



Bellevue Planning Commission

Wednesday, February 12, 2014

6:30 to 10:00 p.m. ▪ Council Conference Room 1E-113
Bellevue City Hall ▪ 450 110th Ave. NE ▪ Bellevue, WA 98004

Agenda

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 6:30 p.m. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Call to Order
<i>Chair Tebelius</i>2. Roll Call3. Approval of Agenda4. Public Comment*
<i>Limited to 5 minutes per person or 3 minutes if a public hearing has been held on your topic</i> |
| 6:45 p.m. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Study Session – Comprehensive Plan Update
<i>Review of the public input provided toward the Community Vision followed by review of a draft update of the Vision</i>
<i>Paul Inghram, Comprehensive Planning Manager; Erika Conkling</i> |
| 9:30 p.m. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Other Business7. Communications from City Council, Community Council, Boards and Commissions8. Committee Reports9. Staff Reports
<i>Paul Inghram, Comprehensive Planning Manager</i>10. Draft Minutes Review<ul style="list-style-type: none">• January 8, 2014• January 22, 201411. Next Planning Commission Meeting – February 26 |
| 10:00 p.m. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">12. Adjourn |

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Planning Commission members

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

Jay Hamlin
Michelle Hilhorst
John deVadoss

Staff contact:

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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: February 6, 2014

TO: Chair Tebelius and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Paul Inghram, ACIP, Comprehensive Planning Manager
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SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Update

The February 12, 2014, study session will continue review of the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan as part of the city's major Comprehensive Plan update. This study session will review the assessment of the current Community Vision, what we've heard from the community, and a draft updated Community Vision statement.

No formal action is requested at this study session. Feedback from the Commission is welcome.

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 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. On June 10, 2013, the City Council approved project principles and a work program that provides direction on the issues and scope of the update, which are available on the Comprehensive Plan update website.

Community Vision

The Community Vision is a foundational part of the Comprehensive Plan. It establishes the vision for where the community wants to be in twenty years. As "goal posts" for the future, it guides the various goals and policies of the plan, ensuring that they work together toward a common and integrated objective. Updating the Vision is a critical step in the overall plan update process and establishes a key reference point for the other elements of the plan. As they

are updated we will be able to ask, are the revisions consistent with working toward the community's desired vision? Just as the Vision is important during the update process, the Vision continues its significance for the life of the plan providing overarching guidance to the city organization and helping departments align toward a long-term goal for the community.

Since January 2013, the city has conducted a number of community engagement activities, including recent focus group discussions of vision statements. Simultaneously, staff has reviewed the Community Vision in detail, particularly assessing the elements of the Vision that are now out of date. At this study session, staff will review public feedback and our technical review of the Vision. We will also provide examples from other communities and ask for feedback on a draft update of the Community Vision.

Assessing the Current Community Vision

A vision is meant to guide the plan for the entire 20-year period or even beyond and is intended to be more challenging than strategic or short-term goals. Ideally, a vision should be aspirational, setting a high, yet achievable, bar. It should represent a dynamic tension that challenges the community and the organization to reach toward a better future and beyond today's achievements. A vision should also be based on the values of the community and it should speak to entire community. It is a statement of achieving what the community cares most about, and in turn, guides the actions and priorities of the plan.

Unlike vision statements for corporations, which are typically narrowly focused, a community vision must be sufficiently broad to encompass the community's most important attributes. However, a vision statement benefits from being short, pithy, to the point and memorable. The easier a vision statement is to read and comprehend, the more likely it will be remembered and used in the organization. A shorter vision statement, by its nature, helps an organization have greater focus and therefore better aligns competing strategies. Alternatively, a longer vision statement will be more inclusive and better capture the varied elements of the organization and community. When the City Council reviewed the Vision at their meeting May 13, 2013, they recognized this conundrum by identifying the potential for the Vision to be more comprehensive, while at the same time acknowledging the desire for the Vision to be more concise.

