



# Bellevue Planning Commission

**Wednesday, January 8, 2014**

6:30 to 10:30 p.m. ■ Interlake High School, Library  
16245 NE 24th St. ■ Bellevue, WA 98008

## Agenda

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|------------|---|
| 6:30 p.m.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Call to Order</b><br/><i>Chair Tebelius</i></li><li>2. <b>Roll Call</b></li><li>3. <b>Speakers Event – Neighborhood Centers and Community Gathering Places</b><br/><i>A panel of invited community member will share their thoughts on neighborhood centers and community gathering places. This presentation is intended to help provide context for the update to the city's Comprehensive Plan.</i><br/><i>Ron Sher, Metrovation/Crossroads</i><br/><i>Heidi Dean, President, Newport Hills Community Club</i></li></ol> |
| 7:50 p.m.  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>* Break *</b></p>   |
| 8:00 p.m.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. <b>Approval of Agenda</b></li></ol>  |
| 8:15 p.m.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. <b>Public Comment*</b><br/><i>Limited to 5 minutes per person or 3 minutes if a public hearing has been held on your topic</i></li></ol>   |
| 8:30 p.m.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. <b>Study Session – Parks and Community Centers</b><br/><i>Following the community panel, Parks and Community Services Director, Patrick Foran, will talk about the role of public spaces, including parks and community centers, as community gathering areas and how they can reinforce the activity of commercial districts.</i><br/><i>Patrick Foran, Parks &amp; Community Services</i></li></ol>  |
| 8:45 p.m.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. <b>Study Session – Comprehensive Plan Update</b><br/><br/><b>Neighborhood Centers and Community Gathering Places</b><br/><i>Paul Inghram, Comprehensive Planning Manager, PCD; Camron Parker, Senior Planner, Parks &amp; Community Services</i><br/><br/><b>Urban Design</b><br/><i>Paul Inghram, Comprehensive Planning Manager; Scott MacDonald, Assistant Planner, PCD</i></li></ol>   |
| 9:30 p.m.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>8. <b>Study Session – Eastgate Area Plan</b><br/><i>Erika Conkling, Senior Planner, PCD</i></li></ol>   |
| 10:15 p.m. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. <b>Other Business</b></li></ol>  |

10. **Communications from City Council, Community Council, Boards and Commissions**
11. **Committee Reports**
12. **Staff Reports**  
*Paul Inghram, Comprehensive Planning Manager*
13. **Minutes**
- November 13, 2013
  - December 11, 2013
14. **Next Planning Commission Meeting – January 22 at City Hall**  
Anticipated agenda items include:
- Community Vision
  - Housing and Human Services Policies
  - Subarea Plan Updates and Boundaries
- 10:30 p.m. 15. **Adjourn**

### **Planning Commission members**

Diane Tebelius, Chair  
Aaron Laing, Vice Chair  
Hal Ferris  
John Carlson

Jay Hamlin  
Michelle Hilhorst  
John deVadoss

### **Staff contact:**

Paul Inghram 452-4070  
Michelle Luce 452-6931

*\* Unless there is a Public Hearing scheduled, "Public Comment" is the only opportunity for public participation.*

*Wheelchair accessible. American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation available upon request. Please call at least 48 hours in advance. Assistance for the hearing impaired: dial 711 (TR).*



DATE: January 2, 2014

TO: Chair Tebelius and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Paul Inghram, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Manager  
*Planning and Community Development*  
[pingham@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:pingham@bellevuewa.gov), 425-452-4070

SUBJECT: Speakers Event – Neighborhood Centers and Community Gathering Areas

Ron Sher and Heidi Dean are invited to share their perspectives on neighborhood centers and community gathering areas. During the Comprehensive Plan update process and over several years, members of the community have repeatedly talked about the value of having local stores and services and places for the neighborhood to come together. This presentation continues a series that is intended to help provide valuable context for the update of the city's Comprehensive Plan. Previous speaking panels address development in Downtown, Eastgate and BelRed and overall economic development.

Tonight's speakers panel includes the owner and operator of Crossroads Shopping Center, Ron Sher, and the president of the Newport Hills Community Club, Heidi Dean. They will share their individual perspectives on community gathering and neighborhood centers. As part of the Comprehensive Plan update, this event is intended to gain a better understanding of value of community gathering places, challenges they face to remain healthy and vibrant, and ways the city can continue to support them.

As the owner of the Crossroads Shopping Center, Ron Sher has a history of working to enliven commercial spaces and create places that neighborhoods identify as their own. Sher's bookstores are named after the concept of a place that people enjoy after work and home, the 'third place.' A Seattle Met article about Mr. Sher that discusses the rejuvenation of Crossroads and the effort to build community is available at:

<http://www.seattlemet.com/real-estate/articles/suburban-soul-man>

Heidi Dean, in her role as president of Newport Hills Community Club, has been active working to revitalize the Newport Hills shopping center. Over the years, the shopping center lost its two grocery stores, drug store and bank. The city, community and property owners have been working for a number of years to assess the redevelopment potential of the shopping center, but a viable plan has yet to emerge. Recently, some new stores have begun to take hold in Newport Hills, including Pace's produce store and the city has been partnering with the community on a public art installation.

policy that supports neighborhood centers and other gathering places, and opportunities

global and regional economic issues that affect Bellevue, to hear about past development projects in Bellevue, and to provide an opportunity to see plans that aim to dramatically transform a part of the BelRed corridor.

In addition to writing for the Seattle Times, Jon Talton also writes a regular blog for the Reynolds Center for Business Journalism at Arizona State University, is editor and publisher of the website Rogue Columnist ([www.roguecolumnist.com](http://www.roguecolumnist.com)), and is the author of ten novels.

For 30 years Jon has covered business and finance, specializing in banking, urban economies, energy, real estate and economics and public policy. Jon has been a columnist for the Arizona Republic, Charlotte Observer and Rocky Mountain News, and his columns have appeared in newspapers throughout North America on the New York Times News Service and other news services. Jon served as business editor for several newspapers, including the Dayton Daily News, Rocky Mountain News, Cincinnati Enquirer and Charlotte Observer. At Dayton, he was part of a team that was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Public Service, for the nation's first computer-assisted report on worker safety. In Charlotte, the Society of American Business Editors and Writers honored the business section as one of the nation's best.

Among the stories he has covered are the landmark Texaco-Pennzoil trial; the troubles of General Motors and the American auto industry; the big bank mergers of the '90s, America's downtown renaissance, the collapse of Washington Mutual and the Great Recession. He was a Knight Western Fellow in Journalism at the University of Southern California and a community fellow at the Morrison Institute at Arizona State University.

Before journalism, he worked four years as an ambulance medic in the inner city of Phoenix. He also was an instructor in theater at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. He was educated at Arizona State University and Miami University of Ohio.

Greg Johnson is the President of Wright Runstad & Company. Based in Seattle, Washington, Wright Runstad & Company develops, acquires, manages and leases high-quality commercial office buildings and mixed-use properties throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Wright Runstad & Company has developed in excess of 16 million square feet of office space during its more than four-decade history and is a leader in sustainable development and operations, with over 4 million square feet that is LEED certified. The company

developed several major Bellevue projects dating back to 1983, including One Bellevue Center, Symetra Financial Center, City Center Plaza and the Sunset Corporate Campus. In September it began construction of The Spring District in the BelRed area, which is planned to develop 3.7 million SF of commercial space and more than 1,000 apartments. Additionally, Wright Runstad & Company recently completed the redevelopment of the University of Washington's Husky Stadium. The company's current property management portfolio contains over 3.5 million square feet in eight properties.

Greg earned a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Bucknell University and a Master of Business Administration in Real Estate from the Wharton School at University of Pennsylvania. He serves as a Trustee of the Urban Land Institute. Greg also serves on the Boards of Forterra, the Downtown Seattle Association and the Bellevue Downtown Association and holds a City of Seattle appointment to its Central Waterfront Committee. Greg is also a member, and Past Chair, of the Advisory Board of the Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies at the University of Washington.

Following the presentations there will be time for questions and answers from the Commission and the audience. If a member of the audience has a question for the speakers, they will be asked to fill out a notecard and hand it to city staff. Questions will be addressed as time permits.



DATE: January 2, 2014

TO: Chair Tebelius and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Paul Inghram, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Manager  
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*Planning and Community Development*

Camron Parker, Senior Planner  
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*Parks and Community Services*

SUBJECT: 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update  
– Neighborhood Centers and Community Gathering Places  
– Urban Design Review

The January 8, 2014, study session will continue review of the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan as part of the city's major Comprehensive Plan update. Immediately following a speakers event that focuses on neighborhood centers and community gathering places, this study session will look how those areas could be supported with appropriate plan amendments. The study session will also review potential changes to the Urban Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

This study session follows a series of previous meetings regarding the update of the plan and continues the Commission's review of key planning issues related to the Comprehensive Plan update. No formal action is requested at this study session. Staff would appreciate feedback from the Commission on these topics to guide policy development.

## **BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS**

The Comprehensive Plan captures the community's vision for the future of Bellevue, sets policy that directs City actions and decisions, and guides capital investments. Bellevue is periodically required to update its Comprehensive Plan to ensure continued compliance with the state Growth Management Act and, just as important, to ensure it reflects the dynamic changes and trends that have and will continue to affect the growth of the community. The City's Comprehensive Plan last underwent a major review in 2004. Thus, with adoption scheduled for 2014 it will be a 10-year update of Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan. The City Council approved project principles and work program are attached (Attachments 1 & 2).

The Planning Commission began the update of the Comprehensive Plan with a study session on the Community Vision on June 13, 2012. Following the City Council's formal initiation of the update in October 2012 the Planning Commission has held a number of meetings reviewing the

current plan and beginning to look at issues in detail. Attachment 3 provides an updated list of section reviews that have occurred to date.

Meanwhile, the city has worked to engage the community in the update process through a number of meetings, social media and other tools, including the Bellevue's Best Ideas on-line campaign, and has collected feedback from the community throughout the process. These comments have contributed significantly to the staff review of policy areas. Outreach activities will continue throughout the update. City staff has also evaluated the sections of the Comprehensive Plan to identify sections that are out of date, need to be updated to be consistent with state law or regional plans, and other opportunities for improvements.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS AND COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACES**

Neighborhood centers and community gathering places have long been valued in Bellevue. The City Council identified the topic as one of several key issues to address in the update.

Early in the Comprehensive Plan update process the community talked about the importance of community gathering. During a joint commissions forum in January 2013, participants saw the ability to connect with neighbors as a key component to the future health and vibrancy of Bellevue's communities. They suggested that more community gathering spaces were needed and that these might be in a range of forms, such as local stores, coffee shops, urban plazas and parks.

In a public engagement event, also in January 2013, people identified strongly with where they live. They spoke of the features near them that make their neighborhoods more enjoyable, such as local grocery stores and restaurants. They noted how access to local stores and services helps them conduct their daily activities close to home and avoid getting caught in cross-town traffic. It was noted about how one enjoys going to a store or restaurant and running into their neighbors. And some pointed out the value to seniors who might be less mobile. Participants encouraged creating additional gathering places in neighborhoods, citing these places as an important to their neighborhoods' identity.

The attached issue paper (Attachment 4) reviews the value of community gathering places and potential strategies for supporting them in Bellevue.

## **URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT**

The Urban Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan is focused on people and design. By guiding both private development and public investments to create a city that is dynamic, engaging, aesthetically appealing and functionally understandable, the city is able to foster community and its self-identity. The Element's goals and policies apply to three-dimensional aspects of the built environment in Bellevue: buildings, streets, sidewalks, parks, neighborhoods, plazas, etc. Urban design combines aspects of architecture, landscape architecture, public works, public art, and transportation systems. Implementation of these urban design policies will create an inviting and attractive city with a cohesive city image and distinct neighborhoods that entices people to more actively use their city.

Based on the reviews and comments that have occurred to-date, a number of key themes are emerging that will influence our approach to the Urban Design Element and run throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

- Downtown serves not only as the city's primary commercial center, it has a regional role and is looked at as the center of the Eastside. Through the Downtown Livability initiative the city is actively looking at how to build on Downtown's successes and work to make it a vibrant, memorable place.
- Other commercial and mixed use centers in the city – BelRed, Wilburton, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria – have taken on key importance and are now also seen as developing as distinct places with residential opportunities, cultural offerings, and local services.
- The majority of future employment and residential growth is anticipated to occur in Downtown and these other growth centers, while the community seeks to preserve the character of predominantly residential areas.
- Neighborhoods and neighborhood centers remain vitally important to Bellevue. Communities seek opportunities to recognize the individual identities of their neighborhoods through character, signs, and connection to local shopping and services.
- Many in the Bellevue express an interest in being able to walk to nearby stores, services, restaurants and parks. Rather than need to take a car for all trips, or as an option for those that don't drive, people desire to have local offerings in reach and have the option to walk to them, which could affect the community's approach to transportation, health, recreation, and design.

The attached issue paper (Attachment 5) considers these urban design issues in greater detail and seeks direction on how the update may respond to them.

## **SUBAREA PLAN UPDATES**

With the establishment of the work program for the 2014 Comprehensive Plan update the City Council identified a need to define a process to update Bellevue's subarea plans and the subarea boundaries. Council also directed review of two specific subarea boundary requests. The Planning Commission had an initial discussion of the subarea plans and potential new boundaries at its meeting on October 23 and information about new neighborhood boundaries has been posted at several meetings since. City staff are actively meeting with key stakeholders in the two specific boundary areas and will present to the Commission results of community input at the meeting on January 22.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Review of the Comprehensive Plan update will continue at future study sessions. The objective is to work through issues and specific policy areas through the winter so as to enable preparation of an updated draft in the spring of 2014. Attachment 6 is an updated draft schedule of the Planning Commission's review of the Comprehensive Plan update.

The Planning Commission's next regular meeting on January 22 is scheduled to discuss the Community Vision, housing policies, and subarea plan updates and boundaries.



## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Project Principles
2. Work Program
3. List of Element and Chapter Reviews
4. Community Gathering Places Issues Paper
5. Urban Design Issue Paper
6. Draft Comprehensive Plan Update Schedule

Copies of the current Comprehensive Plan were previously distributed to the Planning Commission. It is also available online: [http://www.ci.bellevue.wa.us/comprehensive\\_plan.htm](http://www.ci.bellevue.wa.us/comprehensive_plan.htm)

## **PROJECT PRINCIPLES**

### **Forming our Future – Updating the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan captures the community’s Vision for the future. It directs how the city will grow and change over the next twenty years, and it guides city actions and investments. With the last major update adopted in 2004, this update will comprehensively assess the Comprehensive Plan according to the following project principles:

<b>Remain relevant to our community</b>	Ensure that community values and priorities are the foundation for the plan and reinforce the Comprehensive Plan as the entire community’s vision for how Bellevue will grow and evolve to meet the needs and opportunities of the future.
<b>Advance the community Vision</b>	The new Comprehensive Plan will look to the future to the year 2035 and should be evaluated to ensure that it is appropriate for our changing community.
<b>Address the needs of a more diverse community</b>	Ensure that the plan continues to be relevant for the needs of all aspects of the community, including the young and old, disadvantaged and those from diverse backgrounds.
<b>Engage the entire community in the update process</b>	The update process will engage the community, including a wide range of stakeholders, neighborhood groups, businesses, and other agencies. Recognizing the increasing diversity of the community and the need to include all perspectives, outreach will include innovative practices.
<b>Use the current plan as the foundation for the update</b>	The current Comprehensive Plan serves the city well and is based on a vision first established decades ago. The update will build off the current plan that focuses growth in Downtown and other commercial centers while preserving key aspects of community character and enhancing quality of life.
<b>Address emerging issues</b>	<p>The update provides the opportunity to consider new, emerging issues that have arisen since 2004, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New economic development strategies stemming from the City Council’s retreat, and the update of the Regional Economic Strategy</li> <li>• The City’s adopted Environmental Stewardship Initiative, and further information about the environment</li> <li>• Growing understanding of the role land use and transportation patterns play in public health</li> </ul>

**Increase the plan's accessibility, usability**

This update will look for ways to make the document more accessible to the public and relevant to City actions. This may include reducing the number of policies and using clear, straight forward language to make the plan easier to read. New technology tools give us an opportunity to make an electronic version of the document more accessible on-line.

**Meet our state and regional requirements**

The plan will be assessed for consistency with changes to the state Growth Management Act, the Regional Plan (Vision 2040), and the Countywide Planning Policies.

**Connect to implementation strategies**

To be effective, the City's plan for the future needs to connect to City actions, such as the Land Use Code, Capital Improvement Program, and other implementation strategies.

**Measure progress and success**

Over time, the City will measure progress in meeting the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and acknowledge successes in working toward the community's Vision.

## **2014 UPDATE WORK PROGRAM**

### **Forming our Future – Updating the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan**

Bellevue's current Comprehensive Plan is serving the City well. It establishes a clear, vibrant Vision for the year 2025 and supports the City's general land use pattern of focusing growth in Downtown and other commercial areas, while protecting residential neighborhoods. However, much has changed since the last major update was adopted in 2004. The City witnessed a boom of Downtown development and annexation of the Eastgate area. Several significant plans were completed, including those for Bel-Red, Wilburton, Crossroads and Eastgate/I-90. Additionally, the nature of the community continues to change, becoming more diverse and older. And while the City has made significant strides in meeting the goals of the current plan, some issues continue to present challenges, such as meeting objectives for housing affordability and addressing the needs of households of all economic segments.

The Comprehensive Plan update is anticipated to include:

1. Amendments required because of changes to the state Growth Management Act, other state laws, and regional planning documents
2. Amendments that bring the plan up to date and extend the planning horizon year to 2035
3. Amendments to keep the plan relevant to the community, City Council and staff, and that reflect City actions since the last update and Council direction from current and recent projects
4. Those amendments sought by individual citizens, subject to the direction of the City Council

### **UPDATE STEPS**

The update project has four general phases. This Council study session marks the end of the first phase that consisted of early community outreach and issue identification. Data collection and staff auditing of the current plan occurs during this first phase. The second phase focuses on analysis of issues and development of possible update opportunities. Updated goals and policies are drafted during the third phase. Review and adoption occurs in the final phase.

During these steps, issues will be reviewed through a number of means. Staff will conduct technical analysis of issues and present them to the City's boards and commissions for their guidance. Issue forums, tours and guest speakers will be arranged to review key topics. Staff will assess current goals and policies against state law, regional plans and current best practices. And the City will continue to engage the community to seek its participation through a number of different venues.

**GENERAL UPDATE SCHEDULE**

The Comprehensive Plan update will occur over a two-year period to allow time to hear from the community and craft a relevant and effective plan that meets their expectations.

**General schedule for the Comprehensive Plan Update**

2012	2013	2014
Review of existing Comp Plan		
Data collection		
Council initiation		
Scoping		
	Analysis and development	
	Draft and review potential amendments	
		Public Hearing
		Council adoption
Community outreach		

**WORK PROGRAM AND KEY ISSUES**

The table below provides an outline of the primary categories of review for the update and the types of amendments that may be anticipated. A range of early public engagement activities and initial staff analysis of the existing plan helped identify a number of key areas of review:

**Community Vision**

The Community Vision, “Bellevue 2025,” is an element of the Comprehensive Plan that paints a picture of where the community aspires to be in the future. The Vision serves as a framework for the entire Comprehensive Plan. By identifying gaps between where we currently are and where the Vision indicates we want to be, the Vision establishes a “dynamic tension” that leads to action. Early outreach indicates that many see the economic opportunities of a city with a strong, growing Downtown and commercial areas, but want to preserve the natural areas and open spaces that make Bellevue a “City in a Park.” People love their neighborhoods, schools and community gathering areas. Many see the value of the increased diversity of the community and its cultural riches. Retaining elements of the current Vision helps root it in the community’s past, while this update provides the opportunity to make the Vision more consistent with the face of the community and address recent changes, emergent issues, and new opportunities. It is recognized that updating the Vision in the Comprehensive Plan is different from, yet related to, other visioning work, such as developing a strategic economic vision. The current Vision, last

updated in 2004, speaks to the community's hope for Bellevue in the year 2025. The update of the Comprehensive Plan will extend this horizon to 2035.

### **Economic development**

Bellevue has historically been seen as a good place for business and the Comprehensive Plan strongly supports business and economic development. The update is an opportunity to incorporate the Council's current economic strategies and ensure that other elements of the plan are aligned with the City's economic priorities. It will be important for the update to reflect the economic growth that has occurred since 2004 and to link the City's economic development strategies with land use, housing, environment, transportation and other policies. In addition to the City's overall economic health, early outreach identified the need to support start-ups and small, local businesses and the economic viability of local commercial and neighborhood centers. The update will also address the recently updated Regional Economic Strategy.

### **Environmental stewardship**

While the City has a strong set of environmental policies that reinforce the City's Vision as a "City in a Park" with urban development set amidst high quality natural areas, a number of changes have occurred since 2004. The City started the Environment Stewardship Initiative and the state established a long-range goal for reducing greenhouse emissions to respond to the threat of climate change. In early outreach, citizens indicated that preserving and enhancing natural areas is becoming more critical as the City and region continue to grow. They identified future opportunities, such as access to a BNSF bike trail and to lakes Washington and Sammamish as ways to further the City's vision as one with great natural areas. In the update it may be important to look at how environmental issues are addressed, not just within the Environmental section of the plan, but throughout the Comprehensive Plan to recognize the interaction land use, transportation, utilities, and economic development all have with the environment.

### **Community health**

Public health has become a national concern, especially the health of the country's youth. Health involves many factors and increasing research over the last decade has pointed to the role land use, access to recreation (especially walking), and access to healthy foods play in obesity and health. While Bellevue generally provides good access to food choices and recreation, the Seattle-King County Department of Health advocates that cities review how local policies can and should affect community health.

### **Culture and diversity**

Bellevue has become one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the state with nearly 1/3 of residents foreign born. Diversity is even greater for families with children. Meanwhile, the City

is also growing older with a wave of population just entering retirement. The Comprehensive Plan update is an opportunity to assess how the City responds to the changes in the community, whether to facilitate ‘aging in place’ or to reflect the value of a diverse and vibrant culture. The update process also needs to take diversity into account and seek ways to provide access to all segments of community.

### **Neighborhood centers and community gathering**

Bellevue survey data has consistently shown that people love their neighborhoods. Many residents in our early outreach emphasized a need to preserve the qualities of their neighborhoods. People expressed concern about the health of some neighborhood centers and talked about the need to build a stronger sense of community. People asked for more gathering places (“third places”) and a way to stimulate neighborhood businesses services, not just those Downtown. The update is an opportunity to review economic, land use and transportation policies that support both preservation of neighborhoods and ways to strengthen neighborhood centers and opportunities for community gathering. This may build off the work completed for Crossroads, Wilburton, Factoria and Eastgate that supports working towards mixed use development that creates greater opportunities for housing and local services within the City’s commercial centers as well as work to maintain neighborhood centers.

### **Mobility**

Early outreach comments made it clear that the community envisions a City where it is easy to get around. People talked of making Bellevue a better place for walking and bicycling through such techniques as increased weather protection for sidewalks and separated bike routes, and they identified a desire for improved transit as ways to access stores and services without having to always use a car. Transportation was also identified as an important component to support businesses and economic development. The update is an opportunity to assess the state-of-the-art for measuring transportation level of service and to look at mobility comprehensively. The City completed a Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan update in 2009 and an update of the Transit Master Plan is underway. Light Rail Best Practices resulted in a number of Comprehensive Plan amendments in 2008 that helped establish the vision for integrating light rail. The update will organize and consolidate these different efforts to ensure that we have a consistent, clear picture of future mobility for Bellevue. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan has several overlapping and out-of-date transportation project lists. Ideally, these lists create a long-range vision for the City’s transportation network that lead to development of the City’s 12-year TFP (Transportation Facility Plan). The Comprehensive Plan update can consolidate and update the transportation project lists to improve support for future TFP updates.

**Partnerships and collaboration**

Bellevue has a long track record of collaborating with the community. To function at the high level the community expects requires collaboration and partnerships with the community, businesses, organizations, and other cities and agencies. Comments during early outreach emphasized the opportunity to better coordinate and partner with the Bellevue School District and Bellevue College, whether for access to recreation or to stimulate learning that supports our economy. The Comprehensive Plan has the ability to be a tool that identifies and coordinates partnerships to help align initiatives inside and outside City Hall. With a common Vision for the future, City departments can be better coordinated and work more effectively. This update can strengthen the relationship of the City's Vision and its policies to near-term actions, and create a stronger nexus between the City's Vision and the City's biennial budget.



## Work Program Topic List

Topic/Component	Description of Updates	References
<b>General updates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update out of date data, facts, figures and references</li> <li>• Review for consistency with Countywide Planning Policies, regional plan and state law</li> <li>• Review for internal and external consistency</li> </ul>	GMA Countywide Planning Policies Vision 2040
<b>Usability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review language for clarity, precision and usability</li> <li>• Make the plan more accessible to the general reader</li> <li>• Reduce redundancy and remove out-of-date policies</li> <li>• Ensure that policies are at the “policy level”</li> </ul>	
<b>Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess community Vision and update as appropriate</li> </ul>	
<b>Introduction &amp; Citizen Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance readability, such as with an executive summary</li> <li>• Review policies on citizen engagement, including the aspect of culture and diversity, and related to city master planning processes</li> </ul>	
<b>Land Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update population and employment forecasts and targets</li> <li>• Update/add information regarding growth strategy that focuses on Downtown and other commercial centers</li> <li>• Improve support for neighborhood and mixed used centers and recognize Downtown as a residential neighborhood</li> <li>• Review land use designations, including commercial and multifamily</li> </ul>	GMA Countywide Planning Policies Vision 2040 Early outreach
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate updated needs assessment with City’s regional partner ARCH</li> <li>• Update policies on housing needs consistent with Countywide Planning Policies</li> <li>• Review how policies support changing demographics</li> </ul>	GMA Countywide Planning Policies Early outreach
<b>Capital Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update consistent with current system plans</li> <li>• Review need for additional civic facilities based on growth</li> <li>• Review guidance to CIP process</li> <li>• Review how to support and integrate partnership opportunities</li> </ul>	GMA

<b>Utilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates for consistency with system plans for City-managed utilities</li> <li>• Updates related to plans for non-city-managed utilities</li> </ul>	GMA
<b>Stormwater</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate NPDES-related stormwater policies that emphasize low impact development; integrate with land use, transportation and other policy areas</li> </ul>	NPDES
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider multimodal strategies to support land use, economic development, environmental and community objectives</li> <li>• Assess state of the art for measuring concurrency and mode split and consider additional policy direction</li> <li>• Update and consolidate transit sections consistent with Transit Master Plan update</li> <li>• Review/update consistent with current light rail direction, including policies related to access to station areas</li> <li>• Consolidate/update existing multiple long-range transportation plans consistent with the Transportation Facilities Program (TFP)</li> </ul>	GMA Countywide Planning Policies Vision 2040 Early outreach
<b>Station Areas Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate project, that may result in Comprehensive Plan amendments to be folded into overall update</li> </ul>	Station Area Planning Project
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update economic data</li> <li>• Updates based on current economic strategy discussions and updated Regional Economic Strategy</li> <li>• Recognize significant/growing economic areas, including retail, high tech, medical, tourism/hotels, entertainment, auto sales, and small business development</li> <li>• Address ways to attract “knowledge workers”</li> <li>• Address connections to higher education</li> <li>• Improve “nimbleness” in responding to situational instances (linked with Land Use)</li> </ul>	Bellevue Economic Strategy Regional Economic Strategy Countywide Planning Policies Vision 2040 Early outreach
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review how plan supports K-12 and higher education as a community and economic asset</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review across Comprehensive Plan to address issues of healthy communities, such as walkability</li> </ul>	Countywide Planning Policies

<b>Human Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update recognizing changes in city demographics, including needs related to seniors, public health, and homelessness</li> </ul>	
<b>Diversity/Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update demographic data</li> <li>Integrate Bellevue Diversity Initiative</li> <li>Review issues related to culture, ethnicity and age across the Comprehensive Plan</li> </ul>	Early outreach
<b>Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate city's Environmental Stewardship Initiative strategies</li> <li>Address state/regional climate change goals</li> <li>Review across Comprehensive Plan to incorporate greenhouse gas reduction and mitigation strategies</li> <li>Review city objectives for ecosystem restoration and improving water quality</li> </ul>	Bellevue Environmental Steward Initiative Countywide Planning Policies Early Outreach State goals
<b>Parks, Open Space &amp; Recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update consistent with POS system plan</li> <li>Review long range goals to preserve, expand park system, including the need for parks serving developing areas, such as Downtown and BelRed</li> <li>Update Community Services policies</li> </ul>	GMA
<b>Urban Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider updates related to the Downtown Livability project and other planning studies</li> </ul>	Downtown Livability Project
<b>Annexation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Now has limited importance; reduce and merge into Land Use Element</li> </ul>	
<b>Downtown Subarea</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate potential policies amendments, projects and updates to the land use designations that result from DT Livability and DT Transportation Plan projects</li> </ul>	Downtown Livability Project Downtown Transportation Plan
<b>Eastgate/I-90 Corridor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update portions of the Eastgate, Richards Valley, and Factoria subarea plans to include the Eastgate/I-90 project recommendations</li> </ul>	Eastgate/I-90 Project
<b>Subarea Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a schedule for updating individual subarea plan on a rotating schedule beginning in 2015</li> <li>Develop a preliminary map to guide boundary updates</li> </ul>	
<b>Glossary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor updates</li> </ul>	
<b>Shoreline Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated under separate SMP process</li> </ul>	SMP Update project

## **INDIVIDUAL PUBLIC SCOPING REQUESTS**

Due to its wide ranging nature and the importance of addressing community interests, the update is an opportunity for the public to suggest any number of potential amendments. Many public comments are broad in nature or concern the overall plan and vision for the city. However, the City has also received requests from individuals that specific amendments be considered as part of the update.

