expressed concern that this is inconsistent with the Eastgate/I-90 plan.

- (c) Pamela Johnston thanked the Council for considering an additional study session to address the Comprehensive Plan periodic update. She expressed concern about the lack of community outreach conducted after the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was issued. She thanked the Council for conducting hybrid meetings to make it easier for the public to participate. She referenced the transportation section with a current list of bike projects. She said it is confusing to follow all of the different projects and she wondered when they will be back before the Council. She said Bel-Red Road was added to the Mobility Implementation Plan as a designated bike area. While she would like to have bike lanes on that street, she suggested it does not make sense for the long term. She expressed an interest in information regarding the timing of the plans and projects. She noted that 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been closed for a year and was originally designed to not accommodate bikes between Ichiro Way and Northup Way. She questioned the rationale for bike lanes on Northup Way.
- (d) Paul Quinn, a Sammamish resident, commented regarding recycling and composting and reducing what we send to the landfill. He thanked Deputy Mayor Malakoutian and Councilmember Nieuwenhuis for their support of recycling and composting in Bellevue. He said two-thirds of Bellevue's trash could be recycled or composted. Mr. Quinn said he provided four handouts to the Council via email, which includes information regarding Bellevue's updated diversion rate and ways to improve the diversion rate. He said the rate has gotten worse since 2021 and the City needs a new approach to improve diversion rates and achieve the 2030 goal. He recommended a pilot program, Smart Disposal, to focus on the diversion rate. The program provides feedback to residents and businesses regarding their diversion rates.
- (e) Paul Rood said he has been unable to achieve assistance with noise code enforcement over the past 21 years. For example, after elevating a Labor Day complaint through the Police Department, City Attorney's Office and Code Compliance division, the City responded that it did not consider a chain saw loud enough to create a noise disturbance. He said he suggested last fall that the City conduct staff training regarding noise regulations. He expressed concern that the Council recently extended the hours allowed for construction noise. Mr. Rood said residents have a legal right to the reasonable use and enjoyment of their properties. He said the Police Department will not enforce the noise code because the Council has not provided the technical, legal and political support needed. He asked the Council to limit the hours that noise is allowed.
- (f) Tim Motts, a father of three boys and President/CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Bellevue (BGCB), expressed support for the young women who spoke earlier regarding teen mental health. He asked the Council to increase human services funding for youth services and programs. He said 14 of the 18 BGCB locations are in the Lake Hills community and they are the largest single provider of child care and after-school services in Bellevue. He said 24 percent of Bellevue School District students receive free or reduced lunches, and more than 55 percent of the BGCB youth qualify due to family circumstances. He said the Bellevue Human Services Commission is currently

recommending a slight reduction in BGCB funding despite increasing needs. Mr. Motts said hundreds of students are experiencing homelessness and BGCB is spending more money on mental health support staff.

(g) Kristina Mendieta, Director of Public Affairs, Kinderling Bellevue, said they have been serving children with disabilities and other needs for the past 60 years. She highlighted their funding request for four programs, all of which are offered at no cost to participants: 1) Child Care and Peaceful Consultation, 2) Families in Transition, 3) Parent-Child Plus school readiness home visiting program, and 4) Parent Education and Family Support. The majority of youth and families served identify as people of color and are from families of low to moderate income. She requested the City's support of the programs and thanked the Council for the opportunity for public comment.

(h) Alex Tsimerman expressed concern about the rules for oral communications, which he believes limit freedom of speech.

5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions: None.

6. Report of the City Manager: None.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives: None.

8. Consent Calendar

→ Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to approve the Consent Calendar, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion to approve the Consent Calendar carried by a vote of 7-0, and the following items were approved:

(a) Council Minutes

*Minutes of August 6, 2024 Regular Meeting*

(b) Motion to award Bid No. 24060 for the South Ridge Pump Station/Force Main Rehabilitation Project to Road Construction Northwest, Inc., as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, in an amount not to exceed \$1,648,920, plus all applicable taxes (CIP Plan S-16).