It is also key for a vision to be specific to its community. The Bellevue Community Vision should reflect Bellevue's aim, not that of some other community. The challenge is that people in all communities share many of the same values and objectives. We all have a mutual vision for safe communities, good schools, employment opportunities and freedom. However, to be meaningful a vision should be unique. Restating fundamental human needs should be done only in a way that is specific to the community. It is appropriate for the vision to speak broadly about the entire community, and not be focused only on the aspects of the city organization. The City, as a municipal organization, orients itself to help the community achieve its vision. Meanwhile, there may be many aspects of the community's vision that are accomplished through the businesses, agencies, and citizens in the community with limited involvement of the city organization.

Current Bellevue Vision

The intent of the Comprehensive Plan update is not to start over from scratch or to reinvent the plan for the community. It is to adjust the plan where necessary to respond to changes to the community and the world while retaining continuity that pulls from the city's past. Similarly, the community's vision for 2035 is anticipated to be very similar to the vision for 2025 that the community has held previously and yet it may need to be adjusted to recognize changes and the community's evolving direction.

The current Community Vision has fourteen vision points, each with a short narrative statement. It paints a picture of a vibrant urban city that serves as the hub of the Eastside, a "city in a park" with a strong downtown juxtaposed with lush green spaces. It envisions a diverse transportation system that includes a form of high capacity transit, housing that meets the community's needs, and a community that cares and nurtures all of its people. It envisions a safe community and a city organization that is responsive and a leader addressing regional issues.

In addressing the many facets of the community and the city organization, some argue that the current Vision is too long. Many remember "City in a Park," or a few of the other vision points, but it is difficult to remember the Vision as whole. Some of the Vision points appear to overlap. Several talk about Bellevue's role as a hub or a center of the Eastside. Several talk about the city's regional role. There is a point regarding the downtown and city's economic strength, which share similar elements. Many of the current Vision statements are appropriately graphic, expressing a clear, easy to envision future. Others might hint of jargon and some parts may be overly precise for a citywide vision.

The Vision paints a vivid picture of Bellevue's future that continues to be widely shared. However, with changes to the community since 2004, it may be missing potential key qualities. The City Council in its May review suggested that the Vision should be more oriented on people. The current Vision is focused mostly on the character of the place and could be enhanced to talk more about the community itself.

The Vision highlights Downtown Bellevue, but its suggestion of Downtown being "alive 18 hours a day" may be dated. Other commercial and mixed centers are not well represented in the Vision. The Vision support a strong transportation system, yet is not articulate about the need for local, neighborhood connectivity and was written before plans were set for light rail. The Vision includes culture and diversity, although it may not be reflective of the significant increase in diversity that the city has experienced since 2004. The Vision is also largely silent about schools, while it is widely known how valued Bellevue's schools are to the community.

Public Review

During a joint commissions forum and early public outreach where we asked people about the future of Bellevue affordable housing, environmentally friendly stormwater management, increased mobility options, protecting and enhancing green space, ethnic diversity, and economic growth were most discussed.

Overall, people expressed that Bellevue is a great place to live and strongly identified with their neighborhoods. There was a tension between the desire to protect what is here now and wanting to enhance, improve, and change things for the better. People envisioned a future in which they had better transportation options, more housing options to choose from, and were better connected to shops, services, and community gathering places in their neighborhoods.

The city continued to listen to the community through the Bellevue's Best Ideas campaign and more recently with several focus group sessions that asked people to prioritize those vision statements that were most important to them and that would take the most effort to achieve.

Based on the proceeding work, staff crafted 54 vision statements grouped in six review categories. The six categories were: natural and sustainable; designed for people; strong economic centers; arts, culture, and diversity; healthy and secure community; and aspirational government.