### **BelRed Residential Zoning**

Mr. Walter Scott requested changing the BelRed Subarea to provide greater flexibility within the BR-R (Residential) zone. When BelRed was adopted it was recognized that it would take years for the area to transition toward the vision of the plan. It was also recognized that adjustments to the plan might be needed. Council directed including this in the five-year review of the Subarea Plan that is called for in the plan and scheduled to occur in 2014.

### **156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Triangle**

Several community members requested returning the triangle area on 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE from BelRed to the Crossroads subarea and restoring the zoning designations that existed prior to the BelRed planning effort. They argue that the relocation of the Overlake Village light rail station further to the north makes the triangle area less accessible and no longer appropriate for BelRed intensities. They also expressed concern for the heights and shape of development that may occur in the area. Council directed further consideration of this area during the Comprehensive Plan update process.

### **Downtown Boundary**

Comments from the Downtown Livability project include a request to modify the southern Downtown boundary to fix the boundary where it transverses parcels. Council directed consideration of the Downtown boundary related to split parcels as part of the Comprehensive Plan update, while recognizing that this long-standing boundary provides the adjacent residential neighborhood certainty that it will not be encroached upon by Downtown and that its general location on all sides of Downtown should be maintained.

### **Factoria Professional Office Zone**

A fourth request would seek evaluation of the Factoria PO (Professional Office) site located adjacent to Newport High School and consideration of a more intense designation. This site was considered during multiple annual amendment cycles and has been looked at in times past. The Council directed consideration of code changes that have been added to the Land Use Code Amendment work program. Additional policy amendments could also be considered in the update, if appropriate.

<b>Individual Public Scoping Requests</b>		
Request	Proponent	Direction
<b>Bel-Red BR-R</b> Reconsider BR-R zoning in the NW portion of Bel-Red	Walter Scott	Consider in 5-year BelRed review scheduled to occur in 2014
<b>Crossroads/Bel-Red Reconsideration</b> (1) Revert zoning from BR-RC3 to CB in the BelRed area adjacent to 156 <sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and move to Crossroads Subarea in recognition of change to light rail station location.  (2) Ensure plan review when major changes impact the community.	Campbell et al.	Review subarea boundaries and designations during update
<b>Downtown Boundary</b> Review DT boundary on south edge of DT	Issue arose from DT Livability process	Review Downtown boundary during update
<b>Factoria PO</b> Change designation to O or create some new classification between PO and O that allows a more intensive use where the PO does not abut SF properties.	Chris Benis	Consider in Land Use Code Amendment work program

### Element and Chapter Reviews

Chapter or Element	Description	PC Review
Introduction	The first chapter the public sees. Historic context for the Comprehensive Plan and holds the future-oriented Vision 2025, establishing the vision for what the community wants to be like in the future.	6/13/12
Citizen Participation	Policy for how the public engages and influences city planning.	4/10/13
Land Use	General location and distribution of land uses within the city and provides the framework for other plan elements.	2/13/13 9/25/13
Housing	This element seeks to maintain the strength, vitality, and stability of single family and multifamily neighborhoods and promote a variety of housing opportunities to meet the needs of all members of the community.	3/13/13 7/10/13 12/11/13
Capital Facilities	Seeks to provide adequate public facilities and ensure that needed public facilities are available when the growth occurs.	6/26/13
Utilities	Seeks to ensure that Bellevue has utility capacity to adequately serve anticipated growth.	6/26/13 9/25/13
Transportation	Addresses mobility for residents and businesses through the creation and maintenance of a balanced transportation system.	6/12/13
Economic Development	Guides efforts to market the city, offer services to businesses, and guide decision making as they pertain to the success of businesses, employees, and related services.	6/26/13
Environmental	Seeks to maintain the natural environment and protect critical areas.	7/10/13
Human Services	Seeks to create a community in which all members have the ability to meet their basic physical, economic, and social needs, and the opportunity to enhance their quality of life.	3/13/13 12/11/13
Parks, Open Space and Recreation	Addresses acquiring, developing and maintaining the park system, open space and habitat, and providing community services.	6/12/13 7/24/13
Shoreline Management Program	Addresses use of lands at the shoreline. Previously reviewed as part of the SMP Update project.	N/A
Urban Design	Guides the design of public and private development.	6/12/13 1/8/14
Annexation	Manages the city's growth through annexation. Historically significant, now, with annexations nearly complete, it has less relevance.	4/10/13

## Neighborhood Centers and Community Gathering Places

Comprehensive Plan Update Issue Paper

January 2, 2014

### The Value of Community Gathering Places

In his book *The Great Good Place*, Ray Oldenburg writes about the importance of informal public gathering places. He notes how these gathering places are essential to community and public life. Oldenburg identifies ‘third places,’ as the public places on neutral ground where people can gather and interact. In contrast to first places (home) and second places (work), third places allow people to put aside their concerns and simply enjoy the company and conversation around them. Third places “host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work.” Oldenburg suggests that beer gardens, main streets, pubs, cafés, coffeehouses, post offices, and other third places are the heart of a community’s social vitality and the foundation of a functioning democracy. They promote social equality by leveling the status of guests, provide a setting for grassroots politics, create habits of public association, and offer psychological support to individuals and communities.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to this ‘third place’ function that fosters community interaction and civic behavior, gathering places facilitate efficient transportation and improve public health. By creating space for shops, coffee houses and other places that meet the needs for local errands, neighborhood centers allow people to travel short distances to fulfill their daily activities other than work. With these functions close to home, some might walk or bike, pausing to talk to neighbors on the way. People’s health might benefit not only by having greater opportunity for exercise, but they might also have closer access to their doctor and their neighborhood might be safer with more “eyes on the street.”

Much has been written about how the most dynamic companies in the world today are increasingly mobile and seek to attract the best and brightest employees. These companies have freedom regarding where to set up offices and are looking to locate near where their employees want to live. And many of the well-educated, creative workers that are in demand seek cities that have an ideal combination of parks, schools, neighborhoods, activities and scenic beauty. Neighborhoods with vibrant, interesting places and unique character play a role in the city’s economy by helping to attract and retain the workforce that the regional economy depends on.

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<sup>1</sup> Project for Public Spaces [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)

### Types of Community Gathering Places

There are multiple scales of gathering places. The Century Link Stadium is an example of where people from across the region gather for a shared community event – Go Hawks! Locally, the Downtown Park is an example of a place where people from across the city gather, such as the Fourth of July fireworks celebration. Opportunities for large community events are important. This issue paper is focused, though, on the need for neighborhoods to have an immediate gathering spot, a place primarily for locals to hang out, meet each other and celebrate. Even at this local scale, community gathering can take many forms.

<b>Commercial places</b>	
Neighborhood centers	Small neighborhood retail areas can be host to a collection of commercial spaces that act individually and collectively as community gathering places.
Cafes/restaurants	Cafes are classic spaces to hang out and meet friends. Neighborhood restaurants can be the location of weekly business breakfasts, meetings and other gatherings.
Barber shops	Traditionally, a place where people would pass time and discuss issues.
Bars	The “Cheers” or English pub model of a neighborhood place where friends go to find each other.
<b>Public places</b>	
Parks	Parks can take many shapes and can offer space for community picnics, weekend activities, and local recreation.
Squares/plazas	These spaces are the traditional small-town public space and can support farmers markets, festivals and other events.
Community centers	Community centers host a wide range of activities and can be the place where various age groups socialize, whether teens or seniors.
Streets and sidewalks	While streets have an ongoing functional duty, they can also be the location of parades, fun runs and other neighborhood celebrations.
<b>Institutions</b>	
Churches	In addition to the church community, churches are



	often used as neighborhood meeting places.
Schools	Schools are heavily used by the community after normal school hours as meeting places, for recreation, for performances, and other activities.
Community clubs	Community clubs, such as private pools, often act as a neighborhood hang out place, although sometimes these spaces are only open seasonally.

**Role of business.** Commercial spaces have importance as providers of local goods and services in a known environment and within easy proximity to the surrounding neighborhood. Local businesses tend to be places where workers and owners are known to the community. People become “regulars,” and identify with their favorite places.

**Role of public spaces.** While businesses often add a vital mix of activity to a neighborhood center, public spaces, like plazas, can “hold together” a mix of commercial uses, be open to anyone at a wide range of times, and provide space for local events.

Private and public spaces can act as community gathering places in different ways and can have tradeoffs for how they function in the community. A bar, for instance can be a desirable place for friends to meet up, but may not be suitable to a range of ages. A private pool can be a fun and safe hang out spot for teens, but by its private nature is not fully accessible to the community. Public spaces, on the other hand, are generally open to everyone in the community, yet may lack the amenities of private spaces, such as food and drink, entertainment or organized activities.

There are examples of where public and private elements combine. For instance, food vendors set up in public squares or along sidewalks may add to the vibrancy of a public place. Shops encircling a town square work in concert to provide a combination of public space and commercial activity.

### **Status of Bellevue’s Neighborhood Centers and Gathering Places**

Bellevue has a number of successful neighborhood centers and gathering places. A mapping exercise helps demonstrate the location of retail stores, cafes, grocery stores, restaurants and entertainment locations. While mapping relies on information about the category of use and not all establishments act as true community gathering locations, mapping available location data helps identify the propensity for these functions and where gaps may exist.

A number of retail, restaurants and cafes are found in Downtown, Factoria, Eastgate, Crossroads and the eastern end of BelRed. While this mapping is consistent with communitywide and regional attractions located there, some of the uses within these districts act as local community places. Downtown is a great example of being a regional center, yet, a Downtown coffee shop or a restaurant can act as a local spot for Downtown residents. These smaller, local attractions are key at helping maintain the livability of larger commercial centers.

Crossroads is often referenced as a successful community place. While Crossroads is generally larger than a traditional neighborhood center, it includes a number of successful elements that go beyond just shopping. Its food court with open seating is a great place to grab a bite to eat and to meet up with others. A stage at its center provides a venue for weekly entertainment. A giant chess set attracts chess players and spectators. Crossroads Community Center and Park, the eastern neighbor of the shopping center, is also heavily used by many in the community for an array of activities. Following through from the recommendations of a community planning effort in 2007 that saw the value of connecting public and commercial uses, improvements are now being completed that open up the entrance of the community center to the shopping center and provide an enhanced pedestrian connection.

A number of smaller neighborhood centers in Bellevue include Northtowne, BelEast, Kelsey Creek, Lake Hills, Eastgate Plaza, Newport Hills, and Lakemont. Generally, these each include a small mix of neighborhood uses, such as grocery stores, small-scale retail, gas stations, and restaurants. Most of these areas continue to function well, providing key services to the surrounding neighborhoods. Kelsey Creek was recently remodeled with new commercial uses. Lake Hills is undergoing the second phase of a transformation.

Newport Hills is one neighborhood shopping center that has struggled more than others. Unlike some areas of the city with virtually no neighborhood services, Newport Hills is actually fortunate to have a small-scale neighborhood oriented commercial district at its center. However, over a number of years the shopping center lost its two grocery stores, its drug store and the Bank of America. The city, community and the property owners have been working together for several years now to revitalize the center. While several of these retail spaces remain vacant and no specific redevelopment plan has yet emerged, Bill Pace's produce store was opened in 2013 and a potential new restaurant may open this year.

Outside of commercial areas, the city has a number of parks and community centers and there are a number of churches and other institutions that provides some of the functionality of local gathering places. Some of these include:

- North Bellevue Community Center

- Northwest Arts Center
- Kelsey Creek Farm
- Highland Community Center
- Crossroads Community Center
- Bellevue Youth Theater
- Bellevue Botanical Garden
- South Bellevue Community Center
- Lewis Creek Visitor Center
- Bellevue Community College
- Libraries
- City Hall

For a community gathering place to function well it needs to be immediately accessible to the local neighborhood. People will often choose to drive to it, but it needs to be close enough that it is the clear local place and not just one among many regional choices. Ideally, it will be located so that walking is a viable option for many and the walking experience will be safe and enjoyable.

Mapping of commercial uses and community centers in Bellevue, indicates that community gathering spaces are fewer in these locations:

- Between Downtown Bellevue and Northtowne neighborhood center
- Bridle Trails
- Central Bellevue
- Northeast Bellevue (northeast of Northrup Way)
- Southeast Bellevue
- Southwest Bellevue/Enatai
- South Bellevue/Somerset/Cougar Mountain

Parks, community centers, churches and schools provide some of the functionality of community gathering in these areas and for some neighborhoods a local place, like a school, may be adequate if a larger community center or retail district is nearby.

### **Policy Opportunities**

Recognizing the status of community gathering places in Bellevue and the community's expressed desire for enhancing community gathering, how can the Comprehensive Plan support maintaining and enhancing existing neighborhood centers or creating new community gathering places?

Clearly, maintaining the health of existing neighborhood centers and smaller local businesses remains a priority. The city will continue to work with the community and property owners toward the revitalization of the Newport Hills Shopping Center and while additional policy is not required to provide this support, policy updates may more clearly identify the need to maintain neighborhood centers and support redevelopment in a manner consistent with their neighborhood context.

Economically, trends have favored online shopping, warehouse stores and discount stores, and larger shopping centers, depriving some smaller, neighborhood-oriented retail of a sufficient consumer base to be viable. With the exception of a few, small grocery stores have become uncommon. And those that have been successful, like Trader Joes, often draw from a large market area. For example, there are only three Trader Joes serving the Eastside – one each in Bellevue, Redmond and Kirkland. The consolidation of commercial activities and changing economic trends means that neighborhoods cannot necessarily expect or depend on traditional retail forms to enliven public spaces.

In other neighborhoods, the post-WWII, suburban development pattern resulted in areas without commercial centers. These areas are almost exclusively single-family homes and typically make few provisions for other uses. How can a city provide the neighborhood services and community gathering places that people are asking for while preserving the character and integrity of these existing predominately residential neighborhoods?

Looking specifically at the role of the city, the following potential policy opportunities may be considered to help maintain or revitalize existing neighborhood centers and supporting creating new community gathering opportunities where appropriate.

#### **Land use opportunities**

- The city could continue to explore land use strategies that support existing neighborhood centers and forms of redevelopment where appropriate.
- Where single-family neighborhoods seek small-scale retail or services, yet have little access to commercial services, the city could evaluate whether there are appropriate locations within or adjacent to the neighborhood for small-scale services while minimizing the potential impact of commercial uses. This could include exploring what uses would be compatible with multifamily zoning as means to increase proximity to single family areas or how limited retail functions could be included in other institutions.

### **Parks opportunities**

- Parks have traditionally been a place for neighborhood functions and social recreation. The Comprehensive Plan update could look at potential policy opportunities to continue to support this role. It could also consider how to continue to enhance the interface between parks and commercial areas, similar to the improvements at Crossroads Park, and to encourage the development of neighborhood public spaces, such as squares and plazas.

### **Economic opportunities**

- Recognizing the role community gathering places have of stimulating local businesses and helping create attractive, vibrant communities, policy support could encourage appropriate economic development in neighborhood centers.

### **Transportation & urban design opportunities**

- The pedestrian experience is essential for gathering places to work well. Those without cars, such as teenagers, need to be able to walk or bike to the center, and streets and pedestrian spaces often become part of the gathering place, especially during events. Consistent with the urban design policies review, policy support could make well-designed pedestrian spaces a priority in neighborhood centers.

### **Other opportunities**

It may also be appropriate to consider policy direction that supports programming public spaces to make them more active; public art for neighborhood centers; and facilitating neighborhood engagement.

### **Select Existing Policies**

#### **Land Use**

POLICY LU-25. Maintain areas for shopping centers designed to serve neighborhoods, recognizing their multiple roles: serving residents' needs, acting as community gathering places, and helping to establishing a neighborhood's identity.

POLICY LU-26. Encourage new neighborhood retail and personal services to locate at appropriate locations where local economic demand, local citizen acceptance, and design solutions demonstrate compatibility with the neighborhood. The following concepts should be considered when determining compatibility:

1. Retail and personal services should be encouraged to group together within planned centers to allow ease of pedestrian movement.
2. A large proportion of a Neighborhood Business-zoned center should consist of neighborhood-scale retail and personal services.
3. The location of such retail/service activities within the neighborhood should encourage pedestrian patronage.

POLICY LU-20. Promote maintenance and establishment of small-scale activity areas within neighborhoods that encourage pedestrian patronage and provide informal opportunities for residents to meet.

### **Parks, Recreation and Open Space**

POLICY PA-17. Provide geographically dispersed community centers, using city owned facilities as well as partnerships with the school districts and other non profit agencies, to meet residents' needs for indoor recreation, athletic instruction, arts, meeting space, and special activities.

POLICY PA-20. Promote a diversity of privately funded recreational and cultural facilities throughout the city, especially in coordination with major employment centers.

POLICY PA-14. Develop partnerships with other public agencies and the private sector to meet the demand for cultural and recreational facilities in the city.

POLICY PA-16. Develop partnerships with the public school districts to utilize school sites to provide active recreation and cultural facilities.

POLICY PA-35. Promote partnerships with public and private service providers to meet cultural, recreational, and social needs of the community.

POLICY PA-36. Provide opportunities for individuals to develop a sense of community through services and programs.

POLICY PA-13. Develop pedestrian and bicycle linkages between neighborhoods and major natural areas, recreation facilities, and education centers.

### **Transportation**

POLICY TR-79. Assign high priority to pedestrian and bicycle projects that: ...

2. Provide access to activity centers such as schools, parks, public facilities such as libraries and community centers, retail centers, major employment centers, and concentrations of housing and commercial areas;

### **Economic Development**

POLICY ED-26. Where commercial areas are in decline, work with businesses and other stakeholders to identify corrective actions, which may include:

1. Planning for new uses and new urban forms, leading to proposals for changes to the Comprehensive Plan and zoning
2. Developing incentives and other strategies to promote re-investment
3. Targeting investments in public infrastructure that may help catalyze new private sector investment.

POLICY ED-27. Where a commercial revitalization effort involves significant changes to plans and regulations that may impact a residential neighborhood, develop strategies to avoid or minimize these impacts.

POLICY ED-28. Facilitate the redevelopment and re-invigoration of older neighborhood shopping centers that are experiencing decline. Work with stakeholders to transform such centers into high quality and dynamic retail/mixed use commercial areas that also provide a gathering place and sense of community for the neighborhood.

### **Urban Design**

POLICY UD-29. Provide a system of public places of various sizes and types throughout the community.

POLICY UD-30. Ensure public places give access to sunlight, a sense of security, seating, landscaping, accessibility, and connections to surrounding uses and activities.

POLICY UD-33. Incorporate pavilions in major public places that provide protection from inclement weather. While total enclosure is generally discouraged, some enclosure may be necessary.

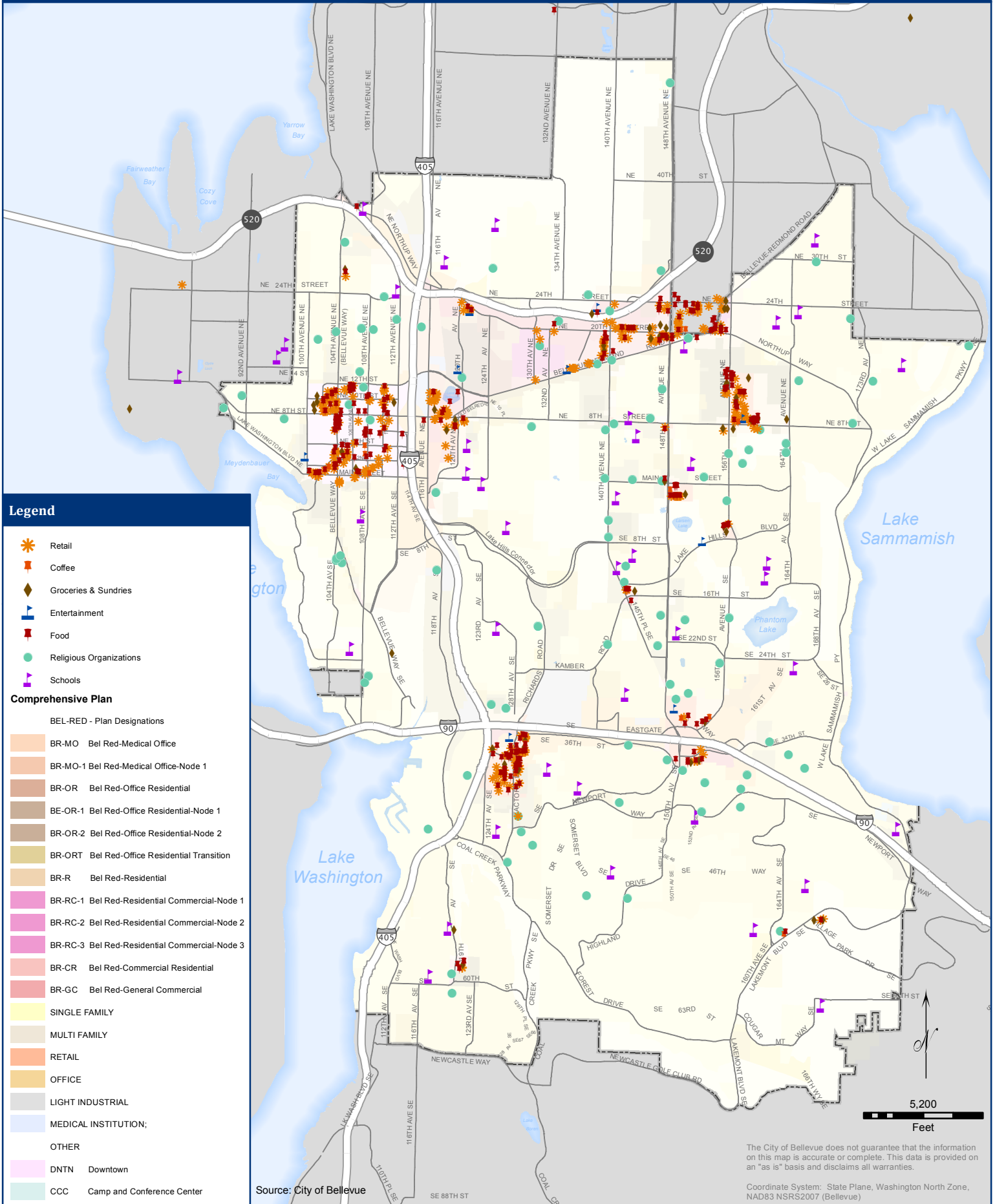
POLICY UD-35. Support a variety of artwork and arts activities in public places, such as parks, public buildings, and plazas.

POLICY UD-39. Include clear and ample walkways from street sidewalks and parking areas to building entrances and within and between developments as a part of site design.

# Gathering Places

Stores, Cafes, Restaurants, Schools, Religious Organizations & Others

City of Bellevue  
GIS Services





## URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

As part of the Comprehensive Plan Update process, this issue paper takes a look into the Urban Design Element to assess where policy changes may possibly need to occur. The issues raised in this paper result from the culmination of feedback from specific workgroups within city government that use the Urban Design Element, a study session with the Arts Commission, Bellevue's Best Ideas, the Joint Boards and Commissions and the Public Forum Reports and other outreach efforts. Through an analysis of the existing policies, staff has isolated key areas for improvement.

The Urban Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan is focused on people and design. By guiding both private development and public investments to create a city that is dynamic, engaging, aesthetically appealing and functionally understandable, the city is able to foster community and self-identity. Urban design policies, by their nature, create some overlap with corresponding parts of the Land Use, Housing, Transportation and Parks elements, while being focused on the design aspect of these features of the city's built and natural environment. The Urban Design Element is also the primary location of arts-specific policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

The table below summarizes the existing Urban Design policies in the Comprehensive Plan. Each section is comprised of a series of subsections that focus in on a particular component of Urban Design.

UD Section	Description
<p><b>Design Quality</b> Policies UD-1-28</p>	<p>Policies in this section promote high quality design of both architecture and landscaping that continues functional cohesiveness while providing a dynamic and interesting environment. These policies support the "City in a Park" vision and stress that a balance of variety and consistency is needed throughout the city. Topics include Site and Building Design; Vegetation and Landscaping; Open Space; and Signage and Wayfinding.</p>
<p><b>Public Places and Connections</b> Policies UD-29-53</p>	<p>Policies in this section reinforce the importance of public places appealing to the broadest audience. They should be comfortable and attractive. These policies promote a safer pedestrian environment, draw people together, celebrate the diversity of the community and encourage a strong arts community. Topics include Public Places; Public Art and Cultural Activities; Sidewalks, Walkways and Trails; Street Corridors; Transit Facilities; and Freeways.</p>

<p><b>Community Design</b> Policies UD-54-75</p>	<p>Policies in this section intend to encourage commercial and public center to attract people while maintaining and strengthening the more private and insular qualities of residential areas. Topics include Commercial and Public Centers; Residential; and Downtown.</p>
<p><b>Landmarks and Historic Resources</b> Policies UD-76-79</p>	<p>Policies in this section intend to highlight historically significant components located in Bellevue. Landmarks and historical resources can vary from the agricultural past of the Mercer Slough to Winters House.</p>

### **Potential Urban Design Updates**

Through the public engagement and technical reviews that have occurred to-date, the following are the types of updates to the Urban Design Element that are currently anticipated. As the Commission continues to have discussions about the update of the plan, additional changes are likely to be identified.

### **Urban Design in Bellevue**

In 2004, the time of the previous update to the Comprehensive Plan, staff completed modest revisions to the Urban Design Element maintaining the majority of policy direction from the previous plan. Despite the age of some of the policies, the current Urban Design Element continues to be generally in line with the vision of the majority of residents based on feedback staff has heard so far through the update process. However, some policies are outdated or conflict with what staff has heard from the public. Taking a critical eye to Bellevue's urban design uncovers some key issues that can be addressed in this update while highlighting what works or could be strengthened.

Clearly residents have the desire to see high quality urban design throughout the entire city that is representative of the diverse cultural districts that are continuing to evolve while maintaining the vision of Bellevue as "a City in a Park." Key to quality comprehensive urban design is an understanding that some design features work across the entire city, while others are specific to individual districts and neighborhoods, and that each of these systems work seamlessly together to create the larger vision of Bellevue. The result is a city comprised of functionally compatible, but distinct neighborhoods able that celebrate their own unique character and identity. Feedback from residents and staff indicates that there is a need to focus on a few key topics and items in the update of the Urban Design Element. These topics include Policy Approach, the Arts, Pedestrian Space, Neighborhood Centers/Community Gathering Places and Environmental Design.

## Policy Approach

The Urban Design Element guides public and private development to create a city that is diverse, appealing and functions cohesively. A key change that has occurred in Bellevue is that the city can no longer be simply separated into two categories: residential and Downtown. Recent and projected future growth in housing in Downtown, Wilburton, Crossroads, Eastgate and BelRed make the previous plan's distinction between Downtown and residential inconsistent with what is happening on the ground today and what will happen moving forward. BelRed and Downtown alone represent the majority of projected future housing growth in Bellevue by the year 2035. Growth of multifamily housing and mixed use development results in Bellevue being more diverse in the types of neighborhoods offered giving people more options for the kind of environment they want to live in.

To capture and implement the overall vision of the urban design of Bellevue, it is important to identify the key approaches that inform this update. Firstly, laying out the overall vision for the entire city forms the foundation for all urban design policy. Built into this larger vision is the diversity of the different kinds of neighborhoods and uses that Bellevue needs to plan for. To support Bellevue's residentially-dominated neighborhoods it is key that policy recognizes changing demographics and that the neighborhoods are representative of those who live there while still respecting the history of the place and the desire for continuity of character. Similarly, mixed use areas such as Downtown, Eastgate, Wilburton, Crossroads and BelRed should have policy that supports these areas' important roles within the community. These dynamic and diverse neighborhoods offer the most variation of experience from site to site recognizing the visual and cultural importance that these districts represent to the identity of the community.

### Example goals and policies for review:

GOAL #5: To Develop a functional and aesthetically pleasing urban Downtown.	With the development of mixed use areas throughout the city, this goal should be applicable to all such areas.
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### Residential Specific Policies in UD Element

POLICY UD-62. Minimize the removal of existing vegetation when improving streets to preserve the natural character of neighborhoods.	Minimizing the removal of existing vegetation when improving streets supports the retention of natural areas in more urban areas and in more residential areas. Since residents support the idea of Bellevue as a "city in a park," this policy should apply to the entire city.
POLICY UD-66. Enhance the appearance of neighborhoods, especially those which are older, with targeted city programs and services, such as landscaping and maintenance along the public right-of-way, sidewalk enhancements, identity treatments, and other actions that may enhance neighborhood appearance.	As Bellevue plans to have neighborhoods throughout the entire city, this policy should apply to the entire city.