(c) Motion to approve payment of claims and payroll for the period July 1, 2024 - July 31, 2024.

(d) Ordinance No. 6805 authorizing execution of a grant agreement with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security FEMA to accept \$707,423.39 in Fire Prevention and Safety grant funding for Electronic Core and Associated Key Security Equipment; amending the 2023-2024 budget of the Operating, Grants,

Donations and Special Reserves Fund in the amount of \$707,423.39; and authorizing expenditures of said grant funds.

- (e) Resolution No. 10408 authorizing execution of Amendment 9 to the Software as a Services (SaaS) Agreement, PO # 2250136, dated 07/18/2022, between the City of Bellevue and N. Harris Computer Corporation, to increase the contract amount by \$204,059.00, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$3,282,571.01, plus all applicable taxes. The executed amendment shall be substantially in the form of the amendment located in the Council Library.
- (f) Resolution No. 10409 authorizing execution of Interlocal Agreement for eCore Access and Grant Implementation between City of Bellevue and City of Redmond.
- (g) Resolution No. 10410 authorizing execution of Interlocal Agreement for Hazardous Materials Response between undersigned cities and fire districts of the State of Washington.

## 9. Public Hearings

- (a) Public Hearing and Action on Resolution No. 10411 authorizing the execution of documents necessary in support of the removal of restrictive residential covenants on a city owned property known as Lot 19 of the Woodridge Division No. 3, located at 12020 SE 11th Street (formerly the “Ollis Property”).

Acting City Manager Diane Carlson introduced the public hearing regarding the release of restrictive residential covenants on a property owned by the City at 12020 SE 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

Loren Matlick, Real Property Division Manager, Finance and Asset Management Department, said the City purchased the property in 2021 in response to community interest and with the intent of creating a trail connection to Eastrail. State law requires a City to provide notice and hold a public hearing for the removal of any restrictive covenants from a property owned by the City. Modifications to the covenants require a majority of the owners within the plat to agree to the change.

Mr. Matlick said community outreach was initiated in May through mailed notices and on-site events. He said the outreach will continue until the release document is recorded. The City-owned property is located in the Woodridge neighborhood and platted as Lot 19. The property is adjacent to Eastrail and is ideally located for a connection to the trail system. When the neighborhood was platted, a protective residential-only covenant was recorded to restrict the type of development allowed. The covenant can only be changed with majority consent of the 68 lot owners within Woodridge Addition Division 3.

Mr. Matlick said the Council approved the 2021 acquisition of this parcel for public recreation and open space, including the connection to Eastrail. He presented graphics depicting the current residential use and the proposed trail connection concept. Following the public hearing, staff

requests that the Council adopt a resolution authorizing the execution of the documents necessary in support of the removal of the restrictive residential covenant on Lot 19, 12020 SE 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mr. Matlick noted that Council's action tonight will not result in the removal of the covenant but will authorize the City to sign as one of 68 property owners within the division in support of the covenant's removal. To date, 23 of the 35 signatures needed to move forward with the covenant removal have been obtained, and the City would be the 24<sup>th</sup> property owner to support the proposed action.

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to open the public hearing, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

No one came forward to comment on the proposed removal of the covenant on the City-owned parcel.

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to close the public hearing, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Councilmember Stokes said he lives in the Woodridge neighborhood but not in the affected division.

Councilmember Lee said he supports the proposal to redevelop the property as a trail connection. Responding to Mr. Lee, Kim Bui, Parks Property and Acquisition Manager, said staff will continue its outreach to seek approval from additional residents. Mr. Lee suggested that more support should have been secured before holding the public hearing.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Ms. Bui said staff will return to the Council for further discussion about the property if the required approvals are not met. Ms. Bui said state law requires that the City hold the public hearing before the action is finalized. Mr. Matlick said that Council approval tonight will allow the City to sign in support of removing the covenant. However, the covenant will not be removed unless sufficient support from a majority of property owners is achieved. Ms. Bui noted that some property owners are undecided and wanted to wait for the public hearing and additional outreach and discussion.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian suggested a community garden, public art and/or other features on the site.