There was a high degree of consistency in the responses, which speaks well to the shared values in the community. Environmental stewardship and keeping Bellevue as a "City in a Park" were very important to participants. Participants embraced continued development of Downtown as the economic and cultural center of the Eastside, but also saw the potential to develop flourishing districts in BelRed and Eastgate/Factoria. People enjoy the quality of life Bellevue has to offer with safe and strong neighborhoods, good schools, and great public facilities. They also supported a vision that continued to improve quality of life and make it available to all in the community through affordable housing, improved mobility and more transportation choices, especially, creating neighborhood gathering places, embracing diversity, and ensuring inclusivity. We heard that diversity is not the same as culture. That diversity should be integrated into all parts of the Vision and the Comprehensive Plan. And there was support for vision statements that are representative. Those that, if achieved, would be indicators of broad success across specific objectives. A summary Vision outreach report is attached, Attachment 1.

Future Trends and Challenges

For the Vision to remain relevant it must be stated in the context of today's city and the challenges that the city faces moving into the future. Bellevue has evolved rapidly over the last 100 years and continues to advance. First incorporated in 1953, Bellevue is now a city of more than 130,000 residents and about 140,000 jobs.

After several decades of explanation, annexation has all but ceased. The City is now nearly completely framed by lakes Washington and Sammamish to the east and west and by state parks Bridle Trails and Cougar Mountain to the north and south. Other edges of the city border Kirkland, Redmond, Issaquah, Newcastle and Renton. Without the opportunity to annex, future growth will be focused inward, largely directed to the city's Downtown and other urban centers. Nearly all future residential development in Bellevue will be in the form of multifamily and mixed use development. Likewise, much of the future commercial and retail development will become increasingly multi-story.

Downtown showed explosive growth in the last decade and became significantly more residential. Downtown Bellevue was the city's fastest growing neighborhood with its population increasing 176 percent from 2000 to 2010. Nearly half of the city's future growth by 2035 is anticipated to occur Downtown, increasing its prominence in the region. Arts organizations are increasingly making Downtown Bellevue their home. In addition to the Bellevue Arts Museum, work is progressing on developing a performing arts center. And BelRed is home to a number of arts-related organizations, such as PNB's ballet school.

Our population is also diversifying, with about 1/3 of residents foreign born, and growing older. Bellevue's average age is greater than that of King County. Those numbers are likely to increase. As the demographics change, demands for services, recreation opportunities and housing types may follow.

Light rail is now funded and under final design, expected to be operational in 2023. And while, light rail will provide the community with an additional transportation option, traffic congestion is likely to remain a concern and the community has increasing interest in local, neighborhood oriented mobility.

Even as the city continues to grow and become more urban, the community has a keen interest in maintaining and enhancing its park-like image and restoring the environment. Expanding the city's tree canopy, improving water quality in streams and lakes, and addressing global concerns about the climate will be challenges.

Bellevue is an affluent community, yet there are those in poverty and housing remains unaffordable to many that work here. Supporting families in need and addressing housing affordability were adopted as two key elements of the Vision in 2004, yet both remain as vexing challenges.

Assessment Summary

Intent with update:

- *Not to start over from scratch*
- *Up to date to reflect current times, future challenges and current interests of the community*
- *Continuity that pulls on the city's past*
- *Improve how the vision works/reflects the nature of the community*
- *Make the vision more accessible, usable (shorter)*

What's missing from current vision?

- *Emphasis on people*
- *External environmental aspects/GHG/environmental footprint*
- *Recognition of other MU districts*
- *Neighborhood/local connectivity (as opposed to regional transportation)*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Downtown is alive more than 18 hours</i> • <i>Diversity of community</i> • <i>Inclusivity of city</i> • <i>Emphasis on schools</i>
<p>Key challenges or elements of the future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Most growth will be focused Downtown</i> • <i>Other growth will be in other centers, not in SF neighborhoods</i> • <i>Increased diversity</i> • <i>Increased global connections</i> • <i>Light rail</i> • <i>Housing prices remain out of reach for many</i> • <i>Need to preserve and improve environment and parks even while the city becomes more urban</i>
<p>We also routinely hear people in Bellevue talk about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Abundant green and open spaces</i> • <i>Safe neighborhoods</i> • <i>Outstanding schools</i>