## Downtown Specific Policies in UD Element

POLICY UD-67. Enhance the appearance, image, and design character of the Downtown to be an inspiring place to live, shop, play, and work.	This policy is specific to Downtown but with the planned development of BelRed and other areas as inspiring places to live, shop, play and work, the language could be expanded to include all mixed use areas, while maintaining Downtown's significant role as the urban center.
POLICY UD-72. Link the increased intensity of development with the increased pedestrian amenities, pedestrian-oriented building design, midblock connections, public spaces, activities, openness, sunlight, and view preservation.	Pedestrian amenities are important in many locations. With planned growth in housing set to occur predominantly in centers throughout the city, amenities should be promoted in all these areas.
POLICY UD-75. Use urban design features to soften the public right-of-way and sidewalk environment as appropriate. These features include, but are not limited to, street trees, landscaping, water features, raised planter boxes, potted plantings, pedestrian-scaled lighting, street furniture, paving treatments, medians, and the separation of pedestrians from traffic.	This policy could apply to many parts of the city, with a heightened use of such amenities in the Downtown. Mixed use areas and neighborhood centers offer an opportunity to improve the experience of Bellevue as a walkable and livable place.

Staff proposed response

- Improve how the Urban Design policy applies to the vision of the entire city, recognizing a variety of scales of neighborhoods, including those that are predominantly residential, mixed use areas, and Downtown.

**Arts & Culture**

The Urban Design Element is the primary home to arts and culture related policies. The current arts policies focus largely on public art and are largely silent to other facets. In the creation of a vibrant arts community, Bellevue can envision its citizens experiencing art and culture as a part of everyday life. While public art is an important component, there are many factors that help create a vibrant arts community. Artists and arts organizations need places to practice and create their work. They need places where they can perform or present their work. Bellevue residents have shown that there is an audience for the arts and cultural events. With arts education being strong in Bellevue's schools, urban design policy can work towards creating the kind of city that future generations want to stay in or return to.

With the most popular idea put forth under the Bellevue Best Ideas campaign for a large scale performing arts center in the Downtown, residents clearly see the arts as integral to the culture of Bellevue and arts performance as a key function of Downtown.

**Example goals and policies for review:**

<p>GOAL #8: To encourage and support the arts as a vital part of community life.</p>	<p>Current policies do not comprehensively support this goal. As the sole home of arts specific policies within the Comprehensive Plan, the Urban Design Element is critical to the creation and support of a thriving arts scene. The majority of the policies within the element promote the inclusion of public art in public and private development. While public art is an important component of a thriving arts scene, it is simply one piece of a larger arts ecosystem. As outlined in the Cultural Compass, the City's strategic vision for arts and culture, support for the arts comes in a variety of forms, from financial support for artists and organizations to the creation of a wide variety of types and sizes of cultural facilities.</p>
<p>POLICY UD-7. Encourage private and institutional developers to include artists on design teams and incorporate artwork into the public areas of their projects through the use of incentives.</p>	<p>Policy is specific to the design of buildings and the inclusion of public art in development.</p>
<p>POLICY UD-35. Support a variety of artwork and arts activities in public places, such as parks, public buildings, and plazas.</p> <p>Discussion: Public Art such as sculptures, murals, reliefs, and art objects can transform the character of a place from the ordinary to the special. Public art may embellish a site, evoke emotion, create a memorable place, acknowledge community history, or be abstract and symbolic. Large or small, art pieces can stimulate the imagination and encourage people to explore them.</p>	<p>Policy is specific to public art and publically available arts activities while the discussion is specific to public art.</p>
<p>POLICY UD-36. Encourage development, display, and performance opportunities for a wide range of artistic expression throughout the city.</p>	<p>Policy supports the creation and presentation of a wide range of artistic expression.</p>
<p>POLICY UD-37. Expand the city's public art collection; involve the community in selection of new major items; and encourage partnerships with other arts organizations and private enterprise in city artistic activities.</p>	<p>Policy is specific to the city's public art program and collection.</p>

Staff proposed response

- Elevate the section of arts policies making a clearer “home” for policies on art and culture
- Connect to the city's functional plan for art and culture, the Cultural Compass
- Expand policy direction to cover art programs, facilities and performing arts in addition to public art

## Pedestrian Space

Repeatedly stressed by the public at forums, in Best Ideas, and other outreach efforts, is the need to make Bellevue's neighborhoods more walkable, specifically to nearby services. Improving the walkability of neighborhoods to local services has implications on public health, local businesses, the environment, the possibility of people to age in place and general livability.

The design of pedestrian space is important to a successful pedestrian experience. It is not enough to simply provide sidewalks and expect people to walk on them. For a sidewalk to be a viable option people need to feel safe and the environment needs to be engaging recognizing that this experience will vary to match its local context. Focusing pedestrian infrastructure along major arterials makes this goal especially difficult because these are the harshest environments for pedestrians to use and plantings are often designed to be viewed at faster speeds over greater distances.

Also creating difficult conditions for pedestrians, Downtown was originally designed with superblocks. By making the blocks twice as long as many other cities' blocks, the amount of public space available to pedestrians was essentially cut in half. With fewer streets to use, pedestrians need to walk often longer distances to cross a street on sidewalks that need to serve more people than they otherwise would have with normal block lengths. Since there are fewer sidewalks available, there are higher volumes of pedestrians using each sidewalk at times compromising the space for landscape buffers between the sidewalk and automobile traffic.

### Example goals and policies for review:

GOAL #4: To give visual prominence to pedestrian facilities and environments.	
GOAL #9: To soften the visual impact of the automobile on the city.	
POLICY UD-1. Encourage high quality, attractive, architecturally appealing designs for major buildings in order to create distinctive visual reference points in the community.	Designing major buildings to be distinctive visual reference points improves the pedestrian experience, but with superblocks in Downtown and in other areas, distances are often great between such visually interesting reference points.
POLICY UD-4. Ensure that development relates, connects, and continues design quality and site functions from site to site.  Discussion: Examples are shared driveways, similar landscaping, pedestrian connections, similar building form, collective open and public space, and continuous pedestrian protection from weather. Assets and attributes of adjacent sites, when connected or combined, improve the overall urban design of the area.	The discussion highlights the use of similar building form and landscaping. This promotes little variation from site to site. Compatible building forms and landscaping maintains functions from site to site while allowing for a more interesting and varied pedestrian experience.

<p>POLICY UD-38. Ensure continuous and ample sidewalks along principal, minor, and collector arterials which are integrated with abutting land uses.</p> <p>Discussion: Sidewalk design may include separation from streets, connections to walkway and trail systems, landscaping, and other pedestrian amenities that enhance the community and improve pedestrian comfort.</p>	<p>Ample implies wide which is not always desirable or necessary for the pedestrian experience. The scale of the sidewalk should be in line with the level of use. There are areas, especially along principal arterials with limited pedestrian use, where the width of the sidewalk along with the width of the street create conditions that are out of scale for a pedestrian to feel safe and engaged in the pedestrian experience. There are also areas that are in need of much larger sidewalks than currently exist. In both cases, a buffer, created through separation from the street, landscaping or potentially public art, between the pedestrian and the street would help create a feeling of safety among pedestrians.</p>
<p>POLICY UD-41. Design vehicular and pedestrian routes to be visually appealing connections between different parts of Bellevue.</p>	<p>Vehicular and pedestrian routes should often be designed differently, with vehicles experiencing the city at much faster speeds than pedestrians.</p>
<p>POLICY UD-44. Encourage special streetscape design for designated intersections that create entry points into the city or neighborhoods or that warrant enhanced pedestrian features. (See Figure UD.1)</p> <p>Discussion: Design features could include wider sidewalks, special signs, colorful planting, seating, improved lighting, prominent crosswalks, decorative paving patterns, and public art. Incorporate gateway treatments at designated intersections that are key entry points into the city and into smaller districts and communities within the city. Design of these intersections should take into account potential visual and physical obstructions such as mechanical equipment.</p>	<p>The Urban Design Treatment map (Figure UD.1) doesn't offer any variation of conditions; a street is either a boulevard or it is not or an intersection is designated or it is not. The scale of the street and adjacent commercial and residential development offer opportunities for levels of designation from a pedestrian-oriented street, such as Main Street in Old Bellevue, to an auto-oriented street, such as 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. In addition to these streets, which are oriented towards a dominant use, there are other streets throughout the city that offer an opportunity to create a balanced approach. To create a dynamic, livable and functional city, a variety of street types are needed.</p>

### Staff proposed response

- Improve how the Urban Design Element addresses pedestrian space at various scales – local neighborhoods, arterials/boulevards, Downtown and other centers
- Identify specific street corridors that would be priority locations for streetscape improvements
- Clarify the connection between the Urban Design Element and the Transportation and Parks and Recreation elements

### **Neighborhood Centers / Community Gathering Places**

Neighborhood centers/community gathering places offer residents a place to meet, a place to identify with and a place to seek services locally. They often form the face of the visual identity of neighborhoods, giving people a landmark and destination. The importance of such spaces is incredibly important to residents, especially new residents, as they seek to connect to their community. Crossroads is a perfect example of how the private space of a mall becomes, in effect, a public space for a huge variety of communities to meet. Aiding to the success of

Crossroads as an important cultural space is the availability of nearby social services, parks, connections to nearby neighborhoods and shopping.

While Crossroads is a model that works within a mixed use area, residents of Newport Hills see the future Newport Hills Shopping Center in a similar light, where residents have stressed the importance of this development as the center and face of their community. Clearly, some of the issues involved in seeing revitalization of the Newport Hills Shopping Center relate to land use and economic development policies. However, there is a role for urban design policies recognizing that design plays a key role in shopping center success and in how shopping centers related and speak for their surrounding neighborhoods.

**Example goals and policies for review:**

Goal #3: To create and develop public and semi-public spaces to attract people.	These spaces are incredibly important to community members. Allowing access to such spaces is a key concern and helps the success of such spaces as community gathering places. Neighborhood Centers offer unique opportunities as community gathering spaces for local areas.
POLICY UD-56. Ensure that perimeter areas of major commercial and public centers use appropriate planting, lighting, and signs to blend with surrounding development and to be compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods.	Policy focuses on blending the design of commercial centers with surrounding development and residential neighborhoods. Commercial centers should blend with nearby development and neighborhoods and connect to them.
POLICY UD-59. Assure that more intense development is compatible with adjacent, less intense development by incorporating elements in site and building design that soften the impact from commercial to residential areas or from multifamily to singlefamily areas.	Policy focuses on buffering the impact of more intense development on surrounding areas. Allowing access from one development type to another increases the opportunity for local residents to walk or bike to neighborhood centers and community gathering places.

Staff proposed response

- Review urban design policies to ensure that they support quality design of development and public improvements in neighborhood centers
- Support the development of community gathering places within neighborhoods

**Environmental Design**

The vision of Bellevue as a “City in a Park” is widely known and supported among residents. The Urban Design Element can assist this vision by promoting designs that work to achieve this goal. This vision is clearly a component of the identity of Bellevue. For example, by increasing the tree canopy, Bellevue can build upon the “City in a Park” theme and improve the overall experience of the city, support the unique character of Bellevue and provide interesting experiences to people. Low impact development, such as the development of rain gardens, green walls and green roofs, designed to be visually engaging, work to create interesting points of reference while supporting community values. These systems, from an urban design standpoint, have the added benefit of improving local and regional environmental health.



Ensuring that urban design policy is not acting as a barrier to such kinds of innovation and technology is important to consider as technologies change or are created rapidly. As an example, the urban design policy related to the screening of mechanical equipment on Downtown's buildings does not reference environmental technologies such as wind and solar power while other mechanical equipment is referenced, such as satellite dishes. This lack of clarity leaves private developers and staff involved in the design review unsure how such technology should be incorporated into building architecture.

**Example goals and policies for review:**

<p>POLICY UD-8. Design rooftop mechanical screening so that it is integral with building architecture. Consider the visual effects of technical advances such as satellite dishes, on building design.</p>	<p>The inclusion of solar panels or other environmental design equipment and features are not mentioned in the Urban Design Element. While solar panels would seem to be rooftop mechanical equipment, they clearly have a different effect on the appearance of a building than vents and other electrical equipment. This policy, by highlighting satellite dishes, which are rarely used today, illustrates the need to consider innovative existing and future technologies in policy language.</p>
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Staff proposed response

- Review and update urban design policies to assure that they appropriately address landscaping and the natural environment, such as emphasizing the importance of trees within street corridors, ensuring that they don't create barriers to advance stormwater techniques, and promote utility designs that enhance the character of the area
- Address the visual design aspects of emerging and future technology, such as solar, wind, and green roofs

**NEXT STEPS**

Feedback on these policy areas is welcome to help guide staff as the city works to prepare initial draft policy amendments. Staff will return to discuss urban design policies in greater detail at a future study session while the overall review of the Comprehensive Plan update will continue at throughout the winter and spring. The objective is to work through issues and specific policy areas so as to enable preparation of an updated draft in the spring of 2014.

## Draft Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Review Schedule

1-2-20114

*\* dates are likely to change; other agenda items are not be shown at this time, including Land Use Code amendments, Downtown Livability, and other items*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Planning Commission or Joint Meeting</u>	<u>Other related items</u>
Downtown	Sept 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kemper Freeman speaking on history and future of Downtown</li> </ul>	
Growth and Infrastructure	Sept 25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing and Employment Growth</li> <li>• Utility Infrastructure Planning</li> </ul>	
Eastgate	Nov 13 – <i>at Bellevue College</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eastgate speakers and plan</li> <li>• Land Use policy direction</li> <li>• Eastgate plan</li> <li>• Subarea plan boundaries</li> </ul>	ongoing CPU outreach activities
Environment	<i>Nov 19 - Env Stewardship joint commissions meeting</i>	Vision focus groups
Economic Development & Future Growth	Dec 11 – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speakers Session - Economic Growth &amp; Development: Jon Talton, Seattle Times; Greg Johnson, Wright Runstad &amp; Co.</li> <li>• Housing &amp; human service – comments from the Human Services Commission and Network on Aging</li> <li>• <del>Urban Design policy direction</del></li> </ul>	
Community Gathering	Jan 8 – <i>at Interlake High School Library</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speakers Session - Neighborhood Centers and Community Gathering: representatives from Crossroads, the Parks Department, and neighborhood leaders</li> <li>• Neighborhood centers and community gathering places</li> <li>• Urban design</li> <li>• Eastgate plan</li> </ul>	
Community Vision	Jan 22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Vision review</li> <li>• Subarea plan updates and boundaries</li> <li>• Housing and human services</li> </ul>	

Culture & Diversity	<p>Feb 12 – <b>Joint Commissions Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity Forum – speakers representing business, a cultural group, &amp; Bellevue Schools; and a forum workshop</li> <li>• Culture and diversity policy review</li> </ul>	ongoing outreach activities
Economic Development	<p>Feb 26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council’s Economic Strategy presentation</li> <li>• Economic development and light industrial policy review</li> <li>• Education policy review</li> <li>• Eastgate plan</li> <li>• Potential additional CPU policy topics</li> </ul>	2014 Annual CPAs
Community Health	<p>Mar 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speakers Session - Community Health</li> <li>• Health related policy review</li> <li>• Potential review of Urban Design and Parks &amp; Rec policy areas</li> </ul>	2014 Annual CPAs
	<p>Mar 26 – <i>at South Bellevue CC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eastgate plan</li> <li>• Review major themes/framework discussion</li> <li>• Potential additional CPU policy topics</li> </ul>	ongoing outreach activities
	<p>April 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive Plan update - summarize major issues &amp; review of draft sections</li> </ul>	
	<p>April 23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tbd</li> </ul>	2014 Annual CPAs
Joint CPU Review	<p>May 14 – <b><i>tbd</i> Joint Commissions Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive Plan update - joint meeting with boards/commissions to review draft</li> </ul>	
	<p>May 28</p>	
	<p>June 11</p>	
CPU public hearing	<p>June 25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>tbd</i> potential Comprehensive Plan update public hearing</li> </ul>	
	<p>July 9</p>	



- Residential commercial 1
- Residential commercial 2
- Office mixed use
- Office
- Commercial residential
- Commercial
- Light industrial
- Institutional
- Park
- Retail frontage
- Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail
- Non-motorized improvement
- Multi-modal improvement
- Intersection improvement
- Potential future High Capacity Transit hub
- Transit hub
- Gateway
- Transit-oriented development



**Increase office presence in corridor**

- Change from light industrial to office
- Allow offices with ground floor service uses
- Provide visibility from I-90
- Enhance stream corridors and vegetated areas

**Maintain light industrial area**

- Mix flex-tech uses with existing light industrial uses
- Enhance stream corridors and vegetated areas

**Seek open space opportunities**

- Drainage pond presents opportunity for parklike setting

**Add park/viewpoint**

- Make use of views
- Aid hill climb
- Provide central meeting point

**Increase Bellevue College presence and connections with surrounding community**

- Allow institutional, retail, and residential
- 148th entrance could be anchored by institutional mixed use

**Protect existing retail and make use of freeway exposure**

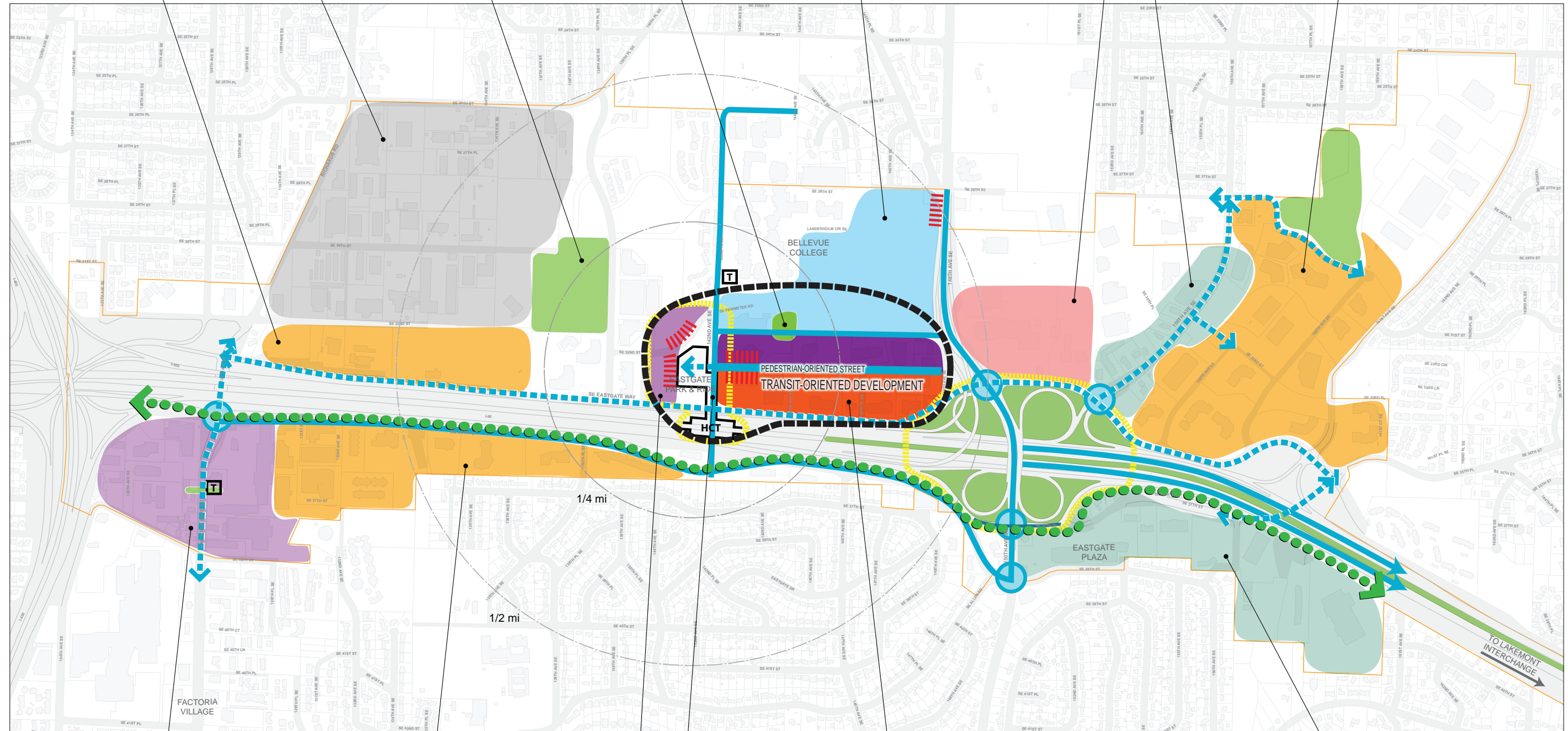
- Allow office, retail, and service uses
- Protect existing retail
- Allow auto sales
- Office uses should include ground-floor retail, especially restaurants

**Provide retail services for nearby offices and neighborhoods**

- Allow retail with upper floor residential or office
- Improve pedestrian connections to nearby office uses

**Provide higher quality office environment**

- Allow additional office development
- Allow retail and service uses on ground floor
- Ensure new development addresses Phantom Lake water quality/quantity concerns and other concerns of nearby neighborhoods



**Build on "Factoria Urban Village Concept"; utilize existing retail and transit**

- Allow retail, hotel, office, residential
- Emphasize transit focus with enhanced pedestrian environment along Factoria Blvd
- Include amenities with new development

**Support business and increase office presence**

- Allow increased office development
- Continue to allow auto sales
- Allow retail and service uses on ground floor
- Allow residential away from highway, in western portion
- Maintain office emphasis in eastern portion

**Activate and make use of transit center**

- Encourage multiple uses (office, retail, and residential)
- Emphasize transit focus with ground floor retail fronting Park & Ride

**Improve 142nd bridge**

- Improve bridge for pedestrians and current transit operations to/through Bellevue College
- Serve as gateway element

**Transit-oriented core of Eastgate; high-activity hub with connections to Bellevue College**

- Allow higher density to form Eastgate's central focal point
- Incorporate mixed uses (retail, residential, office, institutional) to create high activity hub
- Emphasize transit focus with enhanced pedestrian connectivity
- Provide terraced hill-side park for public gathering space
- Connect Bellevue College to southerly properties across steep slope
- Orient buildings to street grid
- Provide vertical access between 142nd bridge and ground level
- Encourage residential with ground floor retail on northern portion

**Serve surrounding neighborhoods**

- Emphasize neighborhood services (e.g., library, clinic, grocery)
- Allow retail, residential uses
- Allow office, hotel in east portion
- Limit building heights to be sensitive to single family neighborhood

# Richards Valley Subarea Plan

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## GOAL:

**To maintain the Subarea as a green and wooded place that provides a complementary mixture of living and working opportunities.**

*Discussion: The Richards Valley Subarea consists of three distinct districts. West of I-405 is heavily vegetated and is developed with a variety of uses – parkland, light industrial, and multifamily. Woodridge Hill is largely residential with a mixture of single-family and multifamily units. East of Woodridge Hill development includes a wide variety of uses – residential, park, warehousing, and extensive retail. Although the community recognizes the need for maintaining working opportunities in the Subarea, they want to ensure that the quality of the residential community and natural features (especially dense vegetation and wooded vistas) remain at a high level.*

## OVERVIEW

According to most sources, Richards Valley was once part of the Duwamish Tribal Territory. Evidence shows a village/habitation site located on or near Mercer Slough.

The earliest English speaking inhabitants of this area prior to 1900 occupied themselves with mining, logging, and farming.

During the 1890s loggers cut large stands of timber on land now known as Woodridge Hill and Richards Valley and into the Factoria area. Logging continued to be important into the 1920s. The railroad trestle built in 1904 serves as an important Richards Valley Subarea landmark.

Land use patterns evolved from early timberland, logging, and farming between the 1920s and 1950s to the current settlements of residential and commercial development. Woodridge Hill and Richards Valley were annexed into Bellevue during the 1960s and 1970s.

Richards Valley, an area of 1,153 acres, forms an oval beginning with I-405 and the Lake Hills Connector to the north, 132nd Avenue S.E. on the east, Mercer Slough on the west and Richards Road and I-405 converging at I-90 to the south. Of the 1,754 housing units in the Subarea 1,022 (58 percent) are single-family units and 732 (42 percent) are multifamily units.

Of the 1.5 million square feet of non-residential uses in Richards Valley, half is industrial, about a quarter is office, and a fifth is institutional and governmental.

Of Bellevue's subareas, only three have land planned for light industrial uses: Bel-Red, North Bellevue, and Richards Valley. Richards Valley has about 120 acres of light industrial land compared to North Bellevue with about 20 acres and Bel-Red with about 400 acres.

Richards Valley has about 140 acres of land planned for office use compared to Eastgate with 246 and Wilburton with 225.

Approximately 2,500 people work in Richards Valley. The residential population is 4,200.

Richards Valley is known for the views from Woodridge Hill and the wooded areas and wetlands in the valley. This plan focuses on protection of the treasured natural features in the face of continued development of residential, office, and light industrial uses.

For instance, the community wants to maintain and preserve single-family neighborhoods as the primary use especially on Woodridge Hill and Woodmoor. A mix of light industrial and additional residential uses is appropriate in the lower elevations of the valley.

In 1987 the City Council adopted the Sensitive Area Requirements to protect sensitive areas in Bellevue. As a result the open use land use designation became obsolete and during the Subarea plan review process the Citizens Advisory Committee redesignated some 115 acres of open use land for residential or commercial uses.

Land uses in the Subarea are indicated on the Land Use Plan Map (*Figure S-RV.1*).

## General Land Use

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### **POLICIES**

**POLICY S-RV-1.** Ensure that development and site planning comply with the Sensitive Area Regulations.

**POLICY S-RV-2.** Encourage land uses and site development that minimize the appearance of intense development.

**POLICY S-RV-3.** Encourage commercial areas to develop with sensitivity to their surroundings.

*Discussion: Richards Valley is recognized as an employment center and additional commercial development is encouraged in properly designated areas. Commercial development is appropriate if it doesn't degrade the environment and if traffic mitigation addresses traffic congestion and safety problems.*

**POLICY S-RV-4.** Auto sales, auto rental, and auto leasing uses are not appropriate on the parcels in the Light Industrial District that are along the following streets: 118th Avenue S.E., Richards Road, and S.E. 26th.

**POLICY S-RV-5.** Allow recreation and community uses in and on school sites which may be closed in the future.

*Discussion: When determining the appropriate intensity of activity, consider the previous use of the school and the ability of nearby streets to accept additional traffic. When applicable, the community can participate in the conditional use process in deciding appropriate uses on closed school sites.*

## Natural Determinants

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### **POLICIES**

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**POLICY S-RV-6.** Retain the remaining wetlands within the 100-year floodplain along Richards Creek, Kelsey Creek, and Mercer Slough for drainage retention and natural resource park use.

*Discussion: It is important to preserve the natural environment and to retain the native habitat for the aesthetic value and character of the community.*

**POLICY S-RV-7.** Protect and enhance the capability of Richards Creek, Kelsey Creek, and Mercer Slough and their tributaries to support fisheries along with other water-related wildlife.

**POLICY S-RV-8.** Retain and enhance existing vegetation on steep slopes, within wetland areas, and along stream corridors to control erosion and landslide hazard potential and to protect the natural drainage system.

## Residential

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### **POLICIES**

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**POLICY S-RV-9.** Encourage a variety of different densities and housing types in residential areas to accommodate social and economic lifestyles changes as well as the different stages of life.



*Discussion: If moderate or low-income multifamily units are constructed in the Subarea, the sites should be dispersed rather than concentrated in one development.*

## **Parks and Recreation**

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### **POLICIES**

**POLICY S-RV-10.** Encourage the City to purchase land for parks and open space when it becomes available.

**POLICY S-RV-11.** Protect and preserve publicly owned land.

*Discussion: This policy refers to land set aside for storm drainage and detention, the right-of-way along the Lake Hills Connector, and potential links in the trail and park system.*

*An efficient way to accomplish this is for the City to purchase properties or parts of properties protected by the City's Sensitive Area Regulations.*

## **Transportation**

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### **POLICIES**

**POLICY S-RV-12.** Develop a safe integrated on and off-street nonmotorized system emphasizing connections to schools, parks, transit, and other parts of Bellevue.

*Discussion: Richards Valley needs many nonmotorized improvements. These include better access to the schools, parks, and transit service. Because of its central location to other parts of Bellevue (such as Downtown, and the Kelsey Creek and Mercer Slough Parks), it is important for the off-street trail system to connect safely to the on-street facilities.*

**POLICY S-RV-13.** Provide better pedestrian access and views of Richards Creek, Kelsey Creek, and Mercer Slough.

*Discussion: While pedestrian and visual access is important, it should be balanced with the need to develop sites sensitively and in accordance with Sensitive Area Regulations.*

**POLICY S-RV-14.** Promote development of a nature trail between the Lake Hills Connector and Kamber Road near Richards Creek.

*Discussion: The nature trail should provide the public with views and walking opportunities in this unique and fragile area. The trail should be compatible with the environmentally sensitive areas along the creek.*

**POLICY S-RV-15.** Consider interim solutions for nonmotorized improvements until major improvements can be made.

*Discussion: Use the City's Overlay Program, Minor Capital Projects Fund, Neighborhood Enhancement monies, or other sources to provide interim solutions when practical. When appropriate, consider constructing sidewalks on only one side of the street.*

**POLICY S-RV-16.** Encourage improved Metro transit service to and from key points in the Richards Valley Subarea.

*Discussion: Metro should provide better transit service in the Richards Road corridor to Bellevue Community College, Eastgate, Factoria, the downtowns of Bellevue and Seattle, and the University of Washington.*

**POLICY S-RV-17.** Plan for the long-range traffic related facility needs in the Richards Valley Subarea including designated arterial, feeder (collector), and residential streets.