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to approve Resolution No. 10411, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 6-1, with Councilmember Lee opposed.

10. Study Session

- (a) 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update - Review of Planning Commission recommended updates to the Comprehensive Plan to comply with the state Growth Management Act, Chapter 35A.63 RCW, and recent State Legislation

Acting City Manager Diane Carlson introduced staff's briefing regarding the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan periodic update. She said the Planning Commission conducted its review with a focus on growth in the Downtown, Wilburton, BelRed and other mixed use centers.

Emil King, Director, Community Development Department, said the Comprehensive Plan periodic update involved the Planning Commission with the assistance of all other boards and commissions. It provides a full update to the City's growth strategy and builds on past successes of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. King said tonight's presentation focuses on the Comprehensive Plan policies. The land use code components will be initiated during future Council meetings and will be reviewed by the Planning Commission with the typical public outreach.

Mr. King said an additional Council discussion is planned for September 24 before requesting Council direction to staff to return with an ordinance adopting the periodic update. He said there was robust community involvement over the past two and a half years. The Planning Commission held a public hearing over two meetings this summer and up-to-date information has been provided online. Mr. King said the City received input over the past few days requesting expanded notice before Council consideration to adopt the periodic update. Mr. King thanked the community for their ongoing input.

Thara Johnson, Acting Planning Director, said the Comprehensive Plan periodic update was launched in February 2022 and there has been continuous community engagement. That process and public input led to the development of growth concepts and ultimately growth alternatives for economic and equity analyses as well as the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) review. The City received approximately 1,600 comments through the EIS process and responded to those comments in the Final EIS. Staff also incorporated additional analysis regarding climate change and the tree canopy based on discussions with the Council and the Planning Commission. Ms. Johnson said that led to the development of the 20-year growth strategy reflected in the periodic update.

Ms. Johnson said there was extensive feedback from the community regarding potential changes to policies and to the land use map. She said a number of boards and commissions provided input and recommendations to the Planning Commission.

Craighton Goepple, Chair, Planning Commission, presented the commission's recommendation to adopt the Comprehensive Plan periodic update. He thanked staff for their extensive work and support throughout the review process. He noted that there were many different views among the commissioners, who understood the important and legacy impacts of the recommendations. Mr.



Goepple said the commission held 26 meetings to study the Comprehensive Plan and to gather input from the community, boards and commissions.

Chair Goepple highlighted a number of the updates. The strategy for growth is articulated in Land Use Policy LU-1 builds on the existing strategy by continuing to focus growth around transit and amenities while allowing for a wider diversity of housing types throughout the city. The commission deliberated over the appropriate density for neighborhood centers, which was a focus of a number of public comments. He said the update to the Community Engagement Element provides a stronger structure for consistent, ongoing and meaningful dialogue with residents, businesses and other stakeholders.

Mr. Goepple said the Housing Element provides stronger support for planning for affordable housing and meeting the housing needs of households at all stages of life and income levels. He noted expanded policies for tree stewardship and retention, climate change and environmental stewardship. He said they discussed the Transportation Commission's recommendation for updates to the Transportation Element and made changes to align with the City's overall growth strategy. He said they reviewed all Comprehensive Plan policies in terms of their impact on racial equity.

Chair Goepple said that some members of the public commented that the Comprehensive Plan update was too complicated and that more time was needed to address all issues. He said the Planning Commission conducted an in-depth review over a series of 26 meetings while taking input from the public, staff and other boards and commissions. He said the commission discussed the scope for future land use code designations. They ultimately opted to split the low rise-mixed use designation into two land use designations: mixed use-medium (i.e., Kelsey Creek shopping center, Lake Hills Village and Lakewood Village) and neighborhood/community business.

Mr. Goepple said the commission discussed the issue of replacing traffic lanes with bike lanes and reached a compromise position that does not rule it out but sets a high objective bar for doing so. He referred the Council to Policy TR-57 for more details.