New Draft Community Vision

Using what was recorded from the conversations with the public, Council and commissions about what is important about Bellevue as it grows and changes, and using staff's assessment of the current Vision, a revised Community Vision statement was prepared that reduces the number of individual elements from fourteen to seven, attempts to be more focused on those aspects of greatest importance, and highlights elements specific to Bellevue:

In 2035, Bellevue is:

- *Livable*
- *Natural and Sustainable*
- *Mobile and Connected*
- *A Place of Opportunity*
- *The Eastside's Center of Commerce & Culture*
- *Responsive to People in Need*
- *A City that Works*

The new draft is included as Attachment 2. In reviewing and critiquing the current Community Vision, one may consider the four sets of summary assessment points outlined above:

- Is the draft Vision consistent with the intent?
- Does it include elements that were missing from the current Vision?

- Is it future oriented and responsive to the challenges Bellevue will face over the next twenty years?
- Does it capture the core values of the community?

At the study session, staff will review the process leading to the draft and walk through the elements of the draft Vision. At this stage it would be most helpful to provide an overall assessment of the draft and whether it captures a future vision consistent with the community's ideals and values. To respect the time of the Commission, the intent is not to try to address discrete wording changes. However, detailed, wording suggestions are welcome and could be provided to staff to follow up on outside of the study session.

Next Steps

The City Council will also review the draft Vision update and continued public input will be solicited throughout the update process. Ultimately, the draft Vision will be included in the draft Comprehensive Plan update, which will be considered through a public hearing, formal recommendation by the Planning Commission and taken up for City Council action.

Additional study sessions will continue this winter and spring to review draft updates of the Comprehensive Plan.

A letter recently received from Bellevue College is attached. It is not directly related to the draft Vision; it concerns the overall Comprehensive Plan update and specifically the planning effort for the Eastgate area.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Bellevue 2035 Vision Statements Workshops Report
2. Draft Vision for Bellevue 2035
3. Bellevue 2025 Community Vision
4. Bellevue College Letter