*Discussion: The East Bellevue Transportation Study will include an evaluation of Richards Valley's arterial facility needs on Richards Road including the impacts of new development on the transportation system.*

**POLICY S-RV-18.** Minimize access to the Lake Hills Connector when considering new development near the Connector.

## Utilities

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### POLICIES

**POLICY S-RV-19.** Encourage the combination of utility and transportation rights-of-way in common corridors and coordinate utility construction with planned street and bike lane improvements which could result in a more efficient allocation of funds.

**POLICY S-RV-20.** Use common corridors for new utilities if needed.

*Discussion: If new power lines are needed in the Subarea, they should be developed in areas that already contain power lines, rather than causing visual impacts in new areas.*

**POLICY S-RV-21.** Improve the appearance of public streets and power line rights-of-way.

**POLICY S-RV-22.** Encourage the undergrounding of utility distribution lines.

## **Community Design**

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### **POLICIES**

**POLICY S-RV-23.** Disturb as little of the natural character as possible when improving streets and arterials.

*Discussion: The Lake Hills Connector is an example of using natural vegetation along the street frontage and in the median.*

**POLICY S-RV-24.** Encourage the retention and enhancement of special features designated by the Urban Design Element such as unique open spaces, landmarks, and view points.

*Discussion: In Richards Valley the stream and wetlands qualify as unique open space, the railroad trestle as a landmark and the view from Woodridge School grounds as a designated viewpoint.*

**POLICY S-RV-25.** Encourage the retention of vegetation during the clearing, grading, and construction processes to screen development from nearby residential neighborhoods.

**POLICY S-RV-26.** Require design review for areas along Richards Road in order to ensure that site and building design of commercial and multifamily uses in the valley are in character with the nearby single-family neighborhoods.

*Discussion: Commercial and multifamily development should be screened to provide a visual separation from the road. If development cannot be screened, building height, bulk, color, and roofline design should be compatible with the development allowed in the nearby single-family community. Use design review to accomplish this.*

*In addition, use the Richards Creek Sensitive Area as an amenity when designing sites.*

**POLICY S-RV-27.** Development along Richards Road should preserve and maintain the green and wooded character of the Richards Road corridor.

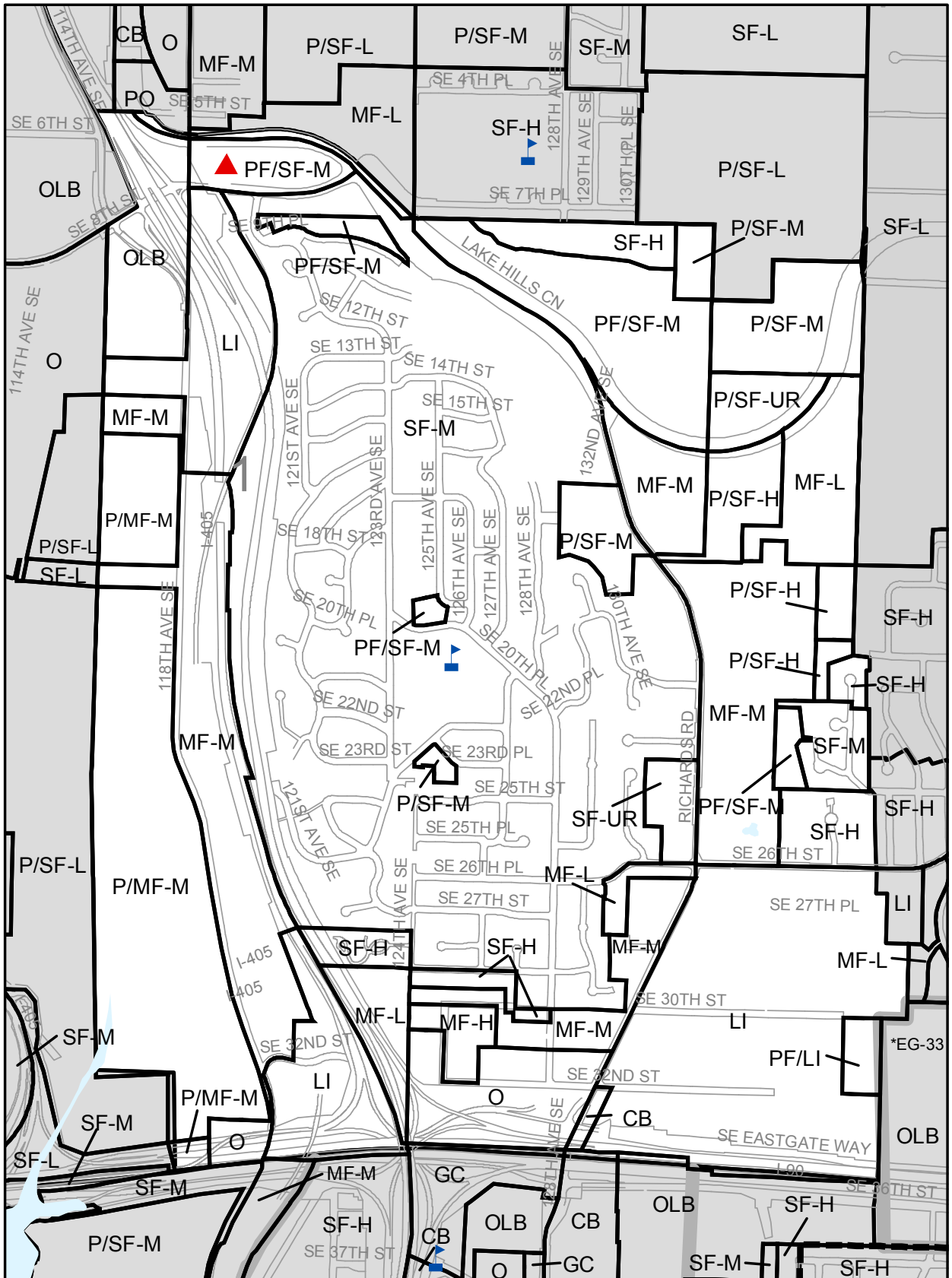
**POLICY S-RV-28.** New development, including single-family development, should install landscaping which provides a dense visual vegetative screen along Richards Road. The planting should be an amenity to those who travel, live, and work along Richards Road.

**POLICY S-RV-29.** Encourage the site and building design of commercial and multifamily use on Woodridge Hill to be in character with the nearby single-family neighborhood.

*Discussion: Building height, bulk, color, and roofline design should be compatible with the development allowed in the nearby single-family community. Use design review to accomplish this.*

**POLICY S-RV-30.** Develop areas designated for light industrial uses with sensitivity to the natural constraints of the sites.

**POLICY S-RV-31.** Encourage screening of rooftop machinery from view at ground level.



**FIGURE S-RV.1  
Richards Valley Land Use Plan**

SF Single Family  
 MF Multi Family  
 -L Low Density  
 -M Medium Density  
 -H High Density  
 -UR Urban Residential

PO Professional Office  
 O Office  
 OLB Office, Limited Business  
 OLB-OS Office, Open Space  
 NB Neighborhood Business  
 CB Community Business

GC General Commercial  
 LI Light Industrial  
 PF Public Facility  
 P Park

Fire Stations  
 Public Schools  
 Planning Districts  
 Bellevue City Limits (6/2005)  
 Lakes

# Factoria Subarea Plan

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## GOALS:

1. **To preserve and maintain a natural setting for our residential areas and to manage change in the commercial district to improve its cohesiveness, compatibility, and accessibility to Subarea residents.**
2. **To create a well-integrated, transit-supportive, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use urban neighborhood in Factoria’s commercial core (District 2).**

## OVERVIEW

Factoria is known for its residential neighborhoods, easy access to the freeways, and shopping at Factoria businesses. Current issues center around the redevelopment of the commercial district while protecting residential neighborhoods, addressing mobility, and improving pedestrian links between commercial and residential areas.

Even before its 1993 annexation, the city worked with Factoria residents and businesses to strengthen the community’s transportation vision. Since then, a series of transportation studies and updates have embraced the integration of transportation and urban design to enhance the quality of life in this vital activity center.

This Subarea Plan recognizes that the latest study—the 2005 Factoria Area Transportation Study (FATS) Update—sought to update the Subarea policy framework and list of associated transportation facility projects so as to achieve long-term mobility and safety for transportation system users. This approach challenges the existing suburban land use pattern because, while Factoria has a mix of land uses – housing, offices, retail and services – they are disconnected.

This Subarea Plan also provides a framework for the 2002 Land Use Code amendments that direct redevelopment of the Factoria Mall so that it can accommodate a new, mixed-use focus. The FATS Update provided the necessary determination of transportation system adequacy to accommodate the Mall’s expansion. For all of District 2 redevelopment, the Update also addresses the needs of all modes of transportation within the Subarea and provides design guidance for private sector redevelopment.

Redevelopment in Factoria will use FATS Update transportation and urban design strategies adapted into the Subarea Plan and in the East Bellevue Transportation Facilities Plan to create a well-integrated, transit-supportive, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use urban neighborhood.

## History

It is believed that Factoria was once part of the Duwamish Tribal Territory. Evidence of a village/habitation site exists at a location near Mercer Slough. The earliest English-speaking inhabitants of this area prior to 1900 occupied themselves with mining, logging, and farming. Edwin Richardson discovered coal in Newcastle in 1863 and prospectors formed the Lake Washington Coal Company which eventually became the Seattle Coal and Transportation Company.

During the 1890s, loggers cut large stands of timber on land now known as Woodridge Hill, Richards Valley, Greenwich Crest, Mockingbird Hill, Monthaven, Newport Shores, and the commercial area of Factoria. Somerset Hill forests remained intact for several decades. Logging continued to be important into the 1920s.

Apparently, around the turn of the 20th century, the area known as Mercer Landing was proposed as a port serving railroad and manufacturing plants.

This area, destined to become the town of Factoria, was promoted as an industrial center with coal smoke “belching from hundreds of smokestacks.” Promoters expected at least 20 plants, in addition to the existing Factoria Stove and Range Co., to locate there. But some 15 years after the promoter’s pitch, only the Factoria School had been built and the proposed industrial town of Factoria never got off the ground. The present day Factoria Mall is located on the original Factoria property.

Land use patterns evolved from early timberland, logging, and farming between the 1920s and 1950s to the current residential and commercial development.

Much of the area was planned and developed under the jurisdiction of King County.

Newport Shores and Somerset annexed into Bellevue during the 1960s and 1970s. The Factoria commercial area annexed in 1993.

Factoria is an area of about 2,100 acres bounded by I-90 on the north and Lake Washington on the west. The southern boundary forms an oblong crescent around Newport Hills. The Subarea contains just over 3,400 single-family dwelling units and about 1,300 multifamily units. There are 11 million square feet of commercial space, including offices employing over 7,500 people, making Factoria a busy urban area.

In District 1, (1,800 acres) there are about 71 acres of vacant land all of which is planned as single-family use. Approximately 40 acres are classified as protected wetlands, as defined by the Bellevue Land Use Code (Section 20.50.044). In District 2 (282 acres), 6.7 acres remain vacant. Of those, 1.5 acres are planned for multifamily use, and 5.2 acres for office use.

The policies in the Factoria Subarea Plan guide the continued development and redevelopment of the Subarea. The Plan includes a section of design policies for the commercial area.

## General Land Use

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### POLICIES

**POLICY S-FA-1.** Maintain land uses as depicted on the Land Use Plan.

**POLICY S-FA-2.** Protect single family neighborhoods from encroachment by more intense uses.

**POLICY S-FA-3.** Maintain land use densities that will not create vehicular congestion that exceeds adopted level of service standards.

**POLICY S-FA-4.** Encourage infill development and redevelopment in a manner that is compatible with surrounding uses and meets adopted design guidelines.

**POLICY S-FA-5.** Encourage any redevelopment to include parks, landscaping, and pedestrian access.

**POLICY S-FA-6.** Retain the single-family land use designation on all school property.

**POLICY S-FA-7.** Restrict all future office expansion to districts shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-FA.1).

## Critical Areas

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In Factoria, as elsewhere, the city recognizes the importance of preserving the natural environment for wildlife habitat, stormwater management, as well as the aesthetic value to the community.

Controlling storm water runoff will help to prevent additional erosion of stream beds, downstream flooding and siltation. Specific areas of concern include the west side of Monthaven, Sunset Ravine, Mercer Slough, the Coal Creek watershed, and the siltation zone at its mouth.

### POLICIES

**POLICY S-FA-8.** Protect and enhance the capability of Sunset Creek, Richards Creek, Coal Creek, and their tributaries to support fisheries and water related wildlife.



**POLICY S-FA-9.** Retain and enhance vegetation on steep slopes, within wetland areas, and along stream corridors in order to control erosion, reduce landslide hazard and to protect the natural drainage system.

**POLICY S-FA-10.** Encourage the use of a variety of site development options to conserve the natural land features in wetlands or steep slopes.

## Residential

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### **GOAL:**

**To increase housing opportunities in Factoria commercial areas.**

### **POLICIES**

The Community Business zoning along the east side of Factoria Boulevard allows for housing to be developed over ground-floor commercial uses. This represents an opportunity to increase the supply of housing without encroaching on existing residential areas. The FATS Update recommends mixing housing and commercial uses in the same building as a method to help reduce vehicle use.

**POLICY S-FA-11.** Encourage mixed-use residential and commercial development within community level retail districts.

## Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

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### **GOAL:**

**To encourage development of parks and open space linkages by using acquisition and dedication of existing public rights-of-way as shown on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan maps and the Parks and Open Space System Plan.**

### **POLICIES**

**POLICY S-FA-12.** Continue to acquire and develop parks, community facilities, and trail systems.

## Transportation

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### **GOALS:**

- 1. To enhance multi-modal mobility for Factoria residents, employees, and shoppers and for those traveling within and through the Factoria commercial area.**

**2. To maintain and improve the appearance of arterial streets in the Subarea.**

**POLICIES**

**General Transportation**

Transportation planning was conducted in 1992 for the unincorporated Factoria area as part of the East Bellevue Transportation Study. After the area annexed to Bellevue in 1993, the City initiated a detailed study of the transportation infrastructure. The 1996 Factoria Area Transportation Study (FATS) report addressed existing conditions and deficiencies and recommended projects to accommodate travel demand. A FATS Update, completed in 2005, addressed the needs of all modes of transportation within the area, and provided design guidance for private sector redevelopment.

FATS Update traffic modeling for 2030 shows that most Factoria intersections will continue to function within adopted level of service standards. A few transportation system projects would help maintain long-term mobility, including enhancing transit service and improving intersection operations at Coal Creek Parkway/I-405, Factoria Boulevard/I-90, and SE 38th Street/Factoria Boulevard.

For the Factoria Subarea, the adopted vehicle level of service (LOS) is E+ ( LOS E+ is characterized in the Comprehensive Plan as: Near capacity. Notable delays. Low driver comfort. Difficulty of signal progression.) In the absence of transit service improvements, two intersections are projected to fall below the adopted LOS – Coal Creek Parkway at I-405, and Factoria Boulevard at I-90.

Aside from accommodating traffic, Factoria’s arterials should be maintained with litter pickup, plant pruning, and street repairs. In addition, street improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, and other pedestrian amenities should be used to improve the arterial’s appearance.

**POLICY S-FA-13.** Plan for the long-range transportation facility needs in the Factoria Subarea through an integrated, multi-modal transportation system.

**POLICY S-FA-14.** Implement the Factoria Area Transportation Study (FATS) Update transportation and urban design recommendations.

**POLICY S-FA-15.** Discourage traffic from office and retail commercial development from spilling over onto residential streets.

**POLICY S-FA-16.** Establish and implement a street tree plan and planting program for Factoria emphasizing arterial streets and buffering high intensity land use.

**POLICY S-FA-17.** Require new development and encourage existing development to plant and maintain street trees in accordance with a Factoria Subarea street tree plan.

**POLICY S-FA-18.** Provide and improve visual and pedestrian access to Sunset Creek, Richards Creek, Coal Creek, and Mercer Slough from pathways and access points.

**POLICY S-FA-19.** Encourage neighborhood groups to help with maintenance in coordination with City work crews.

## **Pedestrian and Bicycle**

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan provides the guidance for improving the mobility and safety for everyone who uses the non-motorized transportation system, both the public system and the pathways that are on private property.

**POLICY S-FA-20.** Encourage the development of mid-block pedestrian connections.

**POLICY S-FA-21.** Provide a network of sidewalks, footpaths, and trails with interconnections to areas surrounding the Factoria Subarea to accommodate safe and convenient access to community facilities, retail areas, and public transit as well as to accommodate the exercise walker and hiker.

**POLICY S-FA-22.** Improve safety for bicyclists and other nonmotorized users by providing an integrated on-street and off-street system.

**POLICY S-FA-23.** Provide public access from Newport Shores to Newcastle Beach Park for bicycles and pedestrians only.

## **Utilities**

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### **POLICIES**

**POLICY S-FA-24.** Encourage the undergrounding of utility distribution lines in areas of new development and redevelopment.

**POLICY S-FA-25.** Provide screened and maintained space for storage and collection of recyclables in commercial and multi-family developments.

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# Planning District Guidelines

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## **POLICIES**

### **District 1**

#### **General Land Use**

**POLICY S-FA-26.** Permit multifamily development west of Monthaven at densities designated on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-FA.1) provided that the multifamily development does not have primary vehicular access through the Monthaven neighborhood.

#### **Community Design**

The stand of trees along the ridge of the slope provides an important visual buffer for the residents of Monthaven. Multifamily development should provide a vegetative buffer that includes protection of existing significant trees between the multifamily use and single-family residences. The buffer should be augmented as necessary to provide sufficient screening.

**POLICY S-FA-26.5.** Retail auto sales are appropriate in OLB districts along SE 36th Street west of the ravine located at about 133rd Avenue SE and east of the Newport Corporate Campus located at 132nd Avenue SE.

**POLICY S-FA-27.** Provide landscape buffers between any multifamily development west of Monthaven and existing single-family residences.

### **District 2**

**POLICY S-FA-28.** Establish design standards for the Factoria commercial area.

District 2 is surrounded by other neighborhoods and serves as a commercial, employment and high-density residential activity center south of I-90.

The FATS Update recommends transportation and urban design strategies to create a well-integrated, transit supportive, pedestrian oriented, mixed-use neighborhood in Factoria's commercial core.

- Well-integrated: Factoria has a wide variety of land uses – employment, retail, single family and multi-family housing, schools – but in many cases these are separated by long distances, busy roads, and steep topography. Geographic separation discourages walking and transit use, as does an uncomfortable pedestrian environment. The FATS Update recommends guidelines for private redevelopment and identifies public pedestrian projects that together will help to

form a more cohesive Factoria neighborhood.

- **Transit-supportive:** Factoria has a high level of transit service and use. Transit use may increase if riders find it easy and comfortable to walk between transit stops and the buildings. As properties redevelop, the FATS Update recommends locating those buildings closer to the street and providing direct pedestrian connections between the sidewalk and the primary building entrance.
- **Pedestrian-oriented:** The ability to walk-around comfortably within Factoria is essential to help create a neighborhood feel. Private site redevelopment that incorporates FATS-recommended design guidelines, combined with public sidewalk and street-crossing projects will help make it easier to get around without a car.
- **Mixed-use:** Mixed-use structures are those that contain a number of different uses, stacked vertically. Adopted zoning allows for a mixing of uses across much of Factoria's commercial area. For instance, housing may be constructed atop retail uses. The FATS Update encourages greater utilization of this mixed-use potential.

To help achieve the vibrant neighborhood envisioned for Factoria, the FATS Update recommends implementing policies that acknowledge the critical link between land use and transportation. The community envisions a network of walkways and design elements connecting the retail uses to residential neighborhoods and other community activity centers.

## **General Land Use**

In 2002, the City Council adopted a Land Use Code Amendment that allowed 51,000 square feet of new retail and 685 residential units on the Factoria Mall site, plus an additional 100,000 square feet of retail development, contingent upon a determination of adequate transportation system capacity through a FATS Update. The FATS Update provides the necessary determination of transportation system adequacy to accommodate the Mall expansion.

**POLICY S-FA-29.** Utilize vegetation, sensitive site planning and superior building design to integrate multifamily and commercial development with nearby single-family neighborhoods.

**POLICY S-FA-30.** Allow Factoria Mall redevelopment to include an additional 100,000 square feet of commercial space beyond that provided for in the 2002 Land Use Code Amendments, per the FATS Update.

**POLICY S-FA-30.1.** Consider allowing office intensity up to 0.75 FAR in the area north of Factoria Mall through application of design review, with particular emphasis on the area’s contribution to Factoria’s pedestrian environment and the area’s “gateway” location to the Factoria commercial center.

### **Park, Recreation, and Open Space**

**POLICY S-FA-31.** Provide for open space and recreation needs of residents, workers, and shoppers.

**POLICY S-FA-32.** Create a series of open spaces and gathering places with visual and walking connections along Factoria Boulevard.

**POLICY S-FA-33.** Orient open spaces to take advantage of sunshine and territorial views.

**POLICY S-FA-34.** Provide seating, weather protection, special paving, shade trees, and landscaping.

### **Utilities**

**POLICY S-FA-35.** Minimize disruptive effects of utility construction on property owners, motorists, and pedestrians.

### **Critical Areas**

**POLICY S-FA-36.** Minimize erosion damage on slopes to protect downslope properties and stream beds.

### **Transportation**

Transportation recommendations in the FATS Update emphasize multi-modal mobility to guide future public infrastructure investments.

**POLICY S-FA-37.** Encourage interjurisdictional cooperation among the City of Bellevue, the State, Metro, and Sound Transit on transportation concerns.

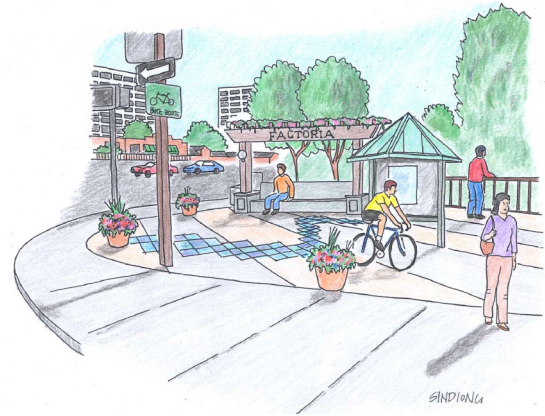
**POLICY S-FA-38.** Ensure that development is conditioned to satisfy future right-of-way, financing, and development standards as identified by the City of Bellevue.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle**

Pedestrian and bicycle system connectivity, as identified in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan (1999), is interrupted by gaps in the planned system. Pedestrian access to transit, employment and retail/services is constrained by inadequate non-motorized facilities on public and private land. The FATS Update identifies

improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks, paths, and private walkways that will help fill gaps and increase accessibility.

**POLICY S-FA-39.** Enhance connectivity and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the Factoria area.



## Transit

Improving transit facilities and services is important to help residents, shoppers, and employees get around Factoria without a car. Investments in transit, together with pedestrian amenities will support Factoria livability and may reduce the long-term need to expand arterial capacity.

Amenities such as passenger shelters and trash receptacles create a more pleasant environment for transit riders. To serve increasing numbers of transit passengers over time, it may be necessary to enhance facilities. A recommended Factoria Station transit center on Factoria Boulevard near SE 38th Street would provide for convenient transit access and transfers for the many thousands of employees, residents and shoppers within a mile of this site.



Each day, regional buses pass by Factoria on I-90 and I-405 without providing service to Factoria. Transit freeway stations on I-90 and I-405 with pedestrian connections to the surface streets could capture this transit service for Factoria commuters.

**POLICY S-FA-40.** Coordinate with Metro to provide passenger shelters, where warranted, at bus stops on Factoria Boulevard.

**POLICY S-FA-41.** Work with Metro and adjacent property owners to develop a Factoria Station transit center at a location on Factoria Boulevard that is convenient to employees, residents and shoppers.

**POLICY S-FA-42.** Work with Metro and Sound Transit to develop freeway stations on I-90 and I-405 to serve Factoria employees, residents and shoppers.

## Roadways

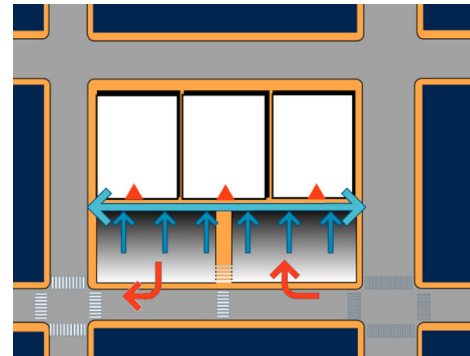
A number of new projects were identified in the FATS Update to improve traffic safety and traffic flow on arterials and to enhance access to the adjacent private parcels and to freeways. These recommended projects are catalogued and mapped in the East Bellevue Transportation Plan.

**POLICY S-FA-43.** Maintain the adopted vehicular level of service on Factoria arterials, utilizing FATS Update recommended roadway projects.

## Circulation and site access

Multiple driveways and limited connections between sites exacerbate vehicular congestion and conflicts with pedestrians. Each driveway onto an arterial creates a site for potential vehicular/pedestrian conflicts. From both a traffic safety and pedestrian safety standpoint, the fewer driveways along an arterial, the better.

Many parcels along Factoria Boulevard have more than one driveway. This pattern was developed when automobile mobility was considered one of the most important objectives. The resulting proliferation of driveways has resulted in just the opposite effect, congestion on the arterial that links all the businesses. With increased land development and better transit service, there are more pedestrians using the sidewalks. At each driveway, a motorist must watch for both pedestrians and other automobiles, but sometimes one or the other is missed, resulting in an accident.



*This photograph of the multiple curb cuts on a portion of Factoria Boulevard, north of SE 38th Street, illustrates the dominance of the automobile. The diagram at right suggests multiple businesses consolidating curb cut access points (red) and installing pedestrian connections (blue) between the three businesses and the sidewalk.*

The FATS Update recommends a long-term strategy to reduce the number of driveways and to enhance circulation along the commercial corridor. This strategy involves two parts: consolidating driveway access points; and providing greater circulation between parcels.



As redevelopment occurs, or as city projects improve adjacent arterials, a parcel with multiple driveway would be required to consolidate access points. Further, when opportunities arise, the city could encourage adjacent property owners to combine and share driveways. An important part of this strategy involves creating off-street connections between parcels so that a customer, whether in a vehicle or on foot, could move along the corridor to patronize different businesses, without having to enter the arterial. Driveway design that incorporates traffic calming would keep arterial bypass traffic to a minimum and create a pleasant pedestrian environment.

**POLICY S-FA-44.** Consolidate curb cuts/driveways as redevelopment occurs or when public arterial improvements are planned.

**POLICY S-FA-45.** Encourage adjacent parcels to develop shared driveways to reduce the overall numbers of driveways along the arterial.

**POLICY S-FA-46.** Provide non-arterial pedestrian and vehicular circulation both between and within commercial parcels.

## **Boulevards**

Factoria Boulevard is designated as a “Boulevard” in the Urban Design Element. Both within the right-of-way and on adjacent private development, a boulevard incorporates design features such as gateways, street trees, colorful plantings, landscaped medians, special lighting, separated and wider sidewalks, prominent crosswalk paving, seating, special signs, and public art.

**POLICY S-FA-47.** Establish Factoria Boulevard arterial streetscape standards for tree planting, pedestrian lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks, and other urban design elements to be applied when private property redevelops or public projects are implemented.

## **Gateways**

Visitors arriving at Factoria use three major routes: south on Factoria Boulevard at I-90, north on Factoria Boulevard at Coal Creek Parkway, or north on 124th Ave SE. at Coal Creek Parkway. Gateway designs for these entry points into Factoria should be provided to mark the transition into this special neighborhood and reinforce the Factoria identity. Street tree plantings; pedestrian scale lights, public art, district identification signs and banner poles; landmark features and wayfinding devices; and building placement should be considered at each of these “gateways”. A gateway can be dramatic and obvious, sometimes including non-commercial signs, art, structures, and unique lighting. It can also be subtle, using signs, a change in plant material or paving surface.



*As drivers approach the Factoria area from the south (left photograph) or from the north (right photograph), urban design elements can be provided to mark the arrival into the Factoria area. These “gateway” features can reinforce the image of Factoria as a neighborhood. The arrival into Factoria can be marked using special banners on light poles, landscape features, buildings and other elements.*

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**POLICY S-FA-48.** Establish gateway design standards and guidelines to create a welcoming experience for pedestrians and motorists at the Factoria entry points on Factoria Boulevard. Apply these standards when private property redevelops and when public projects are implemented.

**POLICY S-FA-49.** In partnership with adjacent property owners, take incremental steps to create mixed-use gateways and urban focal points at the following intersections along Factoria Boulevard:

- SE 37th Place / Loehmann's Plaza entrance;
- SE 38th Street;
- SE 40th Lane / Factoria Mall entrance; and
- SE 41st Place

Incorporate infrastructure improvements and implement design guidelines that will enhance pedestrian crossings (respecting the significant traffic volumes and multiple turning movements at these intersections), improve transit amenities, and develop an active building frontage along Factoria Boulevard with direct pedestrian routes to retail storefronts from the public sidewalk and weather protection for pedestrians.

### **Community Design – Factoria Boulevard**

In 2002, the City Council adopted zoning and design guidelines specifically applicable to redevelopment of the Factoria Mall site. This is the F-1 zoning district, where the Factoria TownSquare Design Guidelines are applicable. The FATS Update recognizes that many components of these guidelines are also applicable to the commercial corridor along Factoria Boulevard.

The F-1 design guidelines are intended to achieve for the Factoria Mall site what the FATS Update recommends for the Factoria Boulevard commercial corridor – that is, a mix of transportation and land use projects that create a more walkable urban environment.