Chair Goepple said the commissioners are confident that their recommendations reflect the best interests of the community and are aligned with the Council's vision for the community. He said the update meets the decision criteria in the City's code for amending the Comprehensive Plan. He recalled that the commission held public hearings on June 20 and June 26 where 46 individuals provided public comments and received numerous written comments as well. The Planning Commission voted unanimously on July 10 to recommend the Comprehensive Plan periodic update transmitted to the Council.

Ms. Johnson said the plan update is consistent with the requirements of the state Growth Management Act (GMA). Pursuant to the approval of HB 1220, the updates: 1) plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population, 2) identify policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement and exclusion in housing, and 3) establish anti-displacement policies.

To comply with HB 1110 and HB 1337, the updates create a framework to allow 4-6 units per lot, including accessory dwelling units (ADUs). The updates implement some requirements, due in 2029, related to HB 1181 addressing climate change. Consistent with HB 1717, Comprehensive Plan policies were added regarding the City's work with the Tribes.

Ms. Johnson said the recommendations update policies for enhanced regional consistency related to equity, climate change, environmental sustainability and housing. The plan update identifies centers based on certain criteria (i.e., Regional Growth Center, Countywide Centers and Neighborhood Centers) and addresses comments from the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). She said the plan update provides a number of community engagement outcomes related to parks and green space, concern about housing costs, desire to move around easily (e.g., walking, biking, bus and car) and protection of the environment.

Kate Nesse, Senior Planner, described the Council's original scope and objectives for the Comprehensive Plan periodic update. The first goal was consistent and equitable outreach. She said the City engaged with more than 7,000 individuals over the past two and a half years through workshops, presentations, focus groups and events. She said the engagement report is available on the Comprehensive Plan web site.

Ms. Nesse recalled that the Council directed staff to plan for growth. She said the update builds on the current vision for growth focused on the Downtown Regional Center, countywide centers, transit and the broad range of housing needed. Consistent with Council direction, the update policies advance the community's priorities regarding housing and home ownership, preserving and enhancing the tree canopy, and convenient access to businesses. The policy updates were a One City effort with input from multiple boards and commissions.

Ms. Nesse said the update to the future land use map accommodates the job growth target of 70,000 jobs and housing growth target of 35,000 units. She said approximately 80 percent of the growth will occur in the Downtown, Wilburton and BelRed areas. She said the EIS studied the current capacity in the community and the growth targets through 2044.

The periodic update amends the land use categories to use broader categories that group similar building styles together, and illustrations were added to depict the desired building styles. She described two new land use designations: 1) Lowrise 1 mixed use for community business and neighborhood business districts, and 2) Lowrise 2 mixed use for mixed use – low/medium density (buildings with 4-6 stories).

Ms. Nesse said a number of actions are needed to implement the changes in the Comprehensive Plan, including the Next Right Work item to allow higher floor area ratio (FAR) for residential development and legislative rezones to implement the land uses.

Bellevue has one Regional Center (Downtown), five candidate Countywide Centers (BelRed, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria and Wilburton/East Main) and neighborhood centers in small commercial areas.

Ms. Nesse said the periodic update is intended to be consistent with state and regional housing requirements and new policies that address minimizing displacement, repairing racially disparate impacts, providing housing at all income levels, supporting housing for those with the lowest incomes and preventing homelessness.

Ms. Nesse recalled Council direction to address racially disparate impacts as part of the review of the Comprehensive Plan. She said a Racially Disparate Impact Analysis was completed, which identified and guided policies regarding housing, land use, urban design and the arts.

Ms. Nesse said the updated policies take steps to meet the requirements of HB 1181 related to climate change and due in 2029. The Climate and Environment Element was expanded, two subsections were added, a Climate Impact Analysis was completed, and policies were added to respond to the causes and impacts of climate change.