FORMING_{our}FUTURE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

BELLEVUE 2035 VISION STATEMENTS WORKSHOPS

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2013

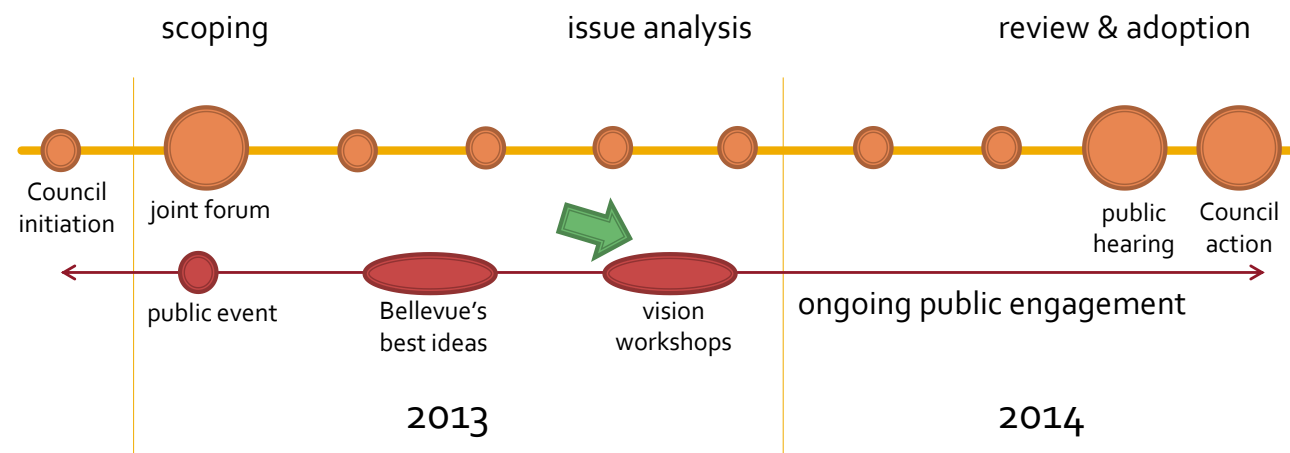


CITY OF BELLEVUE
Planning and Community Development

Bellevue 2035 Vision Statements Workshops

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BACKGROUND

On October 22, 2012 the Bellevue City Council initiated the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update. This update is a major, ten-year review of the community's plan for the next twenty years. It is the time to think and plan for future generations in Bellevue.

Forming our Future: Looking ahead to Bellevue in 2035

Bellevue has transformed from a small farming community to the fifth largest city in Washington State. Through the Comprehensive Plan, the city plans for people, places to live and recreate, ways to get around, jobs and a strong local economy, schools and colleges, and a healthy environment. The Comprehensive Plan is Bellevue's vision for the future. It sets

policy that directs city actions and decisions, and guides capital investments. The plan anticipates future population and job growth and plans for how to meet those demands.

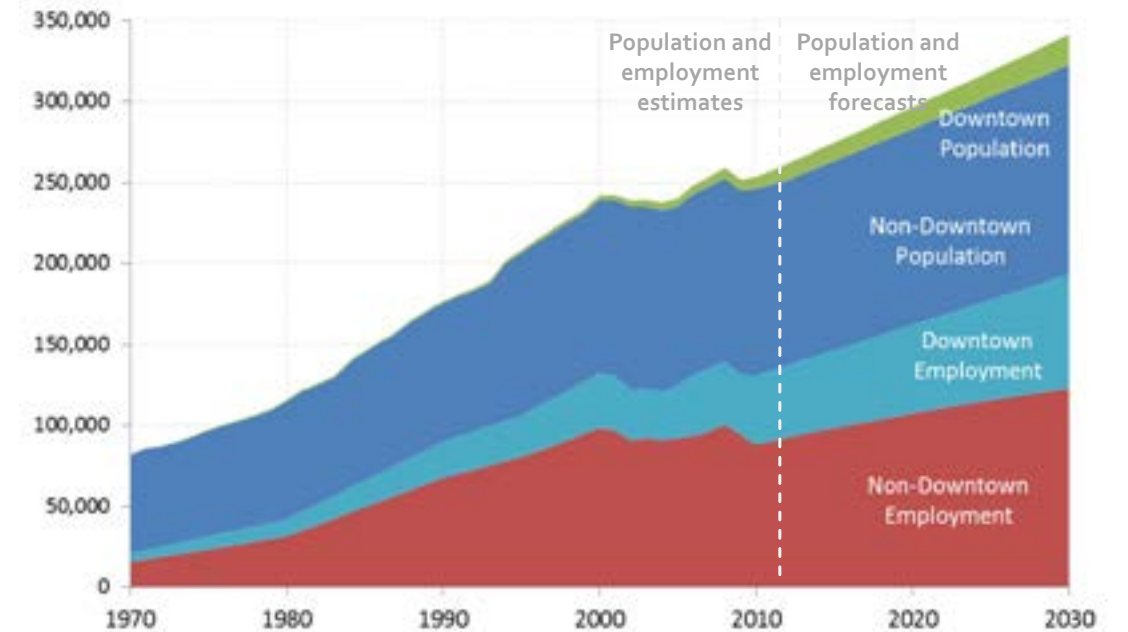
Ten years ago, Bellevue established a vision that included fourteen characteristics of Bellevue in 2025, a vision that in 2013 has only been partly realized. By 2035 Bellevue is expected to have an additional 16,500 housing units and 60,400 more employees that will work here every day. Thinking ahead to 2035, it is important to identify the community's vision of the future.