Implementing F-1 urban design guidelines on the Factoria Mall site and the FATS Update specific guidelines elsewhere on the Factoria Boulevard commercial corridor, would transform the corridor from an auto-oriented strip to a commercial corridor that has a greater orientation toward pedestrians.

To supplement the Urban Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan, and the guidelines of the Community Retail Design District, specific urban design guidance for redevelopment of Community Business-zoned properties along Factoria Boulevard should include the following key elements:

- Building placement
- Parking location
- Pedestrian environment

**POLICY S-FA-50.** Develop and implement design guidelines, to supplement the Community Retail Design District guidelines applicable to new development and redevelopment on commercial sites along Factoria Boulevard.

### **Building Placement**

To create a walkable environment in an urban, commercial setting, the relationships between the buildings and the public sidewalks deserve considerable attention. In such an environment, buildings are located close to or adjacent to the right-of-way, and they are designed to invite pedestrians to the front door.

Factoria Boulevard’s walkability is currently challenged by a land use pattern that generally favors automobiles over pedestrians. In Factoria, many buildings are situated at the rear of the lot. Seldom can one walk directly from the sidewalk to the building entry without encountering moving vehicles, a maze of parked cars, high curbs, and overgrown vegetation. Since everyone is a pedestrian at some point in their journey to a store’s front door, it is both good public policy and good business, to make the front door accessible to all.

In the Community Business zoning area, Land Use Code regulations require no minimum front-yard setback, and the F-1 zoning calls for a minimum 15-foot setback from the right-of-way along Factoria Boulevard. To facilitate pedestrian activity, the city could establish a maximum building setback along Factoria Boulevard for the Community Business zoning designation. Site design should include an accessible

walkway to a weather-protected main entrance, and parking that is located on the side or rear of the building, or perhaps underneath it.

**POLICY S-FA-51.** Consider establishing a maximum building setback from the right-of-way for structures along the Factoria Boulevard commercial corridor.

**POLICY S-FA-52.** Allow buildings to abut the Factoria Boulevard public right-of-way, so long as there is adequate space for the arterial sidewalks.

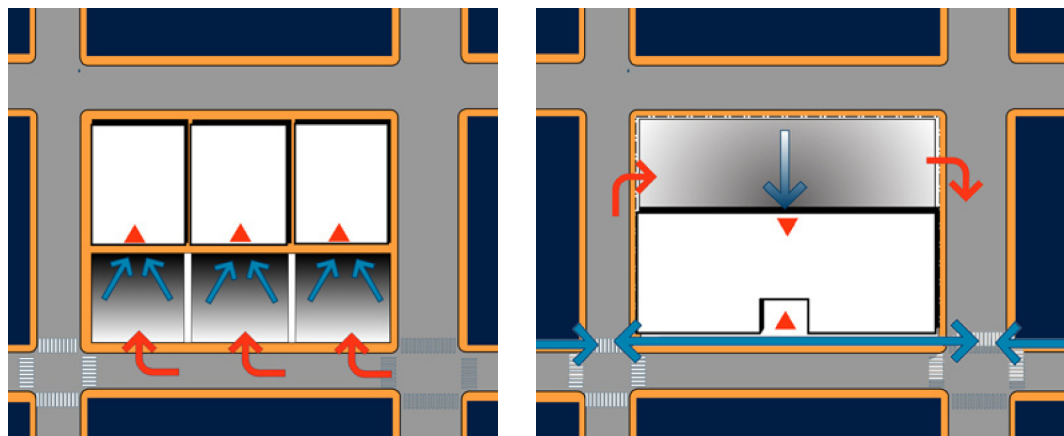
**POLICY S-FA-53.** Provide building-mounted weather protection for pedestrians.

**POLICY S-FA-54.** Provide prominent, easily identifiable pedestrian entries to individual storefront businesses.

**POLICY S-FA-55.** Incorporate high quality and pedestrian-scaled materials on building facades along public sidewalks and interior walkways.

## Parking Location

The FATS Update recommends site planning that locates parking either behind the building or on the side of the building. If parking is located behind the building, then a driveway with directional signage would be incorporated into the site plan. If parking is located on the side of building, and thus adjacent to the sidewalk, then a visual screen/physical barrier between the parking lot and the sidewalk is appropriate.



*These diagrams illustrate the existing building/sidewalk/street relationship in Factoria (left) and a more walkable urban design configuration (right). The first diagram illustrates buildings set back from the street, with the parking in front. Pedestrians must traverse the parking lot to access the businesses. Each business has its own curb cut and parking inventory. The second diagram illustrates buildings adjacent to the sidewalk, with shared parking behind.*

As walking and transit use grow, and an increasing number of customers arrive to businesses on foot, it may be possible to reduce the amount of parking required.

The FATS Update recommends studying reducing the minimum parking requirement if the site is adjacent to transit service and if the development includes amenities that foster transit use and pedestrian activity.

**POLICY S-FA-56.** Locate and design buildings and parking such that there is a direct pedestrian connection between the public sidewalk and the primary building entrance.

**POLICY S-FA-57.** Explore providing incentives to developers on the Factoria Boulevard commercial corridor to build underground parking that would enhance the pedestrian orientation of a site.

**POLICY S-FA-58.** Use shared parking and provide accessible pedestrian linkages across adjacent sites.

**POLICY S-FA-59.** Design surface parking lots so that they are not located between the building entrance and the public sidewalk along Factoria Boulevard, unless there is a direct accessible pedestrian connection through the parking lot.

## **Pedestrian Environment**

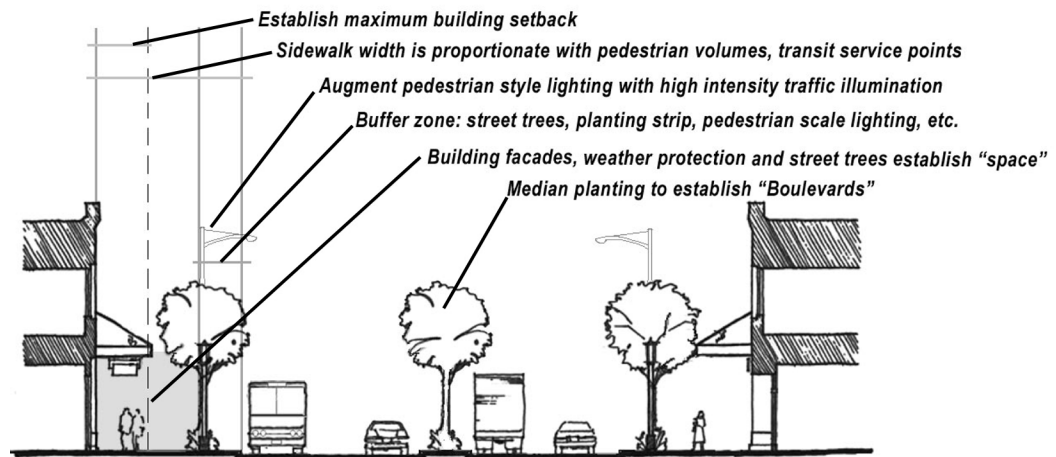
Sidewalk design should include a “buffer zone” along the curb that consists of items such as street trees, planting strips, kiosks, street furniture, pedestrian scale lights or signage. This buffer zone separates moving cars from pedestrians. Along the sidewalks, pedestrian scale/style lighting should augment the high intensity lights that illuminate the street for traffic.

Curbside parking should be provided where possible. While this is not a solution for Factoria Boulevard, pedestrians on other adjacent streets would benefit from this parking configuration.

Sidewalk width should be proportionate to anticipated pedestrian flows, which means that sidewalk should be wider than the standard at transit service points.



*This illustration of a future, “walkable” Factoria illustrates the use of parking access streets between buildings that are located along Factoria Boulevard. These streets provide drivers with an indication that parking is available in front of stores, and provides a route to the parking behind buildings. With a double loaded parking configuration, these buildings should be 75-80 feet apart.*



*Streetscape design principles for a “walkable Factoria”*

A pedestrian-oriented business district can be created when open spaces are incorporated into the site design. Public plazas invite relaxation, informal gatherings, and provide visual contrast to the buildings. Wide sidewalks provide for outdoor seating areas adjacent to restaurants and cafes and increase opportunities for business activity when the weather is nice. Whether as an expansion of the sidewalk or a plaza that extends away from the street, partial enclosure by buildings, landscaping, and/or street furniture will create comfortable public places. These spaces may be large and elaborate, or small and discrete. The design of a plaza should include good pedestrian circulation and active ground floor uses in the adjacent buildings. Buildings should provide weather protection using storefront awnings.

**POLICY S-FA-60.** Establish design guidelines to create plazas and other quasi-public spaces when private properties along Factoria Boulevard redevelop to allow space for outside activities including café seating.

**POLICY S-FA-61.** Provide pedestrian – scale lighting along Factoria Boulevard sidewalks and along on-site walkways.

**POLICY S-FA-62.** Provide sidewalks along Factoria Boulevard that in places may be wider than the City’s standard 12-foot wide arterial sidewalk to comfortably accommodate pedestrians adjacent to this busy arterial, especially near transit stops.

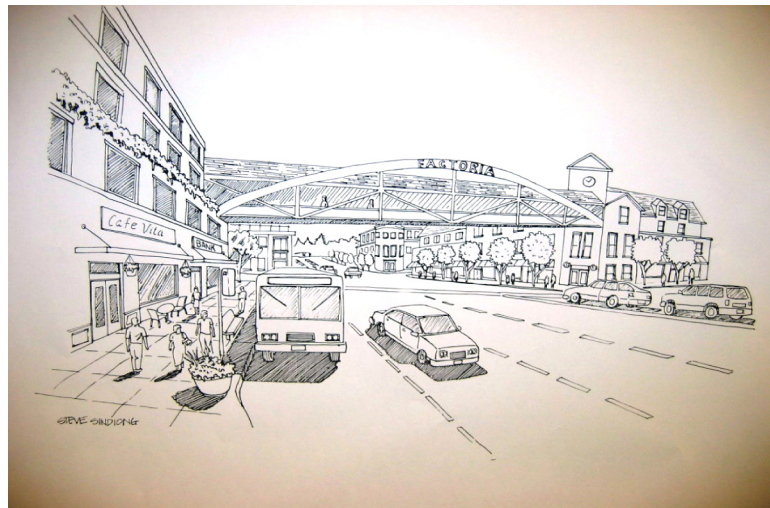
**POLICY S-FA-63.** Enhance pedestrian amenities along 124th Avenue S.E., 128th Avenue S.E., S.E. 38th Street, and S.E. 41st Street.

**POLICY S-FA-64.** Encourage the coordination of amenities and development of bike racks and pedestrian shelters in key locations.

**POLICY S-FA-65.** Encourage the use of landscaping that will serve as physical and visual buffers between pedestrians and parking areas.

The details of pedestrian infrastructure can often make or break a neighborhood's walkability. The FATS Update provides general guidance for creating a pedestrian system that works for everyone. To minimize street crossing distances for pedestrians, curb bulbs could be installed where pedestrian flows warrant and traffic patterns allow. Crosswalks at controlled intersections could be constructed with special pavement to highlight the area as a pedestrian zone.

At certain intersections where high volumes of pedestrians and vehicles converge, the installation of countdown signals can provide some measure of certainty for pedestrians wary of a signal that they think may change too fast.



*This diagram illustrates the potential of a pedestrian bridge across Factoria Boulevard and integrated with new development on both sides of the street. By using the topography that rises to the office development on the east side of Factoria Boulevard, the pedestrian flow can easily cross the right of way.*

In some locations, crosswalk enhancements and pedestrian activity may not be compatible with a roadway's primary mission to move vehicles. In this situation, a grade-separated pedestrian crossing may be warranted. A decision to build a pedestrian bridge or tunnel should consider factors such as topography; accidents; volumes of pedestrians and vehicles; safety for pedestrians; origins and destinations; opportunities to create an urban focal point or gateway; and/or opportunities for partnerships between the city, adjacent property owners, and transit agencies.

The design of a pedestrian bridge should be both distinctive and graceful, providing convenient pedestrian access while enhancing the streetscape. Design components of a pedestrian bridge should include visible and easily accessible connections with the sidewalks, and architectural characteristics that are perceived as part of the public right-of-way and are distinct from adjacent buildings. Weather protection is desirable but should not isolate pedestrians from the right-of-way below.

A comprehensive graphic system of information and wayfinding can help residents and visitors alike get around in Factoria without a car. Wayfinding signage can be implemented by the city on public land, and by private developers with large sites (Factoria Mall, Loehmann's Plaza). A Factoria walking map could show the major access points to neighborhoods, regional trails, and transit service, as well as the shortest way on foot to a bus stop or to a favorite restaurant.

**POLICY S-FA-66.** Enhance pedestrian crossings of Factoria Boulevard and other Factoria area arterials, considering such methods as: installing special paving types or markings; providing longer pedestrian signal phases; extending curbs; installing countdown signals; or providing pedestrian refuge islands.

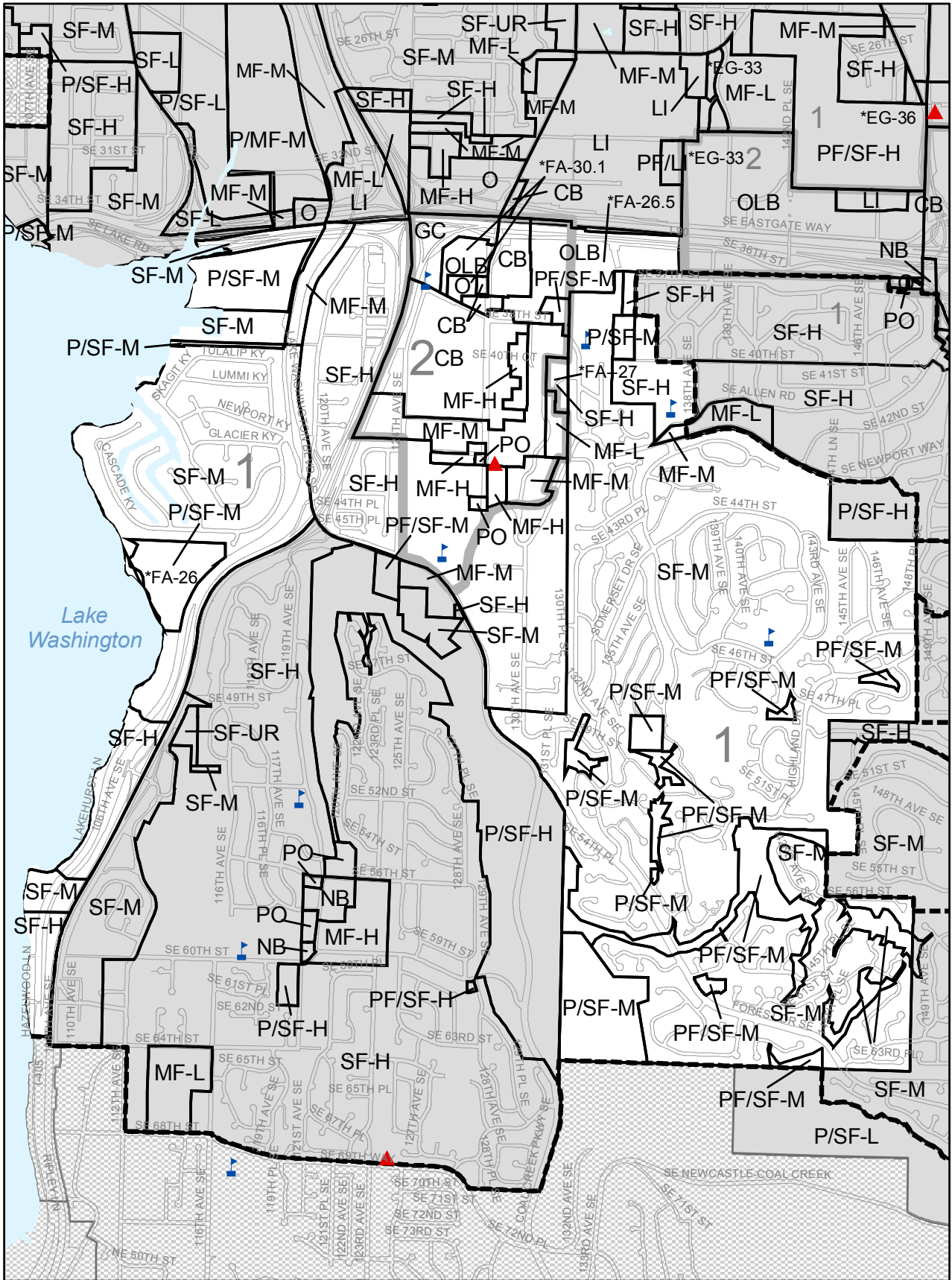
**POLICY S-FA-67.** A pedestrian bridge may be appropriate over Factoria Boulevard at SE 38th Street, provided there is a clear demonstration of public benefit and design criteria are fully met.

**POLICY S-FA-68.** Develop and implement a wayfinding system to guide pedestrians to attractions in the Factoria area.

**POLICY S-FA-69.** Provide pedestrian-oriented storefront signage.

**POLICY S-FA-70.** Consolidate commercial signs to a single structure and limit their size. Apply Bellevue's Sign Code and amortization program for nonconforming signs.





**FIGURE S-FA.1**  
**Factoria Land Use Plan**

SF Single Family  
 MF Multi Family  
 -L Low Density  
 -M Medium Density  
 -H High Density  
 -UR Urban Residential

PO Professional Office  
 O Office  
 OLB Office, Limited Business  
 OLB-OS Office, Open Space  
 NB Neighborhood Business  
 CB Community Business

GC General Commercial  
 LI Light Industrial  
 PF Public Facility  
 P Park

- Fire Stations
- Public Schools
- Bellevue City Limits (6/2005)
- Lakes
- Planning Districts
- Outside of Bellevue



# Eastgate Subarea Plan

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## GOAL:

**To preserve and promote the accessibility and appearance of residential neighborhoods, local amenities, and business establishments within the Subarea.**

*Discussion: The Subarea is mostly developed. It is important that subsequent development and redevelopment improves the function and appearance of the various land uses and that they are compatible with each other.*

## OVERVIEW

The Eastgate Subarea provides a gateway for south Bellevue and an axis for travel between the Eastside and metropolitan Seattle. Rolling tree- and house-covered hills on either side of the I-90 corridor surround a major commercial interchange located at the center of the Subarea.

Convenient access makes the Eastgate Subarea a desirable place to live and work. Jobs, stores, schools, churches, parks, and trails all are within easy walking distance of each other. As one of Bellevue's older areas, the Subarea contains established residential neighborhoods, many with attractive views. Combined, these amenities have greatly enhanced the quality of life for the Subarea's residents and business owners alike.

The Eastgate Subarea encompasses approximately 1,500 acres. Its boundaries are 137th Avenue S.E. to the west, S.E. 23rd Street to the north, 168th Avenue S.E. to the east, and S.E. 41st Street to the south. The southern third and portions of the eastern edge of the Subarea lie outside the City of Bellevue's boundaries. In the future, the Subarea's boundaries may expand southward, to include areas that fall currently within the Newcastle Subarea and eastward up to Lake Sammamish.

The I-90 business corridor covers 10 percent of the Subarea, and is home to major corporations, hightechnology industries, and community shopping areas. The corridor, which has developed within the last ten years, owes its success to the area's accessibility to I-90 and its proximity to major urban centers. Sunset Village and the Eastgate Shopping Center, which serve the large residential neighborhoods in the Subarea, also are located in this corridor.

The area north of the I-90 corridor features large and small parks; a deep, wooded ravine; about 160 acres of publicly-owned land; and numerous public facilities such as churches, government agencies, and a community college. The area south of I-90 is largely within unincorporated King County, with the exception of the commercial

areas that front the freeway. Parks, schools, and churches also are found within the Subarea on both sides of I-90.

As of November, 1989, 95 acres of incorporated land remain vacant in the Subarea. Of those, about 22 acres are designated for commercial uses and about 73 acres are designated for residential uses. Eighty-two acres of the Subarea's vacant land is known as the Sunset Property, which will be developed with 750,000 square feet of office space and 312 multifamily homes. These multifamily homes will augment the Subarea's current supply of 522 multifamily and 725 single-family homes that lie within the incorporated portions of the Subarea. The potential residential population of the Subarea is approximately 3,250 people. This potential is not expected to increase or decrease dramatically. Employment growth, however, is projected to reach 9,000 workers by 2020, up from 7,270 workers in 1988.

Protecting residential neighborhoods from increased development and its resultant increased traffic, redeveloping existing retail properties, and creating a comprehensive trail system are expected to be the Subarea's major issues in the near future.

## Land Use

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### POLICIES

**POLICY S-EG-1.** Encourage office and retail land uses that take advantage of the freeway access without impacting adversely the residential neighborhoods.

*Discussion: Intense office development can generate adverse traffic impacts and block residential views. Site design also can impact residential quality. To support this policy, office and retail development should be limited so that it is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.*

**POLICY S-EG-2.** Encourage restaurants and other commercial uses that serve local workers to be compatible in design with surrounding office development and accessible to pedestrians.

*Discussion: The reason for encouraging restaurants and other commercial services within office developments is to reduce vehicular traffic between the office parks and retail areas. Retail areas are intended to serve primarily local needs*

# Natural Determinants

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## POLICIES

**POLICY S-EG-3.** Protect the Vasa Creek riparian corridor from development to improve water quality, fisheries, and provide open space.

*Discussion: The Vasa Creek riparian corridor has major segments that remain in a natural state. This creek is one of the few natural areas left in the Subarea and should be protected. A trail along the creek may be possible if environmental impacts can be avoided.*

**POLICY S-EG-4.** Protect and improve the stormwater quality entering public drainage systems, streams, and Phantom Lake.

*Discussion: Construction activities should control erosion and sedimentation. This could include seasonal limitation on grading activities, natural vegetative filtration, and use of the best available technology. Storm water quality from developments should be improved prior to discharge into the public drainage system.*

# Commercial

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## POLICIES

**POLICY S-EG-5.** Consolidate retail/commercial development within existing Community Business and General Commercial boundaries.

**POLICY S-EG-6.** Limit retail expansion to serve primarily neighborhood and community retail needs.

*Discussion: Retail services should serve area residents but not become regional shopping centers.*

# Residential Development

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## POLICIES

**POLICY S-EG-7.** Maintain single-family housing as the predominant residential land use in the Subarea in land area and appearance.

**POLICY S-EG-8.** Limit multifamily housing to locations accessible directly from arterials, as depicted on the Land Use Plan (*Figure S-EG.1*).

**POLICY S-EG-9.** Discourage multifamily and commercial traffic from passing through single-family neighborhoods.

**POLICY S-EG-10.** Multifamily housing may be appropriate to separate office and retail land uses from single-family neighborhoods.

**POLICY S-EG-11.** Encourage more opportunities for affordable housing in the Subarea by maintaining and rehabilitating existing housing stock.

## Circulation

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### POLICIES

**POLICY S-EG-12.** Evaluate the impacts on parking, nonmotorized circulation, and site access when uses that have high trip generation or unusual traffic patterns are proposed.

*Discussion: Certain land uses, such as health clubs and movie theaters, have high trip generation, unusual traffic patterns, and high parking demands. Appropriate considerations should be given to these land uses to determine their traffic impacts and suitable mitigating measures. Mitigating existing traffic problems also should be considered.*

**POLICY S-EG-13.** Reduce parking spillover from commercial uses to maintain safety standards.

**POLICY S-EG-14.** Improve safety for pedestrians and other nonmotorized users by providing and maintaining an integrated on-street and off-street system.

*Discussion: The City should create a nonmotorized action list that proposes projects to eliminate missing links in the nonmotorized transportation system. It is important to use this list when reviewing tasks such as capital projects, the Street Overlay Program, and maintenance projects. The list could identify both interim and long-term capital improvements.*

**POLICY S-EG-15.** Consider interim solution for nonmotorized improvements until major improvements can be made.

*Discussion: Use the City of Bellevue's Overlay Program, Minor Capital Project Fund, Neighborhood Enhancement Program fund, or other sources to provide interim solutions when practical. These interim projects should not preclude major improvements.*

**POLICY S-EG-16.** Encourage improvement of Metro facilities and service to and from key points in the Eastgate Subarea.

*Discussion: Eastgate needs Metro service during off-peak hours from shopping areas and along arterials.*

**POLICY S-EG-17.** Plan for the long-range, traffic-related needs in the Eastgate Subarea, including designated arterials, feeder (collector) streets, and residential streets.

*Discussion: Such planning should include an evaluation of Eastgate's arterial facility needs for improvements to Eastgate Way and access to I-90.*

## Community Design

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### **POLICIES**

**POLICY S-EG-18.** Encourage a gateway within the I-90 interchange to accentuate Eastgate as an entry into Bellevue.

*Discussion: The I-90 interchange at Eastgate is a major link between the northern and southern halves of the Subarea and is an access point for the freeway. A gateway should link both halves and include improved landscaping with seasonal color, pedestrian connections, lighting, district identification signs, and public artwork.*

**POLICY S-EG-19.** Maximize the use of existing vegetation and topography to separate and buffer different land uses.

*Discussion: The Subarea has natural, vegetated topographic breaks between the commercial/office developments and the residential neighborhoods. These natural buffers should be retained to keep these uses separate but compatible.*

**POLICY S-EG-20.** Preserve the view amenities of adjacent single-family neighborhoods as development and redevelopment occurs.

**POLICY S-EG-21.** Discourage new development from blocking existing views.

**POLICY S-EG-22.** Encourage the preservation of sufficient natural vegetation to assure amenable views.

**POLICY S-EG-23.** Diminish the affect of rooftop equipment on views from residential areas.

**POLICY S-EG-24.** Design rooftop equipment to be low-profiled and screened to match the building’s exterior color, building materials, and styles.

**POLICY S-EG-25.** Use landscaping to complement building and site design.

*Discussion: Eastgate has a variety of land uses with large areas of office development. Site design should use street lighting and landscaping to accentuate walks and roads, soften paved areas, and screen development from adjacent residential uses. Large color spots of flowers should be used to accentuate areas visible from streets. When possible, plantings of trees and shrubs should be large enough to complement the scale of the building.*

**POLICY S-EG-26.** Maintain the Subarea’s predominantly treed skyline.

*Discussion: Eastgate has a low-profile skyline with many trees. Buildings, especially in the I-90 corridor, should respect and complement this skyline.*

**POLICY S-EG-27.** Encourage the State Department of Transportation to provide landscaping that clarifies access patterns and improves the appearance of their properties.

**POLICY S-EG-28.** Encourage cohesive site and building design in the redevelopment of the Eastgate retail, office, and service property.

*Discussion: Some of the Subarea’s retail, office, and service uses have immediate redevelopment potential. Therefore, redevelopment should enhance the surrounding arterials with pedestrian amenities such as well-defined pedestrian walkways that connect surrounding properties with street and building entrances. In addition, coordinate on-site auto circulation to reduce curb cuts and improve pedestrian safety. Landscaping should be in scale with the development. u*

## **Planning District Guidelines**

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### **POLICIES**

#### **Planning District 1**

**POLICY S-EG-29.** Retain significant vegetation and supplement vegetation on the steep slope along the southeast edge of Kamber Road between 137th Avenue S.E. and S.E. 24th Street.

**POLICY S-EG-30.** Retain sufficient vegetation on the eastern side of the Sunset property to visually buffer Bellevue Community College.

**POLICY S-EG-31.** Encourage residential Planned Unit Developments (PUD) to protect steep slopes and preserve open space in the northern half of the Sunset property.

*Discussion: Steep slope protection and open space preservation at the north end of the Sunset property should buffer views of the development from the single-family residences across Kamber Road.*

**POLICY S-EG-32.** Develop multifamily housing in the northern and central portion of the Sunset property to take advantage of the site's view potential.

**POLICY S-EG-33.** Encourage office uses in the southern half of the Sunset property to gain visibility and accessibility from I-90 and the frontage road.

*Discussion: Policies S-EG-29 through S-EG-33 should guide the conditions of development as stated in these policies.*

**POLICY S-EG-34.** Designate the 10.5 acre site northwest of the I-90 Business Park, known as the Old School District property, Single-family Urban Residential.

*Discussion: At the reclassification stage particular attention should be given to the mitigation of traffic impacts to the adjacent residential neighborhoods that could result from the site's development. Multiple access points should be considered in order to disperse traffic. Alternatives to access from S.E. 26th Street/158th Avenue S.E. should be pursued.*

**POLICY S-EG-35.** Designate the 4-acre Saint Andrews Church property and the northern 9.5 acres of the Latter Day Saints Temple property as Single-family High-density (SF-H).

*Discussion: The development of congregate care senior housing, nursing home, or affordable housing may be appropriate for the site. A conditional use permit should be required to insure compatibility with adjacent development and insure that it is in keeping with the character of the Subarea. Multifamily Low-density may be appropriate for a rezone only to accommodate congregate care senior housing, nursing homes, or affordable housing.*

**POLICY S-EG-36.** Designate the 1.25 acre triangular parcel directly opposite the eastern entrance to Bellevue Community College (B.C.C.) at the south end of 145th Place S.E. Professional Office.

*Discussion: In no case should there be access to both 145th Place S.E. and the B.C.C. access road. The site may be appropriate for a Multifamily Low-density.*



**POLICY S-EG-37.** Encourage light industrial development south of Kamber Road to buffer residences to the north.

*Discussion: The buffer should be 30 feet wide along the south side of Kamber Road and include landscaping to accomplish maximum screening. In addition, outdoor lighting shall be shielded and loading docks shall be located away from residential land uses.*

## **Planning District 2**

**POLICY S-EG-38.** Protect the surrounding neighborhoods from future development in the I-90 Business Park by observing transition area requirements from residential uses as well as maintaining landscape buffers.