Mr. King said staff is requesting Council direction to return with an ordinance approving the 2044 Comprehensive Plan Period Update.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian, liaison to the Planning Commission and former Commission Chair, said this is a major milestone for the community. He noted the extensive effort required to update the Comprehensive Plan, which provides the policy foundation to guide the City through 2044. He acknowledged the dedication, engagement and collaboration of so many individuals including staff, the Council, boards, commissions and the broader community. He thanked the Planning Commission for their extensive time commitment and review to complete this review and develop recommendations. He thanked staff for making a large, complex project manageable and understandable for everyone.

Mr. Malakoutian said the City was recently recognized by the Puget Sound Regional Council with a Vision 2050 award for excellent community outreach. He said he was prepared to direct staff to draft an ordinance approving the Comprehensive Plan periodic update for Council action on September 24 to allow more opportunity for public comment.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked everyone for all of their great work. He expressed concern that some residents were not aware this was coming before the Council at this time. He acknowledged the extensive community outreach to date. He said, however, that some residents would like more time to read and review the meeting materials for tonight's meeting. He spoke in favor of waiting until a future meeting to provide direction to draft the ordinance.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis recalled public comments regarding the Eastgate/I-90 study and plan and asked staff to comment. He expressed concern about traffic congestion and projections that at least 13 intersections will fail to comply with standards unless the City takes action. He asked how that is addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis noted that the State has directed Puget Sound Energy to close its coal plants used to generate electricity. At the same time, the State has directed the elimination of natural gas. Mr. Nieuwenhuis said that as electric vehicles become more popular, more charging

stations will be needed. He asked about the ability to provide adequate electrical service to support future growth.

Ms. Nesse referred to comments during earlier oral communications and said the Eastgate area is a growth center that was identified for potentially higher development density, especially given the access to transit.

Mr. King confirmed that public comments expressed concern about transportation and mobility. He said the next major effort to address transportation is the update of the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP). Relating to energy, Mr. King said City staff worked with Puget Sound Energy (PSE) staff to review the environmental impact statement (EIS) and collaborated to develop policies for the overall growth plan. He said staff works with PSE on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis expressed concern that there were times this summer when PSE asked customers to decrease their energy usage. He said he was concerned about the ability to meet future electrical needs.

Mayor Robinson stated her understanding that Councilmember Nieuwenhuis would like to consider delaying direction to staff until the September 24 meeting to allow more time for the public to provide comment and input.

Mayor Robinson thanked Chair Goepple for his leadership and all of the commissioners for their hard work and time commitment. She asked whether the past Crossroads shopping center zoning change to allow increased building heights included the mall. Mr. Goepple said there was a split vote on the commission in support of allowing the increased building heights and density. Some of the supporters of increased building heights were in favor of the development of more affordable housing.

Ms. Johnson concurred that the commission was fairly divided on the issue. She said the owners of the Crossroads shopping center property requested the increased building height.

Mayor Robinson said she was not likely to support increased building heights.

Councilmember Zahn acknowledged the efforts of so many people in reviewing and drafting the 2044 Comprehensive Plan periodic update. She expressed support for the tribal coordination section and climate resiliency section.

Responding to Ms. Zahn, Mr. King confirmed that staff would bring this item back for action as a separate motion and not as part of the consent calendar. Mayor Robinson said the Council could discuss this topic again as a study session item and wait until a subsequent meeting to take final action.

Councilmember Zahn asked whether there are policies related to housing displacement and anti-displacement strategies for businesses as addressed in House Bill 1220. Ms. Nesse said this issue was also important to the community and two policies were added to the Economic Development Element (ED-46 and ED-47).

Councilmember Hamilton thanked the community, boards and commissions, the Bellevue 2044 Strategy Team, Snoqualmie Tribe and City staff for their hard work throughout this planning process. He said he was ready to move forward with the recommended plan update.

Councilmember Stokes expressed support for the proposed update and noted that changes can be made in the future if appropriate and warranted. He said this has been a long, complex process to ensure that Bellevue is prepared to move forward. He commended the Planning Commission and staff for their extensive time commitment over an extended period of time. He said he was ready to vote but he was open to waiting until the next meeting if desired by a majority of the Council.