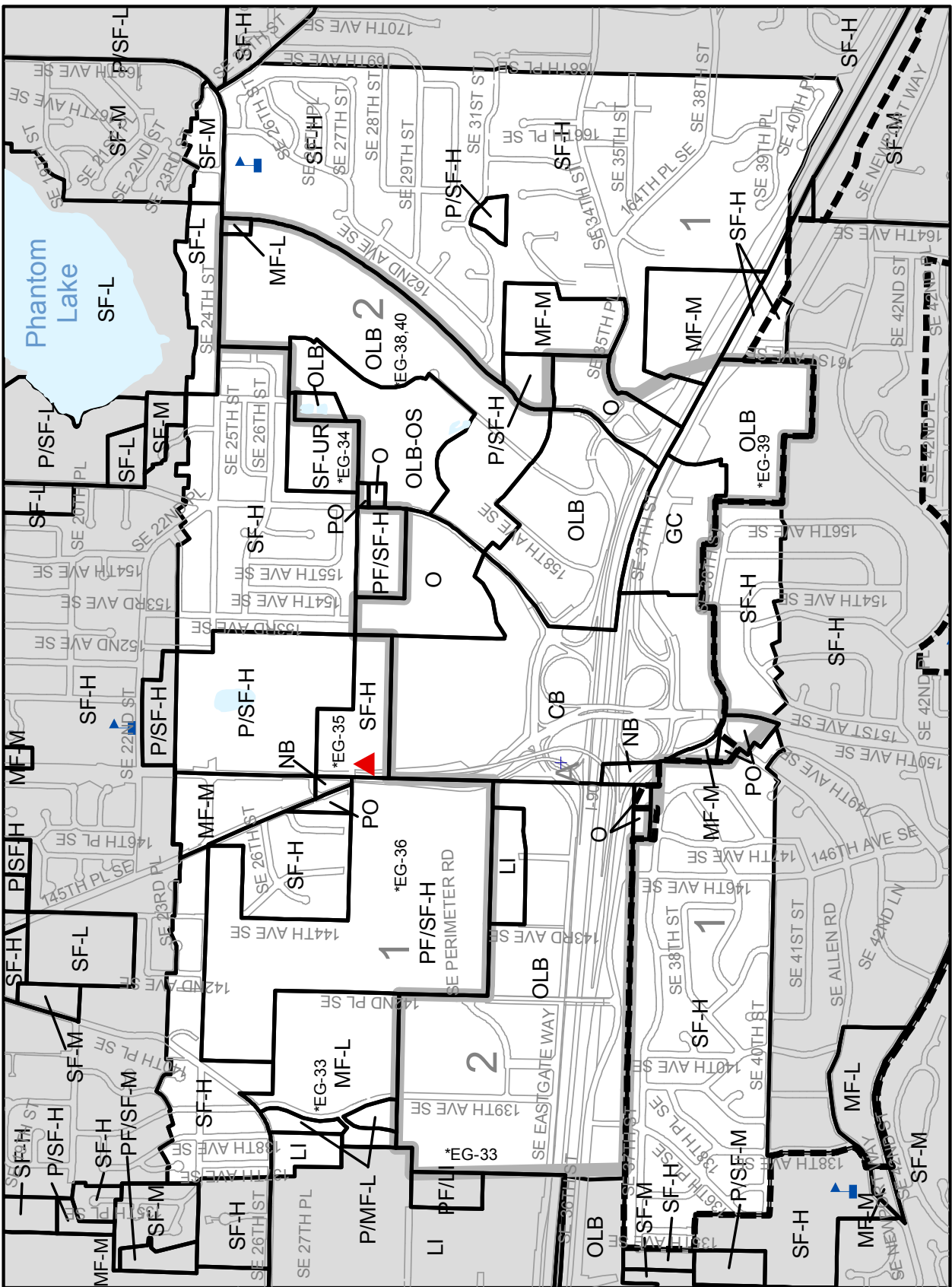
*Discussion: Encourage retention of significant open space in the I-90 Business Park in conjunction with utilization of the remaining Development potential. Apply the OLB-OS designation in support of this policy. [Amended Ord. 5392]*

**POLICY S-EG-39.** Designate the 6-acre parcel south of the Squibb Building west of Vasa Creek as Office, Limited Business.

*Discussion: Any proposed residential development should include a portion of the units as affordable housing. If the site is developed with residential uses, nonmotorized access should be provided to 156th Avenue S.E. Hotel, motel, and retail uses should be prohibited. Before any development occurs at this site, a traffic/circulation study should be required to define a plan of action for dealing with increasing congestion in the area of the tunnel under I-90. Such a study would emphasize the importance of traffic considerations in development of the site to prevent further degradation and increasing safety problems.*

**POLICY S-EG-40.** Auto sales, auto rental, and auto leasing uses are not appropriate in the Light Industrial District located east of 156th and north of I-90 nor along S.E. 24th.

*Discussion: The Light Industrial District located east of 156th is currently known as the I-90 Business Park.*



# Eastgate Land Use Plan



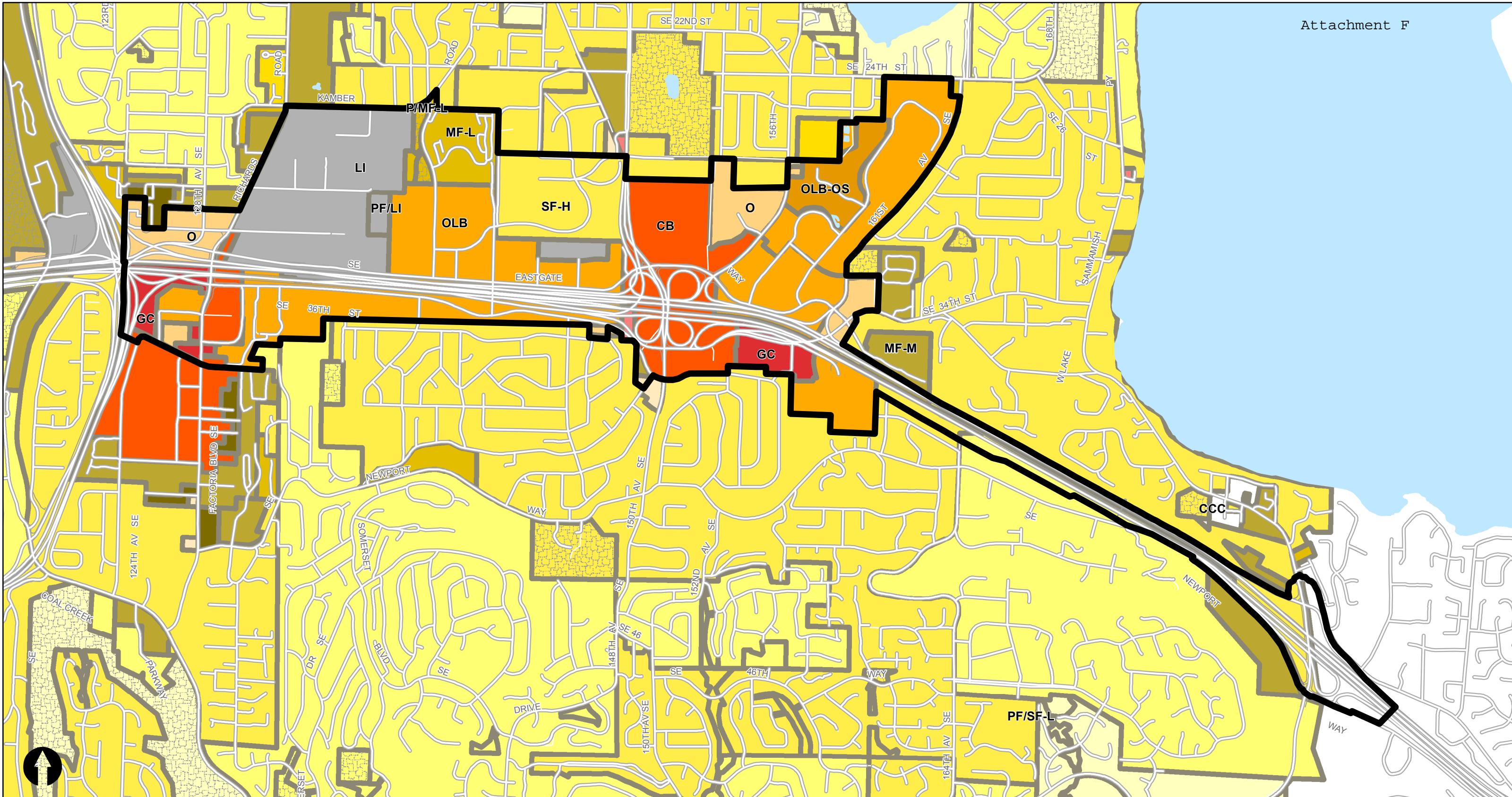
- SF Single Family
- MF Multi Family
- L Low Density
- M Medium Density
- H High Density
- UR Urban Residential

- PO Professional Office
- O Office
- OLB Office, Limited Business
- OLB-OS Office, Open Space
- NB Neighborhood Business
- CB Community Business

- GC General Commercial
- LI Light Industrial
- PF Public Facility
- P Park

- Fire Stations
- Public Schools
- Planning Districts
- Bellevue City Limits (6/2005)
- Lakes

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# Comprehensive Plan



SINGLE FAMILY - Plan Designations, Density (Corresponding Zoning District)		MF-M	Medium Density, up to 20 units per acre (R-15 & R-20)	OFFICE
SF-L	Low Density - up to 1.8 units per acre (R-1 & R-1.8)	MF-H	High Density, up to 30 units per acre (R-30)	PO Professional Office
SF-M	Medium Density - up to 3.5 units per acre (R-2.5 & R-3.5)	RETAIL		O Office
SF-H	High Density - up to 5 units per acre (R-4 & R-5)	NB	Neighborhood Business	OLB Office, Limited Business
SF-UR	Urban Residential - up to 7.5 units per acre (R-7.5)	CB	Community Business	OLB-OS Office, Limited Business - Open Space
MULTI-FAMILY - Plan Designation, Density (Corresponding Zoning District)		GB	General Business	INDUSTRIAL
MF-L	Low Density, up to 10 units per acre (R-10)	GC/CB	General Business/Community Business	LI Light Industrial
				Park or Public Facility Designation



## Planning Commission Schedule

January 8, 2014

The Bellevue Planning Commission meets Wednesdays as needed, typically two or three times per month. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. and are held in the Council Conference Room (Room 1E-113) at City Hall, unless otherwise noted. Public comment is welcome at each meeting.

*The schedule and meeting agendas are subject to change.* Please confirm meeting agendas with city staff at 425-452-6868. Agenda and meeting materials are posted the Monday prior to the meeting date on the city's website at:

[http://www.bellevuewa.gov/planning\\_commission\\_agendas\\_2013.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/planning_commission_agendas_2013.htm)

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Tentative Agenda Topics</u></b>
<b>Jan 22</b>	Comprehensive Plan Update – Community Vision Subarea Plan Boundaries
<b>Feb 12</b>	Joint Commissions Forum on Diversity
<b>Feb 26</b>	Economic Development Strategy Comprehensive Plan Update 2014 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments Eastgate Plan
<b>Mar 12</b>	Speakers Session – Community Health
<b>Mar 26</b>	At South Bellevue Community Center Eastgate Plan

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES

November 13, 2013  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue College  
Library Media Center, Room D106

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Tebelius, Commissioners Carlson, Ferris, Hamlin, Hilhorst, Laing

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Inghram, Erika Conkling, Department of Planning and Community Development; Carol Helland, Mike Bergstrom, Department of Development Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Ray White, Bellevue College; Pat Callahan, Urban Renaissance Group; Steve Fricke, Spiritwood Neighborhood Resident

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Chair Tebelius who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

3. SPEAKERS EVENT - EASTGATE CORRIDOR

Chair Tebelius explained that the city's Comprehensive Plan is a broad statement of goals and policies that direct the orderly and coordinated physical development of the city. The Comprehensive Plan anticipates change, provides specific guidance for future legislative and administrative action, and reflects citizen involvement, technical analysis, and judgment by decision makers. It contains sections on land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, transportation, economic development, environment, human services, parks, open space and recreation, shorelines, and urban design. All cities in Washington state are required to have a Comprehensive Plan and must keep it updated.

Chair Tebelius introduced Ray White, vice-president of Bellevue College.

Mr. White explained that Bellevue College is currently involved in a comprehensive strategic planning process which he is chairing. In the first phase of the process the college is taking the time to listen to the community. He shared with the audience a website address that has information about the process, including upcoming sessions.

Mr. White said Bellevue College is a public institution and as such is funded by the state. Open access is important to the college. The college is community based and specifically designed to

serve the community. By head count, Bellevue College has 38,000 students; some come for a single class while others are part-time students, but when converted to full-time equivalents the college has some 11,000 students, making it the third largest institute of higher education in Washington state. Now a four-year college, the institution still offers a number of two-year degrees but has also been granted the authority to award baccalaureate degrees, though only two percent of the students are enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program. The college has a diverse student body. The number of students attending from outside the immediate geographic area of Bellevue is steadily increasing and currently stands at 28 percent. Absent student housing on campus, the students live at home with their parents or in their own homes.

Mr. White said it takes \$91 million per year to operate Bellevue College, of which only 27 percent comes from taxpayers. Tuition and fees along with proprietary revenues make up the balance. The main campus encompasses 100 acres. The north campus is a satellite facility operating in a building just off of SR-520 that was purchased from Microsoft. The east campus, which is 20 acres of trees, is located near the Issaquah Highlands; site plans for that campus are currently under review and development will occur over the next 30 years. The school's district covers the area from Mercer Island to Snoqualmie Pass, but everyone at the campus is interested in generating more of a connection with a visibility to the city of Bellevue; that could even include a physical presence in the downtown.

The college draws athletes from outside the area; the school has a total of 130 athletes. The international program hosts 1100 students who typically find housing for two years. The interior design program has a draw strong enough to bring students in from out of state. There are no hard figures for how many students from local families choose to live in student housing arrangements while attending Bellevue College just to enjoy the whole experience; estimates range from 10 to 30 percent. Taken together, an argument could be made in favor of needing 400 to 900 student housing beds in various forms. The college has been landbanking over the years with an eye on building housing on site and operating it. Under the best case scenario, student housing units will not be available for another two to four years. If housing is not constructed on the campus, it should be constructed near the campus.

Mr. White said for the most part Bellevue College is a commuter school. Even if student housing ranging from 400 to 900 beds were to be constructed, it would not solve the broader community issue around housing in the immediate neighborhood of the school. Housing on the campus itself would be a different story. The college has been buying homes in the Sunset Ranch neighborhood and tearing them down, though some have been retained and are being used for office space and storage; the college owns 19 lots in that neighborhood. One problem is that each of the properties is on a septic system and connecting to the sanitary sewer will require a pump station. To the south of the campus there are property owners contemplating housing projects that could house college students.

Commissioner Laing asked how close to the college most of the students live, and if a shift to a non-commuter institution would in effect shift the focus of the school. Mr. White said the college has no plans to change the nature of what it does; the intent is to continue operating as a college rather than as a university. There is also no vision to expand the district boundaries.

Commissioner Hilhorst asked what the timeline is for completing the housing options study. Mr. White said he has no hard and fast timeline but likely will be reporting to the Board in January. Should the board decide to move forward toward constructing student housing, it probably would take about two years before the first units would be available.

Commissioner Ferris allowed that housing issues around the college campus have been in the news lately, and the list of other impacts the college has on the surrounding community includes parking and traffic. He asked to what degree the college is reaching out to the community to address their concerns, and what other things the Commission should be aware of. Mr. White said as the college's representative he could be doing a much better job of listening to the neighborhoods. There is an interesting dynamic relative to the on-campus parking. The college is committed to sustainability and that highlights the need to find equilibrium between how much to charge and how many parking spaces there should be so as to avoid enabling single-occupant vehicles. The college certainly encourages alternative transportation modes. There still are issues with students parking at the park and ride, but parking complaints from the local neighborhoods have been reduced. The college really does not have control over where students park if they choose to park off-campus, but the degree to which the college can eliminate trips will ultimately reduce both parking and traffic issues.

Commissioner Carlson asked what the current tuition charge is. Mr. White said full-time students pay about \$1400 per quarter. At \$102 per credit, someone wanting to just take a single continuing education or self-improvement class will be charged about \$500.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Carlson, Mr. White said adding 400 to 900 student housing beds will not be the silver bullet that will solve the issues occurring in the surrounding neighborhoods. The problem of house sharing is actually bigger than just Bellevue College students. The projections are that the college could utilize 400 to 900 beds on an ongoing basis, primarily for international students. The problem with the international program is that it is fragile and a change in visa status or some other trigger could devastate it.

A question submitted by a member of the audience asked where the international students currently live, and why the college does not choose to construct a dormitory on the campus. Mr. White said the college intends to build a dormitory on campus in about two to four years, but it will be called student housing. Currently, international students live in rented apartments.

Chair Tebelius introduced Pat Callahan, CEO of the Urban Renaissance Group, a development company with an interest in the Eastgate/I-90 corridor.

Mr. Callahan said Urban Renaissance Group was formed in 2006 with a focus on developing office space. He said he personally was involved in many of the highrise developments in the downtown and in the Eastgate/I-90 corridor when working for Equity Partners. Through a partnership with Wright Runstad, Equity Partners constructed the Key Tower in the downtown. The overall thinking at the time was that technology companies wanted to be on campuses on the suburbs, so in designing the building the concept chosen was that of a vertical campus that would attract technology companies. At the time, no one believed technology companies would choose to locate in an urban core. That was only 16 years ago and since then there has been a sea change in terms of technology companies wanting walkable amenity rich environments. That new focus was foundational to Urban Renaissance Group at its formation.

Mr. Callahan said there are eight or nine factors that are driving reurbanization, and the focus on the Eastgate/I-90 corridor falls into the reurbanization category. One of the factors is the movement from households with children to households without children. The change leads to three opportunities: vibrant urban core areas; walkable vertical urban villages in traditional suburban locations; and transit-oriented development. Lincoln Executive Center, one of Urban



Renaissance Group's properties in the Eastgate/I-90 corridor, is ripe for redevelopment with a focus on a vertical urban village. The site offers the opportunity to increase vitality in the corridor through a combination of uses.

Lincoln Executive Center is located close to Bellevue College and the Eastgate transit center. The site is currently developed with 255,000 square feet of office space and 4.6 parking stalls per thousand square feet which is a very high ratio typical of a suburban-oriented land use. The result is a development with so few people working in it that it cannot even support a deli. One concept under review by Urban Renaissance Group involves buying the Bank of America site, tearing down one of the single-story buildings, retaining the three three-story buildings, and constructing two 250,000 square-foot 12-story towers and a parking structure. There would be retail opportunities at the base of each tower. Bank of America would relocate somewhere within the complex. Storm water would be addressed through the creation of a pond on-site. The parking garage could be built in a way that would support residential.

During the Eastgate/I-90 CAC process there were a lot of questions asked by citizens about why a height of 12 stories should be allowed. Mr. Callahan said he explained the process of calculating projected rental rates and comparing them against the construction costs for two six-story buildings and two 12-story buildings. Given the achievable rental rates, the construction costs can only be justified with 12-story towers. In part that is because the construction costs per square foot are higher for the six-story towers because of certain fixed costs. The 12-story towers will command higher rental rates for the upper floors because of the views.

Mr. Callahan said redevelopment of the Lincoln Executive Center, or of a property located between Sunset North and the college campus that is also controlled by Urban Renaissance Group, will require a zoning change. The Sunset site could be developed with housing units and phased in over time, beginning with about 400 units.

Commissioner Hamlin noted that the Sunset site was not discussed much during the Eastgate/I-90 study. He said it was his understanding the site is adjacent to multifamily. Mr. Callahan said the site is between the college campus, some multifamily, and the office project Sunset North.

Jack McCullough, a land use attorney with McCullough Hill Leary, explained that when the old gravel pit was redeveloped the Sunset North office project was put in with a cap on the total square footage. The site in question is not currently developed and cannot be because of the 20-year-old zoning that is in place. Mr. Callahan said a change in zoning would permit the site to be developed rather quickly and it would result in a reduction of congestion because students that currently drive from elsewhere could in fact walk to the campus. The site was not focused on during the Eastgate/I-90 process. It was in working with Bellevue College on the need for student housing that the idea of developing residential on the site came to the front.

Commissioner Laing said there are two populations associated with Bellevue College that have housing needs: the student population and the faculty population. He asked how much of a demand there might be for the faculty category. Mr. Callahan said the college believes some townhouses for that population might be appropriate to program in. Mr. White said he did not have a way to quantify the faculty housing market but agreed that it is something he gets asked about often by the faculty.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Hilhorst, Mr. Callahan explained that development takes anywhere from 12 to 15 months to bring online once permits are issued. He

reiterated that a zoning change would be needed first, and the current schedule for effecting that is not fast enough to address the student housing need outlined by Mr. White.

Commissioner Ferris cautioned that where more than ten percent of the occupants of a building under a master lease are occupants of a college or university, the entire debt of the facility must go on the balance sheet of the organization. The college could get way down the road on what it initially perceived to be an advantage only to find out that having it on its balance sheet does not work. That changed in 2010 as a result of the recession. Mr. Callahan allowed that Urban Renaissance Group is not a student housing expert, it just happens to have a site near the college that has the potential for student housing.

Commissioner Hamlin voiced his support for the idea of building housing units on the Sunset North site near the college. He said the concept certainly fits what the Eastgate/I-90 CAC envisioned for the corridor.

Chair Tebelius read a question submitted by a member of the audience that asked if reductions in funding for transit that may occur in the near future will have an impact on the need for parking. Mr. Callahan suggested reductions in transit services likely would increase the demand for parking. To the extent service to the transit center increases, the corridor and the college will be easily accessible by transit.

Chair Tebelius relayed another audience question that asked about the cutting down of a lot of trees to accommodate the redevelopment activities. Mr. Callahan said the Lincoln Executive Center site extends to the bottom of the hillside, and virtually all of the vegetation on the hillside would be preserved. There would be some trees removed from the main site but their removal would be offset by the additional greenery that would be added to the entire site.

Chair Tebelius introduced Steve Fricke, a Spiritwood neighborhood resident.

Mr. Fricke said he recently was asked what it was that made him choose to move to Bellevue and in particular the Spiritwood neighborhood. He said he has lived all over the United States as the child of a career army father. He said he and his wife have two children, one 12 and one 17 who attends Sammamish High School. He said in seeking a place to live, safety was at the top of the list of values. Bellevue is known for being a safe place. He said his list of values also included a strong school system and a walkable/bikeable community, both of which Bellevue is also known for. Spiritwood answered the criteria. It is a great neighborhood; it is close to schools, parks and walking trails. The neighborhood acts as a small city within a big city, which means neighbors can count on one another. Kids can safely ride their bikes in the streets. The downtown is close, but it is not next door, but the services needed are nearby. The homes are not large and as such are relatively affordable.

Mr. Fricke said residents of Spiritwood are concerned about losing their sense of neighborhood and community. The area is zoned single family but increasingly homes are being used as rooming houses. In a conversation with Comprehensive Planning Manager Paul Inghram recently, it was noted that the city has a longstanding policy of protecting the character and quality of its residential neighborhoods, and has no intention of changing the zoning for Spiritwood.

Bellevue College is one of Spiritwood's most valued neighbors. The students bring energy to the area. Some residents of Spiritwood allow students to room with them. Bellevue College does

not always, however, treat Spiritwood as a valued neighbor and often takes actions without informing the neighborhood.

Bellevue College began as a community college and still has community roots. It was not until 2007 that the college began offering four-year degrees. The school is advertised internationally and is attracting an increasing number of students from outside the local community, including a thousand foreign students from more than 70 different countries. The college needs to house its students somewhere, and to its detriment, Spiritwood is on the receiving end of students seeking housing. What is happening is foreign investors are buying houses in the neighborhood and they are taking the small homes and gutting them. They are converting garages into two separate rooms. They are converting living space into bedroom spaces. Houses that were built with three or four bedrooms now in many cases have eight bedrooms and the rooms in them are being advertised on Craigslist for \$500 to \$700 each. The rooms are being advertised in Chinese as well as in English.

The issue was brought to the attention of the city and a mediation meeting was set up. Mr. Fricke said he attended representing the neighborhood, but the owners of the properties in question did not attend because they do not live in the area. When the owners were asked why they are buying the houses, their answer was simply Bellevue College.

The conversions are causing Spiritwood to lose its sense of community. The students are loved by the neighborhood residents and they are welcome in the neighborhood, but not in such high concentrations. Bellevue College is not to be blamed, but it should be held accountable for knowing there would be a need for student housing once four-year degrees started being offered. The city does not want to act so fast that it creates unintended consequences, but Bellevue College, along with the city not enforcing the laws on the books, has already triggered unintended consequences.

Mr. Fricke praised the city staff for listening to the neighborhood and for taking action. An emergency ordinance was put in place that at least in part addresses the problem. What is needed, however, is code that will permanently address the issue in a way that will protect the neighborhoods while also addressing Bellevue's need for student housing.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Carlson, Mr. Fricke said what the neighborhood is most concerned about is an influx of people who have no sense of community and will not be around long enough to develop roots.

Commissioner Ferris asked if the neighborhood would be supportive of Bellevue College developing multifamily student housing on land they own close to the northern edge of the college campus. Mr. Fricke said he is fully supportive of student housing. If developed on the campus or immediately adjacent, it will relieve the pressure on the neighborhood. He stressed that the neighborhood does not put the entire blame for the rooming houses on the shoulders of Bellevue College.

Commissioner Laing asked if the Spiritwood properties have any restrictive covenants in place that might speak to the issue, or if the current property owners have considered banding together and voluntarily creating a prohibition on the rooming house use. He said he is hearing that the rooming house business has a market and that it is profitable, and simply imposing a registration process may not get the neighborhood to where it wants to be. Mr. Fricke agreed that neither registration or a code change would by themselves accomplish what the neighborhood wants and

needs. What is needed is enforcement, but enforcement cannot be expected to occur if the city has no idea where the rooming houses are. Enforcement is handled on a complaint basis, which puts the onus on the neighbors to file a report, then sit back and hope the city will act. Licensing and registration are methods other cities have used. Government is empowered to regulate commerce, but Bellevue's current code allows for the unregulated operation of rooming houses that turn single family neighborhoods into de facto multifamily neighborhoods, and that is summarily unfair to those who purchased homes in what they thought was a single family neighborhood.

Chair Tebelius took a moment to thank Commissioner Hilhorst and Mr. Inghram for putting together the meeting and for arranging for the speakers.

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Nanette Fricke, a resident of the Spiritwood neighborhood, voiced her support for the rezoning that would need to be done in order to allow for the building of student housing on the Sunset North property as outlined by Mr. Callahan.

Mr. Paul Bell, 10000 NE 1st Street, Apartment 107, spoke as a student at Bellevue College. He said he has been living in Bellevue for just over a year. He said he attended a City Council meeting a couple of weeks ago and was moved by the warmth of the Council and the passion of the residents who were concerned about the rooming house issue. He said the students initially opposed the language of the emergency measure up for consideration by the Council in that it labeled students as being part of the problem. After the wording of the measure was revised, the students were on board with it. The students want to be part of the solution. They certainly are not looking for substandard housing.

Mr. Dave Isaac, 3810 140th Avenue SE, said he has lived in the neighborhood for 13 years. He said when the Eastgate park and ride was first constructed it was welcomed by many. It was beautiful, it worked well, and it was within walking distance of many residents. He said he now chooses to drive to the South Bellevue park and ride to avoid standing out in the rain and because the buses come by more frequently. He said he hopes the transit operations at the park and ride will be improved, making it once again desirable. He also said he hoped the city would establish parking stall standards that are wide enough to comfortably park a car in.

Mr. David Payter, 1614 144th Avenue SE, said he has lived in the Spiritwood neighborhood for 16 years. He said Mr. Fricke did an excellent job of outlining the issues facing the neighborhood. He said he lives across the street from an unintended consequence, and within a block of two more. There are a lot of cars on the street. Some of the rooms are occupied by students, but some are occupied by people needing affordable rent. Bellevue and the region is facing an affordable housing crisis, and that certainly is contributing to the problem. A very large home is being built just up the street; it has 7825 square feet, it looks like a hotel, and it will be occupied fairly soon. It is adjacent to another boarding house. He said he purchased his home in a single family neighborhood believing that it would remain a single family neighborhood.

#### 9. STUDY SESSION

##### A. Eastgate/I-90 Corridor Study Implementation

Chair Tebelius introduced Senior Planner Erika Conkling, the staff person working on implementation of the Eastgate/I-90 corridor study.

Ms. Conkling reminded the Commissioners that the Eastgate/I-90 study area covers the territory between I-405 and the Lakemont interchange and from south of I-90 to Bellevue College. Its primary focus, however, is the commercial, industrial and office areas on both sides of I-90. The project kicked off in 2010 under a set of principles adopted by the Council that were aimed at building on the many community assets in the corridor, including accessibility, visibility, job diversity, and the stable neighborhoods that surround the commercial area. The CAC worked very hard to form recommendations that ultimately were accepted by the Council in the spring of 2012. The Council in September 2013 authorized the implementation phase.