Councilmember Lee said he has lived in Bellevue for more than 50 years and it is a great community. He complimented planning staff for their past and ongoing work, including development in the Downtown and BelRed corridor. He said the City has a strong tradition of working with the community. He thanked the Planning Commission for their hard work and recommendation. He commented on the importance of considering all elements of the community together. He suggested deferring Council direction to staff to the September 24 meeting.

Mayor Robinson said Crossroads shopping center is a community asset that serves one of Bellevue's most diverse communities. She said she would prefer to remove language regarding increased building heights at the center from the Comprehensive Plan recommendation.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Ms. Johnson said staff's recommendation to the Planning Commission was to allow midrise mixed-use on the entire site. The property owners asked that the interior of the development be designated as highrise mixed-use and the Planning Commission supported the proposed approach. Ms. Nesse said midrise buildings range from seven stories to 10 stories.

In further response to Mayor Robinson, Mr. King said staff's initial recommendation for the midrise mixed-use designation was based on a review of the larger area.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis asked how neighborhood planning fits into the Crossroads proposals. Ms. Johnson said staff will be seeking Council direction soon to initiate the next round of the neighborhood area planning process. The next two neighborhoods are Crossroads and Newport, which will provide a path for studying the Crossroads area in greater detail.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Ms. Johnson said the development of the proposed future land use map considered adding capacity in certain neighborhood centers. She said the Crossroads area is designated as a countywide center. Ms. Johnson said there was an interest in opportunities in areas with good access to transit.

Councilmember Lee said he is more inclined to accept the Planning Commission's recommendation because they worked hard to study and develop it. However, he looks forward to continued discussion. Chair Goeppele said the commission was split between staff's recommendation and higher density in the Crossroads area.

At Mayor Robinson's request, Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to remove the Planning Commission's recommendation regarding the Crossroads mall site and to revert back to the staff recommendation. There was no second.

→ Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to defer direction to staff to the September 24 meeting and to then schedule adoption of the ordinance for October. Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis expressed support for the motion, which will allow more time for residents to review the proposed Comprehensive Plan periodic update.

Councilmember Zahn requested a shorter presentation on September 24.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

At 8:42 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared a short break. The meeting resumed at 8:56 p.m.

(b) 2024 Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA): BelRed Look Forward

City Manager Carlson introduced discussion regarding the proposed 2024 BelRed Look Forward Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) as recommended by the Planning Commission.

Director King said the current BelRed Subarea Plan was adopted in 2009 and has guided significant development in the urban neighborhoods of the subarea. The work was completed parallel to the process for updating the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. King said the related Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) will be initiated over the coming months to go through the Planning Commission process. He said staff is requesting Council direction, tonight or on September 24, to return with an ordinance approving the 2024 BelRed Look Forward CPA.

Ms. Johnson said the purpose of the BelRed Look Forward planning process was to update the subarea plan policies and future land use designations. The work was launched in February 2022 with the work on the Comprehensive Plan periodic update. Adoption of the CPA is anticipated later this year. The updated policies are focused on increasing capacity for housing and job growth, strengthening and clarifying implementation strategies, and adding other new relevant information. Ms. Johnson said the work on the CPA was reviewed by other boards and commissions as appropriate and a public hearing was held in June by the Planning Commission.

Planning Commission Chair Goeppel said that following the June 20 public hearing, the commission voted unanimously to recommend the BelRed Look Forward CPA for adoption by the City Council. The commission reviewed the proposed updates to the subarea plan and future land use designations through a series of 11 meetings extending over 18 months. Mr. Goeppel said the commission's review was informed by recommendations from the Transportation Commission, Parks and Community Services Board, Environmental Services Commission and the Arts Commission and by extensive community input. Chair Goeppel said the Planning

Commission provided feedback during its review on ways to strengthen and clarify many of the policies and to reflect the best interests of the community.

Chair Goepple said the CPA increases development capacity around light rail stations, especially for housing development. New policies support the preservation of small, local businesses such as the ethnic grocery stores along NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street. He said new policies call for flexibility when implementing local streets where site constraints exist and emphasize creating connections for active transportation. He said the new policies support the BelRed arts district and call for regional stormwater facilities and cross-departmental collaboration on stream rehabilitation and restoration.

Mr. Goepple said the commission heard from 12 speakers on June 20 and voted unanimously to approve the proposed recommendations for amendments to the BelRed Subarea Plan and Comprehensive Plan future land use map. He said the recommended amendment reflects the best interests of the community and meets the decision criteria for amending the Comprehensive Plan. He said the BelRed Subarea Plan will serve as a valuable guide to inform the planning, design and development of the area going forward to implement the BelRed Vision.

Gwen Rousseau, Senior Planner, said the BelRed Look Forward CPA will increase development capacity by more than 11,000 housing units and 950,000 square feet of non-residential space. It will expand the station area nodal designations, increasing the maximum intensity allowed through the floor-area ratio (FAR) amenity incentive system, by expanding the area designated for residential uses to support housing development. The updated land use designations also provide for distinct economic centers within the BelRed area (e.g., Arts District).

Ms. Rousseau described the future land use map and highlighted the four light rail stations (Wilburton, Spring District, BelRed and Overlake Village). The high-intensity land use districts near the stations were expanded to encompass areas within approximately one-half mile of the light rail station. The highrise residential mixed use districts are larger to support housing development.

Ms. Rousseau highlighted the policy updates in four themes: 1) open space and natural systems, 2) cultural and community connections (e.g., Arts District intensive area), 3) transportation, and 4) land use, urban design and housing. Policy updates related to land use focus on cultivating distinct economic centers and mixed-use neighborhood districts, providing for a diverse range of housing and services, promoting the preservation of small businesses and incentivizing amenities that respond to unique site characteristics.

Ms. Rousseau commented on the community engagement process, where staff heard support for growth near frequent transit service, a broad range of housing, stream rehabilitation and restoration, park and open space expansion, vibrant pedestrian experiences, affordable space for arts and culture, and active transportation connections. Key issues raised by the environmental review included increasing building heights and density near light rail, mitigating the displacement of small businesses and considering the environmental health impacts near highways.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked staff and the Planning Commission for their work and thanked Chair Goepple for presenting the commission's recommendation. He noted that he attended all of the commission's meetings where they discussed the BelRed Look Forward CPA. He thanked the commission for its robust community outreach and involvement of other boards and commissions.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis said the BelRed area has not quite developed the way it was originally envisioned, which he believes is because the allowed FARs are too low. He expressed concern that the City-imposed costs make it too expensive to develop. He asked how the City can reduce the cost of development or further incentivize development. He asked whether the FAR is increased to achieve the desired development and how it will compare to the Wilburton area.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis said a major cost driver in developing in the BelRed area is a requirement that private development build out a new road grid system. He said that is a huge cost burdening developers. He said he understood that the City of Redmond has the same requirements. However, Redmond puts the road grid in the capital improvement plan and allows developers to receive impact fee credits for developing that City infrastructure. He asked whether the City of Bellevue has considered a similar approach.

Regarding environmental issues, Mr. Nieuwenhuis said there are a number of streams through the BelRed subarea, which could also impact the ability to develop certain properties. He asked how private development could be involved to achieve environmental benefits while also making it economically feasible to build. He asked about policies related to small businesses.

Ms. Rousseau, referring to FARs, said staff and the commission heard from the community that they wanted the City to study higher FARs for the BelRed area. She said they were increased to a maximum building height of 250 feet instead of 150 feet. She said the FARs studied are known as an assumed average achieved FAR, which was a broad range to capture the cumulative impact. She said the Wilburton area plan allows taller highrise buildings in certain areas.

Regarding the local street grid, Ms. Rousseau said the City has spent extensively (\$194 million) on transportation infrastructure in the BelRed area. She said the LUCA process could be an opportunity to explore impact fee credits and other ways to implement the local street grid. Regarding streams, Ms. Rousseau said the main way for the City to encourage stream integration is using the FAR amenity incentive system. Regarding small businesses, Ms. Rousseau said small business is not defined in the Comprehensive Plan. However, there are provisions in the BelRed plan and the Land Use Code that allow existing businesses to remain. She said anti-displacement issues can be addressed through the LUCA process.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, referring to the street grid, expressed concern that the City's requirements for developers will continue to slow development. Mr. King said the City worked closely with property owners near the 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue station to revise the policies and provide more flexibility in the code.