A number of technical reports addressing various issues were reviewed during the study, and nearly all of the major institutions along with residents and businesses participated. The comprehensive community outreach efforts followed both traditional and non-traditional formats.

Principal Planner Mike Bergstrom said he served as co-project manager for the Eastgate/I-90 study. Commissioner Hamlin was one of the co-chairs for the CAC that met monthly for a year and a half. The experience was positive overall and enjoyed great community support, primarily because it addressed shared community concerns and perceptions about the corridor. The current development pattern is suburban in character. Employers and employees alike complain of having to get in their cars and drive to run any errand at lunchtime because there are no services within a walkable distance. The study was predicated in part on the understanding that Bellevue will continue to grow. There is capacity in the downtown and in the Bel-Red corridor, and the study focused on what role the Eastgate/I-90 corridor should play in relation to those employment centers. There was agreement that there will need to be some reason for property owners to tear down buildings and redevelop them in ways that will be more to the community's liking, both in terms of building form and variety of uses.

The park and ride/transit center was viewed by the CAC as one of the corridor's main assets. It serves as the geographic center of the corridor, and the CAC agreed that it could become the activity center for the corridor as well. It is separated from single family areas, is readily accessible from I-90, and there are relatively large landholdings that can be leveraged. The vision adopted by the CAC included a transit-oriented development center in a node that includes the current park as well the area eastward to 148th Avenue SE. The group agreed redevelopment should be promoted by offering additional FAR, a range of uses, and in some areas additional height. The CAC also agreed the employment areas should be strengthened and that more mixed use is needed throughout the corridor.

The corridor in its current format is focused on commercial uses. The CAC concluded that residential uses in the corridor should be increased to activate the area beyond workday hours. The project boundaries were drawn as they were, however, to stay out of existing single family areas. There was agreement the existing retail uses should be protected. Additionally, there was consensus in favor of greening the corridor. The Mountains To Sound Greenway trail passes directly through the corridor and speaks to the need not only to have a green multipurpose trail but also a generally green concept in terms of building techniques and freeway interchanges. The need for increased connections to Bellevue College was high on the CAC's list of recommendations. The group also highlighted the need to protect sensitive environments in the corridor, most of which are located on the west end in the Richards Valley.

For the area near the old Sunset Village, the plan includes auto retail and office. There are a couple of large auto dealers in that location that are doing very well, and while they are unlikely to move in the near term, markets do change over time and so the backup plan is for a retail and office center. Further to the east along 156th Avenue SE the plan envisions adding retail services, possibly with some housing above, all with a pedestrian scale. In the I-90 office complex area the established office uses likely will continue, but a broader mix of uses there is in order along with increased access.

Mr. Bergstrom said the Eastgate/I-90 corridor has almost five million square feet of office and as such it is a significant employment center for the city. If no rezoning is effected, the area can be expected to grow by only a couple hundred thousand square feet of office, and there would be no more retail, housing, or motel uses. Under the plan, an additional 1.8 million square feet of office is projected to come online along with opportunities for additional retail and some 800 housing units. The growth in office likely would trigger additional interest in constructing hotel rooms.

While overall there will be an increased focus on walkability and non-motorized transportation, the study did also consider transportation options. Some capacity improvements were identified that could make the traffic flow better. Improvements planned for I-90, including the construction of auxiliary lanes on the edges for general purpose traffic to use during peak hours would have the effect of reducing the queues onto city arterials. The Mountains To Sound Greenway trail will figure highly in the corridor. The project developed a list of possible transportation improvements. The list was prioritized and many of the projects were included in the Transportation Facilities Plan during the recent update. The budget includes \$2 million for early implementation of transportation projects in the corridor.

Ms. Conkling said there are a number of issues in need of consideration as the implementation phase moves ahead. The height and FAR recommendations need to be tested to make sure that if implemented they will achieve the community's vision. There is also a need to go through the process of looking at the Comprehensive Plan designations and zoning to make sure it can be implemented consistent with the vision; that process may involve creating some new zoning categories specific to the Eastgate corridor, or making changes to some existing zoning categories. Increasing the development potential for sites in the corridor will increase the possible entitlements, and the city wants to make sure there will be public benefits reaped in return through an incentive system.

Commissioner Hamlin said the CAC was very clear about wanting to see increased height and FAR allowed in exchange for tangible community benefits through an incentive system. Ms. Conkling said details concerning an incentive system have not been worked out. Several different options will be brought before the Commission to look at.

Ms. Conkling said the process going forward will also look at how to incorporate sustainable design solutions into site planning and building design. Tying into the Mountains To Sound Greenway idea, one approach would be to look at solutions that are green in a technical sense but also which look green in terms of landscaping and which fit into the city in a park concept. Site planning in Richards Valley in particular will be important given the critical areas site constraints. Particular consideration will be given to how to direct a substantial portion of growth into the transit-oriented development centerpiece of the corridor.

Ms. Conkling said the Commission will first be asked to consider Comprehensive Plan amendments, the first set of which will be on the agenda early in 2014. The Commission will be asked to look at amending the subarea plans for Richards Valley, Factoria and Eastgate. A public meeting to talk about some of the policy alternatives will be conducted. The Commission will also be asked to look at various Land Use Code amendments; to consider amending existing zoning regulations; consider the creation of new zoning regulations; and review and amend as needed the design regulations. Many properties in the Eastgate/I-90 corridor currently have concomitant agreements that establish special development rules; it may be possible to address some of those agreements by integrating their provisions into the new zoning regulations.

Ms. Conkling said the Commission will be asked to consider a transfer of development rights (TDR) program that could, among other things, transfer development potential from outside the area to preserve lands along the greenway. Mr. Bergstrom said the TDR idea came up fairly late in the CAC process and as such is not well defined.

Commissioner Carlson asked what proportion of Bellevue's jobs are located in the Eastgate/I-90 corridor, and what proportion can be expected to be there in 25 years. Mr. Bergstrom said currently about 18 percent of the city's jobs are in the corridor. No projections were made regarding the number of jobs the corridor will house in the out years given the vitality of the downtown and Bel-Red corridor.

Chair Tebelius asked what the impetus is for moving ahead with making changes in the Eastgate/I-90 corridor given the growth potential that exists in the downtown and Bel-Red corridor. Mr. Bergstrom said the Eastgate/I-90 corridor represents a different market. There are always differences in taste for where employers want to locate; a lot of people want to be in the downtown, but not everyone does. The Eastgate/I-90 corridor is very attractive to a lot of businesses and employers because of its location and regional access.

Commissioner Carlson asked what the long-term vision is for the site owned by King County. Commissioner Hamlin said the CAC saw the site as having potential for office. Chair Tebelius added that the King County Humane Society has started a capital campaign aimed at staying where it is on that site.

Ms. Conkling said the Land Use Code amendments will be coming before the Commission in the latter half of 2014. It will be important to address the Comprehensive Plan amendments first, which will be integrated into the overall update to the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Ferris asked if Bellevue College could build housing for students on its campus under the current zoning. Mr. Bergstrom said they can, adding that the city has no control over what uses they build on the campus.

Commissioner Laing said the comment made during Public Comment about there not being any weather protection at the park and ride is well taken. Mr. Bergstrom said the CAC looked at the 142nd Avenue SE bridge extensively. The conclusion reached was that it should be a pivotal part of the transit-oriented corridor with excellent weather protection, and with loading and unloading allowed right on the bridge.

## 5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded

by Commissioner Hilhorst and it carried unanimously.

**\*\*BREAK\*\***

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Marty Nizlek, 312 West Lake Sammamish Parkway, said the subject of the critical areas ordinance and the conforming amendments will have actual impacts on the lives of many who own shoreline properties. He said the Commission had previously directed him and Mr. Klinge to meet with staff on more than a dozen specific issues. That meeting took place during which the number of issues was reduced to only two relating to floodplains and potential conflicts between the critical areas ordinance and the Shoreline Master Program. The Commission in its process defined a mitigation line 50 feet from the shoreline. Several things have to happen where an expansion takes place beyond the line, including adherence to the greenscape provisions, the hardscape limits, and the 15 percent rule in the first ten feet. The floodplains issue ushers in several areas of concern, one where the flood line would be somewhere above the shoreline but short of the setback, one that steps over and could allow the dwelling to be in the floodplain, or some combination of the two. The staff analysis shows that some 60 percent of the shoreline properties would be impacted by having a floodplain line passing through them. The Shoreline Master Program rules the entire site, but the critical areas ordinance will regulate the floodplain area, creating a conflict regarding what property owners can do with their yards.

Mr. Charlie Klinge, 11100 NE 8th Street, agreed that the meeting with staff was productive. One issue of concern dealt with flood hazard restrictions on moorage and docks and the need to conform with the critical areas rules. The staff solution outlined on page 11 of the Commission packet uses footnotes to refer out to the shoreline rules and is acceptable to WSSA. There remain, however, conflicts between the greenscape and hardscape rules in the Shoreline Master Program and the greenscape and hardscape rules in the critical areas ordinance. The Shoreline Master Program includes a solution, but the critical areas ordinance does not. He called attention to the solutions outlined in the memo from WSSA.

Commissioner Laing referred to Amendment A in the WSSA memo and said his take on it is that someone with a property on which the flood hazard is within the 25-foot setback would be required to comply with the greenscape requirements, yet the city's code would prevent them from doing so because of the flood hazard regulations. Mr. Klinge said that is indeed the problem because of the critical area permits needed.

Commissioner Carlson asked how Mercer Island, Redmond and Sammamish deal with the same challenge. Mr. Klinge said Redmond, Sammamish and Issaquah allow houses to be built in the floodplain with appropriate mitigation and compensatory storage, which is also in Bellevue's critical areas ordinance. Anyone wanting to build a house in a floodplain should be required to get a critical area permit.

#### 9. STUDY SESSION

##### B. Shoreline Master Program Conformance Amendments

Land Use Director Carol Helland reminded the Commissioners that a decision needed to be reached with regard to the conformance amendments if a public hearing is to be held by the end of the year. December 11 is the last meeting date for which there is still time to publish public



notice. She noted that the Commission packet included a proposed consolidated amendment beginning on page 19.

Ms. Helland said the major objective of the conformance amendment is to remove the areas adjacent to the ordinary high water mark from the shoreline critical area in line with state law which states that shorelines cannot be critical areas just because they are shorelines. The conformance amendment strips out all references to the shoreline critical area which has been subsumed into Part 20.25E. The conformance amendment is also needed to ensure internal consistency with the new Part 20.25E, and to conform to the scope of the Shoreline Master Program update provided by the City Council. The consolidated draft ordinance shown as Attachment A in the packet includes the amendments to the general section of the Land Use Code, the critical areas overlay, and the light rail transit overlay cross references. Ms. Helland pointed out that Attachment A did not include any of the responses to the WSSA action items, but she noted that the staff memo beginning on page 10 of the packet did outline the action items as staff believes they should be addressed in the conformance amendment. If so directed by the Commission, the staff will incorporate the changes into the conformance amendment.

Ms. Helland said flood hazard areas are still critical areas. WSSA described what it called an area of conflict, but in reality the city has overlaying regulations everywhere. The shoreline update sent from the Commission to the Council described the conflict and acknowledged that it would occur. There is a conflict provision that anticipates there will be rubs between the shoreline code and the code covering traditional critical areas, which includes floodplains, slopes, wetlands, streams, aquaculture, and coal mine hazard areas. Where there are two layers of regulations overlapping, the most restrictive criteria must be met. The proposal by WSSA to revert entirely to the Shoreline Master Program would result in the loss of some of the performance criteria that apply to the floodplain without replacing them with some that is effectively equivalent, and that would create an equity issue between shoreline property owners and the balance of property owners citywide.

Commissioner Laing said there are some things that make the floodplain situation different. First is the fact that only shoreline property owners have the floodplain issue. Ms. Helland said that is not the case. There are some 485 properties in the shoreline jurisdiction on Lake Sammamish. Some of them have been short platted but are still in the shoreline jurisdiction and there might be a house on each plat, so the number of dwelling units in the shoreline jurisdiction is closer to 500. The graphics presented by WSSA is accurate with regard to the number of parcels but is not accurate with regard to the number of structures that are impacted by the floodplain. There are only 25 structures in the Lake Sammamish shoreline jurisdiction that intersect the floodplain.

Continuing, Ms. Helland said the city adopted its floodplain policy in 1978, and it was a zero rise policy. There are about 1000 parcels that intersect the floodplain citywide. Of that number, about one-fifth of them are located on Lake Sammamish; none are located on Lake Washington because of the way that lake is monitored. The fact is the issue only affects one-fifth of the stakeholders that benefit from the floodplain regulations citywide. The Council has made it clear that changing the critical areas ordinance through the Shoreline Master Program is not an objective of the Shoreline Master Program update. The critical areas ordinance is slated to be updated by about 2015 owing to a state mandate. A FEMA biological opinion update will be put in place once current litigation with FEMA over the floodplain rules is settled. Additionally, the proposed change would impact stakeholders citywide who have not been provided with notice or given the opportunity to comment. The issue as raised by WSSA is important but is not yet ripe

for action.

Commissioner Laing said under the proposal, the city will be telling shoreline property owners they will be precluded from doing the very mitigation other cities allow which are aimed at letting property owners use their properties within the floodplain. That in itself makes the shoreline floodplain rules different from the floodplain rules applicable citywide. It is accepted that properties with critical areas must jump through extra hoops, but what is unique about the shoreline floodplain critical area is that property owners will not be permitted to come up with an effective equivalent. Ms. Helland said the critical areas ordinance may allow prohibited activities with a critical area land use permit. The fact is, however, that steep slopes and floodplains are the only critical areas that allow development where the critical areas performance standards are met. On the ground that might mean planting native vegetation. One could not get there through the greenscape regulations, only through application of the critical area performance criteria.

Chair Tebelius said the rub lies in the fact that the compromise put together by the Commission regarding the buffer area was predicated on the understanding that all of the shorelines would apply, only to discover that it really applies to a minimal number because the floodplain areas are subject to the critical areas ordinance. Other jurisdictions, including Issaquah, Sammamish and Redmond, resolved the issue in the way indicated by Mr. Klinge. The inconsistency was not anticipated by the Commission in coming up with the compromise. The problem with the critical areas ordinance, even if mitigation is approved, is it will cost the property owner thousands of dollars to jump through all the hoops. Ms. Helland explained that Issaquah, Sammamish and Redmond do not have the same conflict because they imposed a 35-foot setback. Had Bellevue gone with a 35-foot setback as well, there would be no conflict.

Commissioner Ferris clarified that the compensatory replacement for building in the floodplain has to do with structures only. He noted that there is in fact quite a bit of consistency between Bellevue and other cities relative to structure development requirements in the floodplain. The greenscape compromise in Bellevue's proposed Shoreline Master Program is unique; no other city has taken that approach and every other city requires native vegetation against the shoreline. He also pointed out that evidence provided by Dallas Evans regarding the floodplain line on his property proved that the city's data was in fact inaccurate as it regarded his specific property. It must be believed that many other Lake Sammamish property owners could also be able to prove that the floodplain boundary as drawn is incorrect and should be changed, allowing them to solve to some degree the floodplain issue. He also reminded the Commission that throughout the Shoreline Master Program process staff consistently pointed out that the floodplain rules would conflict with the shoreline rules; that is in fact why the Commission raised the issue with the Council in the transmittal memo.

Commissioner Laing said he had no problem with the idea that properties with critical areas are going to have an increased level of protection and a need for mitigation. However, the idea that someone could do something outside the floodplain that would trigger the greenscape requirement, which then would trigger the floodplain regulation, is concerning. He said he also was concerned about making distinctions between different ways for putting a structure in the floodplain actions, in other words a tear down, expanding an existing structure, or building a new structure, because the impact is the same regardless. It is particularly troubling that the parks department can do development within the floodplain so long as they engage in compensatory actions. If at the end of the process only one house is in exactly the same position as before, something will not have gone as intended by the legislature.

Chair Tebelius commented that no matter what, property owners must achieve no net loss of ecological function or no permit will be issued. Ms. Helland said that would be true except for the presumption made that by meeting the residential development requirements no net loss is achieved.

Ms. Helland said staff fully understands the concerns. She pointed out that the frustrations lie with the critical area code, not the shorelines code. The structure referred to by Commissioner Laing is the structure that is applicable to all critical areas. The arbitrary line between a tear down, a new development and an existing development is in the use charts of the critical area code and apply to all critical areas citywide, not just those in the floodplain. Picking out the floodplain issue and saying it needs to be fixed would in fact be tampering with the entire critical areas regulatory structure. She said she did not disagree that the issue needs to be fixed, but she reiterated that the time to do so has not yet come. The parks development referenced as being permitted involves soft-surface trails that allow the public to get to the natural areas.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Laing, Ms. Helland said if an existing structure located 60 feet back is expanded to the 49-foot mark triggering the greenscape requirement, it will also trigger the floodplain regulations. Ms. Helland said in the context of applying the floodplain regulations the most likely outcome would be a requirement for the greenscape to be native vegetation. The property owner would not be prevented from achieving the mitigation, but there would be a requirement for the floodplain performance standards to be met as well. That is in fact the source of the litigation over the FEMA rules. The use and activity chart in the critical areas ordinance is overly complex and not terribly intuitive, but in the end structures are not a permitted use in the floodplain. In order to be permitted, property owners must go through the critical areas reasonable use exception. The rationale for permitting existing structures to expand into critical area buffers is that a house once built cannot easily be moved, so allowance is given for additions in areas where the function of the house demands that that be where the addition be located. A tear down and/or new development brings with it the optimal opportunity to look at the structure from the perspective of the site; in those cases engineering can keep a structure from avoiding the floodplain altogether.

Commissioner Hamlin asked if it is always the case that where there are overlapping regulations that both must be adhered to. Ms. Helland said the basic rule is that in such cases the most protective regulations apply. That approach applies in all instances. Commissioner Hamlin asked if the city has ever been able to say one layer will apply and the other will not. Ms. Helland said that has happened in the downtown where the determination was made that the critical areas regulations would not apply.

Chair Tebelius urged the Commission to err on the side of caution by putting in the last two WSSA suggestions, conducting the public hearing, and then possibly pulling them back out. Commissioner Hamlin said there are complications with that approach, including the possibility of running into other issues. Ms. Helland said the bigger issue is protecting the sanctity of the process. She reiterated that there has been no notification to all floodplain and critical areas stakeholders; the approach could create an equity issue, and there could be SEPA concerns as well given that an EIS was conducted on the critical areas ordinance and making substantive changes to the code requires an additional EIS.

A motion to recommend the inclusion of the conformance amendments including the changes that have been agreed to by WSSA and the staff and which were outlined in the packet on pages

10 through 15 was made by Commissioner Hamlin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ferris and it carried unanimously.

No motion was brought to the floor regarding the two issues around which there had been no agreement between staff and WSSA.

Mr. Inghram said a public hearing on the conformance amendments would be noticed for December 11.

### C. Comprehensive Plan Update

Mr. Inghram reminded the Commissioners about and urged them to attend the joint boards and commissions forum regarding environmental issues that is scheduled for November 19.

Mr. Inghram also called attention to page 93 in the packet and the draft Comprehensive Plan update schedule. He noted that based on the reviews and comments that have occurred to date, some types of updates to the Land Use Element are anticipated. The growth pattern and strategy policies need to be updated to clarify the intent to have future growth focused on the downtown and the mixed use growth centers. The update also needs to reflect the adopted growth targets and needs to be consistent with the city's most recent review of buildable lands. With regard to the downtown section of the Land Use Element, the update will need to include the issues that will come out of the Downtown Livability Initiative, and include a recognition of the significant regional position the downtown holds as the economic, housing and retail center of the Eastside.

Chair Tebelius asked if the Commission will be free to review the downtown issues independent of the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC process. Mr. Inghram said as the CAC process winds down staff will check in with the Council to see what direction they want to take.

With regard to the growth centers, Mr. Inghram said the update will need to recognize the planning efforts that have been undertaken since the last Comprehensive Plan update, and provide appropriate direction for future planning efforts. There should also be some clarity regarding the hierarchy of the centers. The update should include a focus on increasing support for the neighborhood centers and identifying new ways of providing local community gathering opportunities.

The city already has solid policies that talk about protecting residential areas. The policies need to be reviewed, however, to see if any minor tweaks are warranted. In addressing housing issues, a line will need to be drawn between what are true housing issues and what are actually land use issues. The Commission may also want to look at some of the multifamily zones and how they are treated from a density and use perspective.

A motion to extend the meeting time by ten minutes was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson and it carried unanimously.

Commissioner Ferris pointed out that in the downtown and Bel-Red corridor density is defined as a function of FAR, bulk and scale. In all other multifamily zones the calculation is based on units per acre. He suggested the units per acre is an old suburban model that is forcing developers to build larger and more expensive units even in the face of the fact that families are getting smaller.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Hamlin, Mr. Inghram said any changes proposed to the neighborhood boundary maps will necessarily proceed as a part of the Comprehensive Plan update. However, even if approved, the boundary changes would not take effect until the individual subarea plans are updated.

6. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Ms. Helland reported that the Council at its meeting on November 12 discussed the Commission's work program recommendations. They acknowledged that the Commission's plate is currently full with very large issues and agreed to take up the issue again after their retreat.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

8. STAFF REPORTS - None

10. OTHER BUSINESS - None

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Marty Nizlek, 312 West Lake Sammamish Parkway, addressed the issue of notification of the forthcoming public hearing for the conformance amendments. He said there should be something more than there was for the critical areas process. It should include a mailing outlining exactly what the hearing will cover.

12. NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

A. December 11, 2013

13. ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Hilhorst. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and it carried unanimously.

Chair Tebelius adjourned the meeting at 10:38 p.m.

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES

December 11, 2013  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Tebelius, Commissioners Carlson, Ferris, Hamlin, Hilhorst, Laing

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Inghram, Janet Lewine, Department of Planning and Community Development; Carol Helland, Mike Bergstrom, Department of Development Services; Camron Parker, Emily Leslie, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Jon Talton, *Seattle Times*; Greg Johnson, Wright Runstad

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Chair Tebelius who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

3. SPEAKERS EVENT - Economic Growth & Development

Chair Tebelius welcomed Jon Talton, economics columnist for the *Seattle Times*.

Mr. Talton commented that Bellevue has created a success story within a success story. Metropolitan Seattle is one of the most successful metro areas in the country and one of the most prosperous places on the planet, and within its sphere Bellevue has risen to become an amazing community in its own right with much to be proud of.

The area is facing unprecedented competition for the very reason that every place in the world wants what Seattle and Bellevue have. The next 30 years will not be a repeat of the past 30 years for a host of different reasons.

Mr. Talton cautioned against letting growth be Bellevue's god. Population growth is not as important as growth in the number of patents Bellevue companies hold, growth in venture capital, growth in the ratio of PhD's per capita, and growth in the number of people completing high school and going on to higher education. Population growth brings with it heavy carrying costs. Bellevue and the region are competing for talents and capital, assets that are mobile and can go anywhere; the competition is worldwide, not just nationwide. There is a natural competition between downtown Bellevue and downtown Seattle, and between Bellevue and

other Eastside cities, that is to some degree unavoidable, but unless the entire metro pie keeps growing, no one jurisdiction will prosper; metro cannibalism should be avoided and thinking regionally is healthy.

Quality urbanism should be embraced. Sprawl is costly. During the recent recession sprawl cities did poorly, and for a host of reasons it will continue to do poorly into the future. Bellevue is a good size and there are a host of ways Bellevue can become urban in a good way that will enhance the city's competitiveness. Bellevue should seek to be many flavors and offer many things, including variety in architecture. Good civic design was lost in the 60s and 70s and it is just beginning to return with things like walkable districts and fine-grained human-scale streetscapes. Careful attention should be given to best practices nationwide in planning and development but in economic development as well, and the practices should be adopted to fit the specific needs of Bellevue. Tolerance and openness are economic values too. They tend to attract the creative class.

Bellevue should prepare itself for further economic disruptions. For a host of reasons there will be economic ups and downs in the future that cannot be controlled. The coming years will not be like the last half of the 20th Century.

Mr. Talton urged the city to think beyond office parks. Innovation districts are a hot new trend, one that is unlikely to be temporary. Innovation districts bring people together in an atmosphere of creative friction, the free sharing of ideas, and collaboration. There is no reason to deny that Bellevue in ten years will be even more prosperous and moved on to the next level, but it is not something that can be taken for granted. Light rail will be a great friend to the city; if anything the city should be pushing harder to get it sooner. Those who drive can already get to the city. What is needed is seamless connectivity and a variety of choices.

Commissioner Laing suggested that the lack of architectural creativity in Seattle is evidence of code restrictions that are in place there. He said Bellevue is looking at issues such as design review to avoid that trap. Mr. Talton said there must be a balance between providing incentives for developers and making them feel wanted. Livability is important, but so is making it easy for developers to bring projects online. Mandating architectural variety can backfire, however. The City Beautiful movement that began in the early part of the 20th Century prior to the Great Depression still has much to teach the modern age.

Commissioner Hamlin asked for comment on the idea of developing the Bel-Red corridor as proposed and allowing for competition with the downtown and other activity areas within the city. Mr. Talton said the Bel-Red corridor represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do something amazing. Having a dense downtown is a good thing, but choices need to be made about the densities throughout the corridor to keep the area in balance with the downtown.

Commissioner Carlson commented that density is something a lot of urban planners have fallen in love with. In some parts of Seattle, the urban village approach appears to be working pretty well, but in other places it seems forced and out of place. Mr. Talton said Seattle has been pushing density without having the infrastructure necessary to support density. Paris has high quality density, and in the right setting that is what should be aimed for by Bellevue. Density must be looked at in an organic fashion in terms of transportation options and human-scale design.

Chair Tebelius read a question from someone in the audience wanting to know if the Seattle-

Bellevue metro area still has the ability to generate startups like Microsoft and Amazon. Mr. Talton said the metro area is seen as one of the best startup places in the world. The problem is that lately the startups that have come online have tended to stay small or have been bought out. The area cannot, however, just count on what it already has.

Chair Tebelius introduced Greg Johnson, president of Wright Runstad Company.

Mr. Johnson said Wright Runstad has been in the development business for the past 42 years and during that time has developed 16 million square feet, much of it in Bellevue. The current focus for the company is the Spring District, the largest single project ever taken on.

Wright Runstad purchased the 36-acre Safeway property in Bel-Red in 2007, and the city adopted the zoning code for the Bel-Red corridor in 2009 that closely mirrored the proposal made by the citizen advisory committee. Light rail was at the time reputed to be coming to the area and the Council wanted to influence where the infrastructure would be placed. The code was in fact adopted before the station locations were determined. Even without light rail, there are many factors that make the Spring District site a good real estate investment given that it is in a path of growth between the downtown and employment centers to the east, including Microsoft.

The spring district is a designated transit node in the code. It has a maximum FAR of 4.0 and height limits of up to 150 feet. Its large size qualified the site for catalyst treatment in the code. Wright Runstad will be developing over \$50 million of infrastructure that will eventually get turned over to the public. A development agreement involving a master plan was negotiated and put in place shortly after the zoning was approved. Significant public open spaces will be constructed as part of the project. The incentive zoning approach requires purchasing FAR from the city at a significant cost. While the recession slowed things somewhat, a master plan was finally approved in 2012. Administrative design review has been completed for two office buildings and an application is in for the multifamily portion.

Mr. Johnson said light rail is not expected to begin operations in the Bel-Red corridor until 2023. Accordingly the master plan includes a phasing plan and identifies how much infrastructure is to be built in each phase. The development of office space involves accommodating other people's businesses. The built environment people work in has become one of the things that differentiates companies, so companies wanting to attract talent must provide engaging work, competitive salaries, and office and neighborhood environments that are engaging and creative; that has become the underlying principle in designing the Spring District. Sustainability is another underlying principle.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Carlson regarding mobility options, Mr. Johnson said the focus is on allowing for choices. A person may not ride their bike to work every day but they should know that they can and could be comfortable doing it; the same is true for walking or taking the bus. The hope is that those using single-occupant vehicles will be in the 25 to 40 percent range on any given day.

Mr. Talton pointed out that Seattle has seen one of the largest declines in the use of single-occupancy auto travel of any metro area in the country. Mr. Johnson said employers and bankers alike are calling out the need for a big bike room in every apartment building as a must-have amenity.



Mr. Johnson shared with the Commissioners a video orienting the Spring District site within the region, and schematic drawings showing what the development will look like. He noted that a different architect will be hired for every building to avoid creating a faux village. Bellevue has a wonderful mix of distinct neighborhoods. The Spring District will represent a unique choice.

Commissioner Laing asked if there is any need to hang onto light industrial uses and land in the city. Mr. Johnson said the choice in the Bel-Red corridor was made with the zoning change and was predicated on the infrastructure investments that are to be made by the region in the form of light rail. Certainly light industrial uses existing in the area should be allowed to remain as they are for as long as they want, but the corridor will not continue to serve its old function into the future. Mr. Talton added that large distribution centers are needed by the regional economy, and such facilities need to be logically sited.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Hamlin, Mr. Johnson said the feeling being sought by the Spring District is distinctly urban, though without tall buildings. Entrances facing the neighborhoods will be designed to be open and inviting, however, as a sort of transition.

Chair Tebelius observed that the Growth Management Act limits the boundaries of every jurisdiction in the state. She asked if down the road the Act will result in everyone living in a highrise building and Bellevue looking more like New York. Mr. Talton urged caution about getting into binary choices. One of the wonderful things about Washington state is that its residents can still feed themselves, something that will continue to be important in the future. Sensible growth planning is and will continue to be absolutely necessary. Density can be done well or it can be done very poorly.