Councilmember Hamilton said he looks forward to more housing, art, enhanced mobility, gathering spaces and connections to nature in the BelRed area. He expressed concern about the displacement of small businesses. Referring to Policy BR-81, he suggested removing the word “limited” before “flexibility.” He suggested flexibility for developers to provide different types of mobility infrastructure, including for bikes.

Councilmember Stokes commented on the multimodal transportation system in the BelRed corridor. He expressed support for the proposed CPA.

Councilmember Zahn said she is pleased to see the continued development of a transit-oriented community in the BelRed corridor. She expressed support for the Arts District and its role in economic development. She thanked her colleagues for their interest in anti-displacement policies for small businesses. She encouraged an emphasis on a bike-friendly, walkable neighborhood. She said she looks forward to future discussion of the related LUCA.

Councilmember Lee thanked everyone for their work and commented that the BelRed area is a model in urban planning. He noted the challenges faced by developers and thanked City staff for working with them and other stakeholders.

Mayor Robinson noted Councilmember Hamilton’s suggestion above to revise Policy BR-81 to read: “allow for ~~limited~~ flexibility to implement the intended alignment and function of local streets where site constraints exist.” Chair Goeppele said the commission did not discuss that particular word. However, he expressed support for Mr. Hamilton’s suggestion.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Trisna Tanus, Acting City Attorney, opined that “limited” was not legally required.

Councilmember Stokes expressed support for the BelRed Arts District and noted continued changes and enhancements in the Spring District. Responding to Mr. Stokes, Ms. Rousseau confirmed that staff coordinated planning for the BelRed and Wilburton areas.

Councilmember Zahn opined that removing “limited” would not change the meaning of the sentence in Policy BR-81.

Councilmember Hamilton suggested it was not necessary to signal a limit on the flexibility.

Responding to Deputy Mayor Malakoutian, Mr. King concurred that “limited” conflicts somewhat with the concept of flexibility.

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to amend Policy BR-81 to read: “Allow for flexibility to implement the intended alignment and function of local streets where site constraints exist.” Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to direct staff to return with an ordinance approving the proposed BelRed Look Forward Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) for Council action at a future meeting, as recommended by the Planning Commission and amended by tonight's motion. Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis suggested deferring direction to staff until September 24. He noted he would like clarification regarding certain items and potential revisions to address developer requirements related to the street grid. Mr. King said this is the time to make policy revisions. However, a number of details will be addressed through the LUCA as well.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian suggested postponing direction to staff to occur on September 24 when direction is provided regarding the Comprehensive Plan periodic update.

Responding to Councilmember Lee, Ms. Rousseau confirmed that the cost of developing the local street grid can be prohibitive for developers.

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to extend the meeting to 10:10 p.m., and Councilmember Hamilton seconded the motion.

- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Continuing, Ms. Rousseau noted Policy BR-80 that allows for a local street grid with smaller blocks to enhance walkability and connectivity. Policy BR-81 was added following input from developers.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Ms. Rousseau said street grid requirements are generally interpreted to refer to vehicular streets unless there is a reason to not have a vehicular connection. Ms. Robinson expressed support for the policies.

- The motion carried by a vote of 4-3, with Deputy Mayor Malakoutian, Councilmember Lee and Councilmember Nieuwenhuis opposed.

11. Land Use: None.

12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions: None.

13. Written Reports

- (a) Quarterly update on the City's recent economic development activities and progress on implementing the 2020 Economic Development Plan
- (b) Intergovernmental Affairs Monthly Update

14. Unfinished Business: None.

15. New Business: None.

16. Executive Session: None.

17. Adjournment

At 10:08 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared the meeting adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC  
City Clerk

/kaw