Chair Tebelius thanked Mr. Talton and Mr. Johnson for their time and insights.

**\*\*BREAK\*\***

#### 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There was agreement to amend the agenda to move items 6, 7 and 8 to follow item 10.

A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Commissioner Carlson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and it carried unanimously.

#### 5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Steve Kasner, 1015 145th Place SE, referred to the proposed new subarea boundaries and said people should be included in the neighborhood area that they identify with. Phantom Lake has said it would prefer to be with Lake Sammamish rather than Lake Hills, and that makes sense. There is a little bit of Bel-Red that could either be in Crossroads or Northeast Bellevue, but it does not belong in Bel-Red. In working on the various subarea plans, the Commission should strive to make sure contiguous areas do not have wildly different plans.

#### 9. PUBLIC HEARING

##### A. Shoreline Master Program Conformance Amendments

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was

seconded by Commissioner Hilhorst and it carried unanimously.

Principal Planner Mike Bergstrom briefly reviewed the steps taken to date to develop the conformance amendments. He explained that the amendments do not represent changes to the Shoreline Master Program or the Shoreline Overlay District, rather they are amendments to other parts of the Land Use Code to make sure that the code in its entirety contains no conflicts. The proposed amendments are predicated on the Shoreline Master Program as drafted by the Planning Commission; in the event the City Council makes changes to the Shoreline Master Program, additional conformance amendments may be necessitated.

At the courtesy public hearing for the East Bellevue Community Council, the group asked about the status of the Shoreline Master Program review and future steps, and asked for a briefing on the shoreline overlay as recommended by the Planning Commission. Phantom Lake residents were present and expressed concerns about the water quantity and quality of Phantom Lake.

Land Use Director Carol Helland said the Council will hold study sessions beginning in 2014 on both the shoreline overlay and the conformance amendments. The East Bellevue Community Council has approval/disapproval jurisdiction over the ordinances. Once approved by the city, the ordinances will be forwarded to the Department of Ecology for review and approval. Ms. Helland said there was no intention to have the conversation be about amending the substantive provisions of the critical areas overlay, including floodplain issues. The Council has said it will review the critical areas code as required to be updated by the state in the next couple of years. There is also some outstanding litigation the Council would like to see resolved before the update work is undertaken. The Shoreline Master Program process was not intended for the purpose of making changes to the critical area code. Stakeholders that would need to be engaged have not been notified, and the environmental review under SEPA has not included any analysis of any substantive critical area ordinance changes beyond those necessary to conform with the recommended shoreline overlay.

Mr. Daniel Himebaugh, 181 112th Avenue Northwest, Puyallup, said two suggestions that will make the Shoreline Master Program more effective were made to the Commission at its last study session. The suggestions relate to the regulations that will control landscaping and the expansion and remodel of single family homes in shoreline areas where there are also flood hazard areas present. The suggestions do nothing more than clarify that where there are flood hazard areas in a shoreline jurisdiction the regulations under the Shoreline Master Program should control the landscaping and expansion and remodel activities. Neither suggestion is a substantive change to the critical areas ordinance. The Commission should strongly consider adding those suggestions to the conformance amendments. The handbook provided to local governments by the Department of Ecology says once a Shoreline Master Program is updated it will supersede the critical areas ordinance. There Shoreline Master Program should be the controlling regulations on the shoreline even where there is a critical area involved, such as a flood hazard area.

Ms. Anita Skoog-Neil, 9302 SE Shoreland Drive, spoke on behalf of the Washington Sensible Shorelines Association (WSSA) in asking the Commission to recommend to the Council adoption of an interim ordinance to address the interim existing conflict between the old Shoreline Master Program and the 2006 critical areas ordinance. It may take most of 2014 for the city to adopt the proposed Shoreline Master Program, and the Department of Ecology is taking up to two years to complete their reviews. That could mean the Shoreline Master Program update will not go into effect until 2016 or later. In the meantime shoreline owners will

be faced with two conflicting sets of regulations. In 2010 the legislature adopted EHB1653 to address the controversy regarding whether critical areas ordinance's adopted after 2003 would apply in the shoreline areas, or if only old Shoreline Master Program's would apply in shoreline areas while waiting for an updated Shoreline Master Program. The bill is specific in stating that a use or structure is considered conforming and may be redeveloped or modified according to two requirements: the project is consistent with the current Shoreline Master Program, and the project demonstrates no net loss. Where those conditions are met, the old critical areas ordinance regulations do not apply. Bellevue's critical areas ordinance was adopted in 2006, but not as an amendment to the old Shoreline Master Program and it was not approved by the Department of Ecology. Accordingly, redevelopment and modification must comply with the existing Shoreline Master Program. Bellevue's shorelines are highly developed so it should not be difficult to meet the no net loss standard. Other jurisdictions have followed the law without implementing regulations of the sort suggested. The Council should adopt an interim ordinance implementing EHB 1653 by simply adopting the language in the statute.

Ms. Joanna Buhler, 4129 185th Place SE, Issaquah, spoke on behalf of Save Lake Sammamish. She noted that the letter sent to the Commission by the attorney for the organization details the legal issues concerning the critical areas ordinance and the Shoreline Master Program and the order in which they can be adopted. The Shoreline Master Program is required to provide a level of protection of critical areas at least equal to that provided by the adopted critical areas ordinance. Under the proposed Shoreline Master Program, the restrictions are slightly more restrictive. The proposed Shoreline Master Program is a draft only and will have no legal effect until adopted by the Council and approved by the Department of Ecology. Changing the critical areas ordinance to conform to an unapproved proposal would not be in conformance with the regulations. There are some very good reasons for not allowing development in flood plains, including safety, preventing property damage, and protecting water quality and other natural resources. Lake Sammamish has suffered high water levels in recent years and conditions are likely to get worse with warmer, wetter winter weather as well as the huge amount of new impervious surfaces draining water into the lake. People who build in designated flood plains will be hurt as a result. There should be no weakening of the flood plain regulations. An interim ordinance is not needed.

Ms. Erica Tiliacos, 18707 SE Newport Way, Issaquah, spoke on behalf of Friends of Pine Lake. She noted that WSSA has testified that the Bellevue critical areas ordinance is more onerous than what other jurisdictions have. They have also said critical areas ordinances should not be applied to the shoreline because of the court ruling that concluded shorelines are not critical areas by virtue of being a shoreline. There are, however, critical areas within the shoreline. The critical areas ordinance regulates wetlands, streams, habitat and other critical areas in the shoreline area. The city of Sammamish has had its Shoreline Master Program adopted with the inclusion of its critical areas ordinance that was adopted in 2005; it is more protective of the shoreline and requires a lot of native vegetation for impacts. Their 45-foot buffer can be reduced to 20 if a full menu of mitigations is followed, with the harder ones employed first, including the removal of bulkheads. Impervious surface area is limited to 50 percent in shoreline residential zones and 45 percent in the urban conservancy zone. Sammamish allows for some intrusion into flood plains provided there is a strict demonstration of need, and then only to the minimum necessary and only with compensatory storage and extensive revegetation. The Sammamish Shoreline Master Program recognizes that any development will risk an environmental impact, but also recognizes that through the revegetation and mitigation sequencing the immediate impact can be minimized and the long-term impacts will not be permanent. Regulating the shoreline includes restoring environmental functions where possible.

Mr. Norm Bollenger, 16226 SE 24th Street, said he is a Phantom Lake resident. He said the amendments under consideration should be opened to more in-depth public comment and understanding, and the critical areas ordinance requirements in the Shoreline Master Program should not be included. The process has not been open and transparent to Phantom Lake residents. The materials presented to the Commission in support of the proposed conformance amendments is confusing to the lay person. It appears that the requirements and restrictions in the critical areas overlay are being integrated into the Shoreline Master Program. That will have significant implications with respect to Phantom Lake. It appears the city is continuing to restrict further development on Phantom Lake; the few properties not yet developed may be prevented from developing or at the very least severely restricted. It appears the city is pushing Phantom Lake into becoming a wetland and detention pond.

Mr. Jim Mackey, 1408 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, said the critical areas ordinance overly amendment put in several years ago was largely without notice to residents. For many years shoreline property owners have been working to see created a Shoreline Master Program that is workable. Complying with the critical areas ordinance has over the years cost many shoreline property owners thousands of dollars seeking permits for simple projects. The challenge of having multiple processes is something the city should avoid. Clearly the Commission has worked hard to simplify the Shoreline Master Program, and it should hold the line and not include the critical areas document as recommended by the WSSA.

Mr. Brian Parks, 16011 SE 116th Street, spoke as president of the Phantom Lake Homeowners Association. He voiced support for the recommendations of WSSA. Over the past four years, the efforts put in by Phantom Lake homeowners have had no effect on the Shoreline Master Program put in place by city staff. The 1977 master drainage plan specifies Phantom Lake for detention via a control structure weir; the 1984 detention site weir design memo states the same. The weir was installed in 1990 under the cover of a water quality improvement. Recently, a city utility employee indicated that the 1990 weir and other efforts made no significant water quality improvements. The Phantom Lake/Larson Lake basin study newsletter from August 1988 stated that the outlet control structure would not affect the flooding level around the lake. Flooding, however, was inevitable given the high initial weir design in relation to the surrounding property elevations. Don Miles, an engineer residing on Phantom Lake at the time, prophetically stated that both the ordinary high water mark and wetlands would increase. Utilities refutes the claims that the lake has raised, though they cannot seem to provide any annual data pre-1980; their data drops off abruptly in 1990 when the weir and berm was put in. Long-term lake residents all agree that lake levels increased after 1990. FEMA's base flood elevation is twice the historic record lake level, yet one property owner cannot rebuild in place because part of a deck barely clips the FEMA FIRM line of NAVD 265 feet. The current lake level is NAVD 261 feet and reaching the FIRM line would put the Walmart parking lot on 148th Avenue SE ten feet under water. The restoration plan fails to include hardly any of the suggestions from residents on any of the three lakes.

Answering a question asked by Chair Tebelius, Mr. Parks suggested the Commission should send to the Council a separate letter indicating that the Commission did not add provisions relating to Phantom Lake to the Shoreline Master Program.

Ms. Eileen Stahl, 21533 SE 28th Lane, Sammamish, said her city recently finished its Shoreline Master Program and critical areas ordinance updates. It was very frustrating to see the waterfront homeowners dominate and take over the process. The larger public was not

represented, nor was the health of Lake Sammamish. The same has happened in Bellevue and the larger public interest is not being addressed. WSSA now wants protections provided by the critical areas ordinance removed from shoreline and flood plain areas. Shorelines are not automatically critical areas, but where a critical area does exist in the shoreline jurisdiction the critical areas ordinance applies, and the more restrictive regulations are needed to help maintain the health of the lake. The only ones who would benefit from seeing the protections removed are the homeowners who want to sell or redevelop. Lake Sammamish belongs to all the people of the state and should be protected for the benefit of all.

Mr. Elliot Severson, 1600 West Lake Sammamish Parkway NE, voiced support for the work already done by the Commission. He urged the Commission to complete the work by making it effective. Without the amendments put forth by WSSA, a lot of work could go down the drain. In Bellevue, a piling does not affect the flood level, so building a dock does not count. He said his house has a five-inch section in the flood plain, and that has prevented him from building or providing compensatory storage because of new construction. The city would approve, however, cantilevering the entire house over the flood plain. Without the proposed amendment, the flood plain will be used as a way to stop what everyone has worked through in the shoreline plan.

Mr. Dallas Evans, 2254 West Lake Sammamish Parkway, said as things stand, because he has a shoreline property that is in a critical area, he must spend up to \$10,000 to do an environmental impact statement to make any changes to his house. The same amount of money could be used to plant a large number of trees along the Sammamish River to create shade for the benefit of the fish. If the property were to flood, water left on the property could be considered to be a wetland. The critical area issue needs to be reconsidered. Some properties have steep slopes or creeks or rivers, and they should be critical areas, but to put the shoreline in the mix and cause a lot of extra money to be spent on what amounts to nothing makes no sense. With regard to bulkheads, he noted that less than a quarter of the properties on the Bellevue side of Lake Sammamish have sandy beaches because of the wave action they receive, especially in the winter months. Bulkhead removal is not the answer. The lake level has in fact fallen in large part to WSSA and others working to get the weir cleaned out. Bear Creek, which runs into a lower part of the weir, likely does put some hydraulic backwater pressure on the weir, but the creek is not stopping the water coming out of Lake Sammamish; the problem is a clogged weir.

Mr. Merwin Hannaburg, a Phantom Lake resident, said 27 years ago city staff promised to maintain the level of the lake to preclude shoreline flooding. The city installed a flood weir gate and constructed a berm on the northwest side of the lake and allowed Ponds A and B on the south side of the lake to instead become water treatment channels. The measures have created flood events which during wet seasons have inundated one-third of his lakefront property with water up to two feet deep, causing shoreline trees to die and willows to flourish in a tangled mess. Runoff from SE 24th Street and the intervening properties cascades through his property into a holding pond and drainage ditches which stand full of water most of the time. The proposed deletion of platforms at the ends of floating docks is troubling in that the use of floating docks would be severely limited. Making improvements to existing properties under the requirements of the city to create or increase wetlands seem superfluous when most Phantom Lake properties already have large wetland areas.

Ms. Carman McDermott, 4024 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, voiced concern about the efforts to weaken the critical areas ordinance for shorelines. It is extremely important for waterfront properties to be managed in a way that will preserve the environmental health of the lake. Healthy water quality for recreational and environmental purposes will maintain property

values. No reduction in construction setbacks should be allowed. The requirement for native plant buffers is important for the ecological health of the lake. WSSA does not represent the views of all lakeshore property owners relative to the management of critical areas. No interim ordinance should be approved. She said a remodel of her backyard using a design from The Watershed Company included native plant gardens has resulted in an increase in the amount of wildlife present in the yard and has reduced the need for watering or for using pesticides and fertilizers. No changes to the critical areas ordinance should be adopted before the Shoreline Master Program is finally approved. The issues facing Phantom Lake are very different from those facing Lake Sammamish and as such it should be treated as a completely separate entity in terms of regulations.

Ms. Cheryl Eberting, 1845 164th Avenue SE, said she has lived in her home on Phantom Lake since 1964 and has seen a steady increase in the lake level since that time. She said her home is located 30 feet from the water and the current regulations are making it very difficult to remodel the home. She said she also owns three lots that have become worthless because of the regulation stating that homes must be set back 110 feet from the ordinary high water mark.

Mr. Chris Stanton, 2668 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, said many do not fully understand the mischief the critical areas ordinance can create. He said he took out 50 tons of concrete impervious surface from his property with the intention of replacing it with pervious grass. It cost \$15,000 in permit fees and designer costs. None of that experience should have been necessary.

Ms. Lori Lyford, 9529 Lake Washington Boulevard, spoke on behalf of WSSA. She pointed out that WAC 365.191.130 relative to fish and wildlife conservation areas is specific in stating that efforts to increase such areas should occur within the species' natural geographic areas so that habitat will be sufficient to support viable populations not creating isolated subpopulations. Violating the code will endanger people's lives, pets and properties by encouraging wildlife in areas where people live. WSSA believes that in developing the greenscape conservation component of the draft Shoreline Master Program the Commission will achieve the proper balance between wildlife, humans and urban vegetation.

Mr. Scott Sheffield, 2220 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, spoke as a member of WSSA, an organization that is seeking sensible shoreline solutions. He voiced his support for amendments A and B. The Department of Ecology handbook says critical areas can be modified to be specific for the shorelines. Standards proposed should control when there is a conflict with the critical areas within the shorelines, and amendments A and B clarify the code and should be read that way. The Shoreline Master Program trumps the critical areas ordinance when dealing with critical areas in the shoreline.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Carlson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Laing and it carried unanimously.

## 10. STUDY SESSION

### A. Shoreline Master Program Conformance Amendments

Land Use Director Carol Helland said it is not the intention of staff to ask the Council to adopt the conformance amendments in such a way that would create a gap in the Shoreline Master Program. The conformance amendments cannot become effective before the Shoreline Master

Program is approved by the Department of Ecology. The Department of Ecology wants to see both the Shoreline Master Program and the conformance amendments because it has jurisdiction over at least the wetland provisions of the critical areas ordinance. They also look to ensure that the critical areas provisions are at least as protective in the shoreline jurisdiction as they are elsewhere in the city, thus they need the conformance amendments to understand what is being removed from the critical areas ordinance. The effective dates of the Shoreline Master Program and the conformance amendments must coincide.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Laing regarding section 20.50.016D, Mr. Bergstrom said the draft Shoreline Master Program includes a definition of shoreline development. Staff initially held the view that that definition should be expanded to fit the rest of the city. However, the conclusion reached was that approach is probably not possible. There will, accordingly, be two definitions. The citation in 20.50.016D will refer to the correct reference.

Commissioner Laing suggested that the comments made during the public hearing led him to believe the city has failed to explain well exactly what is being proposed by the conformance amendments. All that is being done is exactly what state law says, which is that with the new Shoreline Master Program updates, the shorelines themselves can no longer be regulated as critical areas. However, critical areas within the shorelines are still to be regulated as critical areas. No substantive changes are being proposed to the critical areas ordinance. What is being taken away is the labeling of shorelines in and of themselves as critical areas.

Commissioner Laing said one of the things jurisdictions are supposed to do in adopting shoreline regulations, according to the state legislature, is to make sure they are tailored to local circumstances. Arguments have been made throughout the process about what regulations are in place in other jurisdictions, but the fact is circumstances in Bellevue are different. The draft Shoreline Master Program has been neatly tailored to Bellevue's unique circumstances.

Commissioner Laing said Amendments A and B along with the request to incorporate the language from EHB 1653 have been proposed to be considered for forwarding to the Council. The letter received from Ms. Buehler on behalf of Save Lake Sammamish lays out the issues very well. In the end, however, what it really comes down to is no net loss of ecological functions. WSSA claims the city is drawing an arbitrary distinction between constructing a new home and expanding or remodeling an existing home. The argument has been made that the approach would keep development from moving toward the water and encroaching on the views of the neighbors. While that might be good for neighbors, it is not a proper basis for an environmental regulation for flood plains. The flood plain regulations should not be used to draw a wholly arbitrary line of distinction when the bottom line is meeting the no net loss standard. Commissioner Laing said he could not come up with a scenario in which meeting the Shoreline Master Program no net loss standard would involve noncompliance with the critical areas ordinance. It is a lawful use of the police power to try to mitigate impacts, but not to require restoration or the conferring of a benefit. If required in the calculus to exceed no net loss and meet an actual net gain, the regulations have gone too far. He voiced support for Amendments A and B to avoid using the critical areas ordinance, and specifically the flood plain regulations, to keep many shoreline property owners in exactly the same situation they were in under the 2006 critical areas ordinance.

With regard to EHB 1653, Commissioner Laing noted that the Department of Ecology extols the bill as a win for environmentalists. The bill is touted as an optional route forward for

redeveloping and modifying uses and structures within buffers. At a minimum the Commission should send to the Council a recommendation to look at what it would take to implement that portion of EHB 1653.

Commissioner Hamlin pointed out that both amendments seek changes to the critical areas ordinance, and changing the critical areas ordinance is out of the scope of what the Commission has been directed to do. Changing the critical areas ordinance would impact many different areas of the city in ways the Commission has not even considered. He said for those reasons he did not favor Amendments A and B.

Commissioner Ferris noted that the Shoreline Master Program update process kicked off not long after the Council had adopted the critical areas ordinance. One of the principles handed down was to honor the work that was done on the critical areas ordinance and not take it on again. The Council is now on record as saying they want to see the critical areas ordinance reviewed again in the not-too-distant future. For the Commission to jump in and seek to piecemeal the critical areas ordinance update would not be right. If the Council wants to approve an interim ordinance, they are free to do so.

Commissioner Carlson asked if the critical areas ordinance could be applied in a way that will adversely affect the hard work done to update the Shoreline Master Program. Commissioner Ferris said during the process it was made generally clear that there are areas in the shoreline jurisdiction that are also in flood zones, and that in those cases the flood zone regulations would govern. Having the flood plain serve as a governor over where one can build is in fact logical.

Chair Tebelius suggested that former Commissioner Daniel Himebaugh's argument in favor of Amendments A and B, that neither represents a substantive change to the critical areas ordinance, was persuasive. She agreed that both simply clarify the critical areas ordinance and will not actually change the ordinance. She noted the arguments favoring the approach used in Sammamish but pointed out that their shoreline is different and in fact has spawning grounds for salmon, something the Bellevue side does not have. The legal standard of no net loss clearly does not include restoring ecological functions. State law is clear that the critical areas ordinance does not apply to the shoreline; that is the very reason for having the Shoreline Management Act. The critical areas ordinance should not be weakened by approving Amendments A and B.

Chair Tebelius added that the waters of Lake Sammamish and Lake Washington are cleaner now than they were 30 years ago primarily because sewer lines have replaced septic systems and sewage is no longer being allowed to flow into the lakes. Additionally, she agreed that flooding on Lake Sammamish has been reduced as a result of clearing the debris and vegetation from the weir.

Ms. Helland said the time is not ripe for considering Amendments A and B. The amendments are in fact substantive. The distinction between when expansion is allowed on new versus old was not made arbitrarily and is in fact very important to the framework of the critical areas ordinance. Changing it for the purpose of the flood plain area in the shoreline area but not in all other areas will fundamentally result in two different standards applicable in the city. The critical areas code was adopted into the Shoreline Master Program for the exact purpose of meeting the requirements of state law to regulate critical areas within the shoreline jurisdiction. That does not create a conflict though it may create a layer of regulation, something that happens a lot in zoning. The Shoreline Master Program includes footnotes stating that in some locations the flood plain locations will create a more restrictive outcome than the Shoreline Master



Program. She added that the flood plain regulations have been in place since 1978. For the most part, houses in Bellevue are farther than 35 or 50 feet away from the lake, but if approved the amendments would have the unintended consequence of allowing houses to move closer to the lake.

Chair Tebelius said from her perspective the unintended consequence is that the addition of the flood plain on top of the Shoreline Master Program means that the flood plain regulations rather than the Shoreline Master Program regulations will apply to a number of properties.

Commissioner Hilhorst allowed that she is new to the conversation but said her take was that most of those who want the Commission to approve Amendments A and B are those who are paying a lot of money out to make changes to their properties. Shoreline property owners are for the most part good stewards of the lakes. To not work toward clearing up the issue and making it easier for the general citizen to understand which regulations apply and where is to do the waterfront property owners a disservice. WSSA has been working in good faith with the city and has actually given in to many of the proposed changes. In the final analysis, the city needs to make it easy for the citizens to be able to have some control over their properties without extraordinary costs. Ms. Helland said both section 20.25E and the proposed conformance amendments were intended to remove the multiple permit process requirements, but not the substantive requirements in place to protect specific critical areas. The cost issue has been addressed, but the standards must still be met.

A motion to recommend that the City Council approve the proposed Shoreline Master Program conformance amendments as presented in Attachment A dated December 11, 2013, with the following revisions: to include Amendment A and Amendment B as set forth of pages 95 and 96 of the December 11, 2013, Planning Commission packet, and to include a recommendation in the transmittal communication to the City Council that it review EHB 1653 as it considers the draft Shoreline Master Program, was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hilhorst.

Speaking to the motion, Commissioner Laing explained that under the Shoreline Master Program as drafted, a property owner in a flood plain area could expand a portion of their house inside the magic 50-foot line and thus trigger the greenscape standard, but then run afoul of the critical areas ordinance because the greenscape standard would require them to create some disturbance such as removing hardscape and removing greenscape down by the shoreline. That is not something the Commission intended. Amendment A is nothing more than a footnote pointing out that in such instances the greenscape conservation standards would apply. Amendment B goes to the distinction between the expansion of an existing single family primary residents and a tear down and/or new construction. No jurisdiction should try to regulate views using their critical areas ordinances or other environmental regulations. The Shoreline Management Act has provisions that limit the height of structures to prevent them from adversely impacting the views from adjacent and upland residential structures. It simply is not proper for the city to use environmental regulations to regulate views.

Commissioner Ferris said Amendment B says that within the shoreline jurisdiction expansion of existing single family homes and new single family homes are allowed in the special flood hazard areas. The amendment would in fact allow someone to build entirely new homes in flood zones that have been regulated since the 70s. That is something that the Commission has never talked about allowing. The amendment does not reflect an insignificant change, it is in fact a back door way of making a significant change to everything that has been developed in Bellevue

around shorelines as it relates to the flood plain and the flood zone. Throughout the process of updating the Shoreline Master Program, the Commission has held to the notion that the critical areas within the shoreline would be maintained.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Carlson, Ms. Helland explained that flood plains are mapped by FEMA, not the city.

Commissioner Hamlin pointed out that not voting to approve the two amendments will not result in the issues never being addressed. The Council has already signaled its intent to update the critical areas ordinance in due course and the issues rightly will be part of that process.

Commissioner Carlson said he would be voting in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 4-2, with Chair Tebelius and Commissioners Carlson, Hilhorst and Laing voting for, and Commissioners Ferris and Hamlin voting against.

A motion to extend the meeting by 20 minutes was made by Commissioner Hamlin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hilhorst and it carried unanimously.

#### B. Comprehensive Plan Update - Housing and Human Services

Associate Planner Janet Lewine reported that a great deal of work has been done by the Human Services Commission in reviewing the Housing and Human Services Element of the Comprehensive Plan, and in preparing recommendations for the Commission to consider. She noted that the specific recommendations were outlined in the attachments to the agenda memo, and made it clear that the recommendations of the Bellevue Network on Aging were included in Attachment 3.

Human Services Commission member Michael Yantis commented that 25 percent of the money the city spends on human services goes to homelessness and housing in one form or another. That is one area where the work of the two commissions overlaps.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie said the major interest the Human Services Commission has in the Housing Element is centered on the sections that refer to affordable housing, special needs housing, and homeless housing. The countywide Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness is in its eighth year and Councilmember Chelminiak sits on the governing board of the Committee to End Homelessness. There are many changes in the way services for homeless persons are being delivered, and changes to the homeless housing model. For those reasons, the homeless sections of the Housing Element need to be aligned with the countywide initiatives that are under way. Every two years Bellevue produces a comprehensive needs assessment, the latest edition of which will be published in January. The update includes conducting surveys of community residents and for nearly 20 years affordable housing has been the top problem identified.

Answering a question asked by Chair Tebelius, Mr. Yantis explained that the city has documented goals it has agreed to relative to meeting certain levels of affordable housing for various populations. While the intent is there, the city has not delivered to the degree necessary to meet the goals using the current regulations. The recommendation of the Human Services Commission is for the Planning Commission to look at the manner in which the development regulations are written with an eye on achieving the goals.

Commissioner Carlson observed that the recommendations from the Human Services Commission make several references to shelters. He said over the years through his efforts working to help the homeless he has learned that there are right ways to go about it and wrong ways to go about getting people back on their feet. Some measures put in place over the years have actually enabled the behavior that made and keeps people homeless. He asked if the proposed language would allow for something like a tent city in Bellevue, which is an example of how not to help the homeless. Ms. Leslie said in 2011 and 2012 a countywide task force was appointed to address the issue of single adult shelters. The recommendations, which were adopted as investment priorities by the governing board, did not include tent cities because they are not considered to be shelter. One of the main recommendations of the task force was that all shelters should be a pathway to permanent housing. The shelters on the Eastside already take that approach and the Seattle shelters only recently began to make that shift.

Mr. Yantis noted that one of the Human Services Commission's recommendations is to allow for on-site offices for service providers in supportive housing developments. He said just providing shelter will yield a certain result, but providing services around the family housed in a shelter can help them out of the conditions that has created their homelessness. Current city regulations do not permit the siting of provider offices within supportive housing facilities.

Commissioner Hilhorst asked what Bellevue's estimated homeless population is and how many of them are families. Ms. Leslie said the most recent annual One Night Count conducted at the end of January found 178 unsheltered homeless individuals across the Eastside. However, during the 2012-2013 season the winter shelter operated just for men served 210 unduplicated homeless men. The estimation is that there are some 200 to 300 homeless men in Bellevue. The shelter currently operating in Bellevue serving women and children on average serves 16 persons per night, and their regular shelter serves 21 women per night. There is a new system in place to serve homeless families and within King County there are over 3000 homeless families currently in need of housing, about 400 of which are living in places unfit for human habitation.

A motion to extend the meeting for ten minutes was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and it carried unanimously.

Commissioner Laing asked to have on the table for the next discussion of the issue statistics that talk about the type of housing stock Bellevue has, the housing stock the city anticipates it will get, and what the cost is of the housing stock by unit size.

C. Comprehensive Plan Update - Urban Design Policy

This item was postponed to a later meeting.

11. OTHER BUSINESS - None
12. PUBLIC COMMENT - None
13. MINUTES

The Commissioners submitted changes to the minutes in writing to the staff.

- A. July 20, 2013
- B. July 24, 2013

- C. September 11, 2013
- D. September 25, 2013
- E. October 9, 2013
- F. October 23, 2013
- G. October 30, 2013

A motion to approve all seven sets of minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Ferris. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hilhorst and it carried unanimously.

14. NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

- A. January 8, 2013 at Interlake High School

Mr. Inghram noted that construction at Crossroads Community Center precludes the possibility of holding the meeting there as originally planned.

15. ADJOURN

Chair Tebelius adjourned the meeting at 11:05 p.m.