How will we preserve what is most important to us?

What are our greatest ambitions?

Population and Employment 1970-2030

- Population & employment historic trends and forecasts



In January 2013, two major events launched the Comprehensive Plan update project: the Joint Boards and Commissions Forum and a Public Forum hosted by the East Bellevue Community Council. At these events, participants were asked their thoughts on what issues should be the focus of the update, to help guide and shape the plan, and to ensure that the plan continues to embrace the community's vision. They also examined how the city has changed over the last ten years and were invited to envision Bellevue 10, 20, and 50 years in the future. At each event small groups conducted a visioning exercise built around four topics: community, environment, business, and family.

From May through July 2013, the visioning process continued with Bellevue's Best Ideas social media campaign. Bellevue's Best Ideas was an interactive website where participants could submit their ideas for Bellevue's future, comment on the ideas others submitted, and vote for the ideas they liked the best. Participants were drawn to the Best Ideas campaign through a variety of outreach efforts including a series of engagement sessions in busy public places like Bellevue library, Crossroads Mall, Bellevue Square, and Downtown Park.

Vision Exercise

With so much community input gathered in the first half of 2013, the next step was to consolidate this information into a set of vision statements that could be evaluated through another series of public engagements. Drawing from Bellevue 2025 and from newly generated ideas that came from the January



2013 forums and the Best Ideas campaign, 54 vision statements were crafted around six major themes:

- Natural and Sustainable**
- Designed for People**
- Strong Economic Centers**
- Arts, Culture, and Diversity**
- Healthy and Secure Community**
- Aspirational Government**

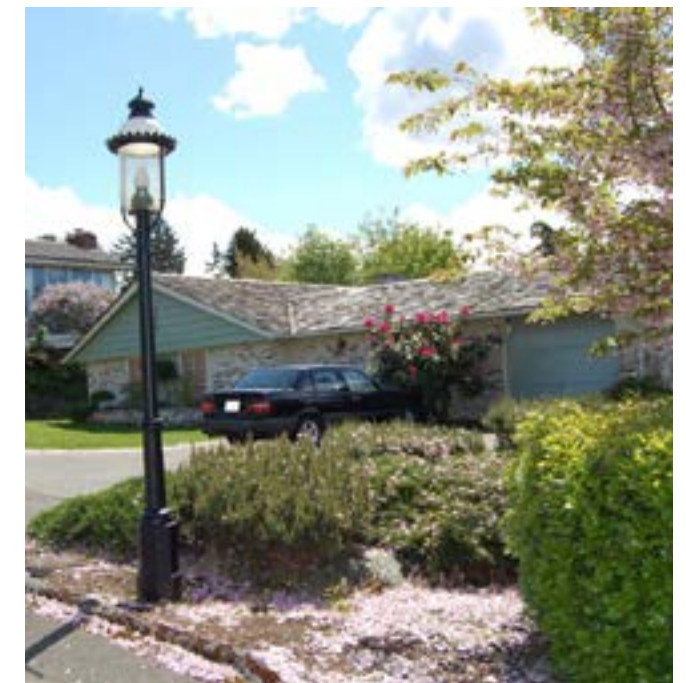
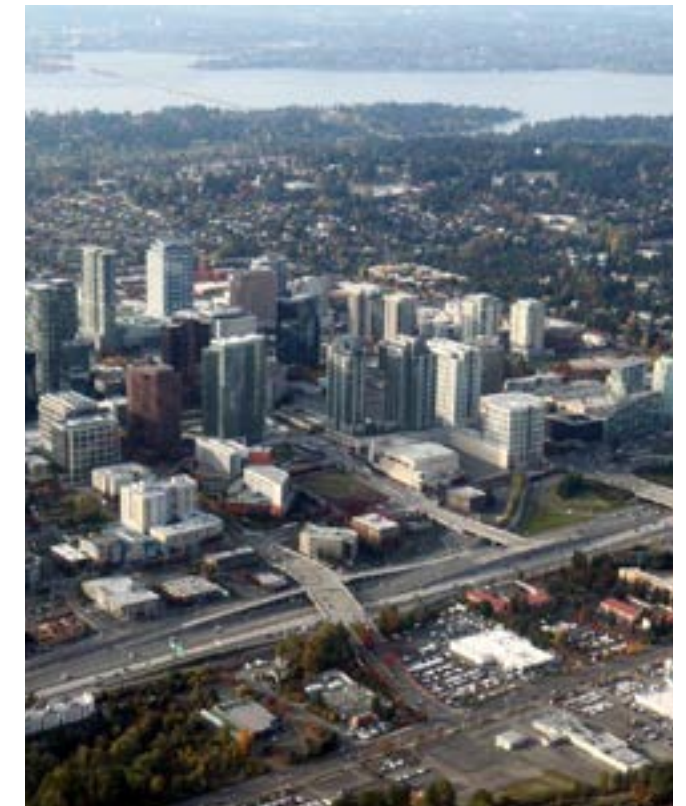
Participants worked in groups and were asked to review the statements and come to consensus on two questions for each of the six themes:

- Which two statements are most important to Bellevue in 2035?
- Which two statements are important AND will take the most effort to accomplish?

Groups were encouraged to edit the statements, create their own statements, and identify ideas that had been left out. Individuals could also submit their own responses and comments.

A series of workshops were held to collect input on potential vision statements. Outreach consisted of a mix of targeting stakeholder groups and engaging neighborhood and community associations. About 150 people participated in one of six workshops:

- October 16- Bellevue Essentials Class
- November 6- Bellevue Youth Council
- November 12- Eastgate Elementary
- November 21- City Large Management Team
- December 3- Interlake High School
- December 4- Bellevue Leadership Team





COMMON THEMES

Despite the broad range of participants, there was a great deal of agreement about what was most important to Bellevue in 2035.

Natural and Sustainable

Statements supporting environmental stewardship in various forms including energy efficiency, green building, conservation and protection of open space, and the restoration of local ecosystems, received the most responses. Bellevue as a “city in a park” has been an ongoing theme in the Comprehensive Plan and it remains important to Bellevue’s future as well. Alternative modes of transportation, including transit, walking, and bicycling were important for sustainability. Several statements from other themes looked at how transportation alternatives shape Bellevue in many ways, from the role in health, to connecting neighborhoods, to supporting economic development, and in creating a vibrant downtown. Good mobility and a variety of transportation choices were consistently a part of the vision of Bellevue 2035.



“*The foundational systems of the environment must be restored to address climate change. It’s our responsibility.*”

-Workshop Participant

There was some inconsistency in a couple areas within this theme. Participants ranked Bellevue being known as a “green” community as very important, and several commented that Bellevue should not just be known as a green community, but should *be* a green community. However, having a green image to help attract businesses was not regarded as important by most. Similarly, the statement that the city should collaborate on reducing greenhouse emissions and controlling the impacts of climate change did not resonate with most participants. Yet it was important to many people to reduce greenhouse emissions below 1990 levels, as well as to collaborate regionally on pressing issues including the environment (from the aspirational government theme). Clearly, these ideas are part of Bellevue’s broader vision of environmental stewardship, but some nuance may not have been captured by the particular statements used in this exercise.

Designed for People

Four statements were nearly universally agreed upon as important in the designed for people theme, and all broadly emphasize physical and social connections, providing diverse housing types, and creating complete neighborhoods served by parks, shops and services, and community gathering spaces. These results echo much of the input heard earlier in the visioning process.

However, statements that addressed more specific ideas such as commitment to design and historic preservation, creation of public and private gathering spaces, or aging in place were important to fewer participants. Due to the nature of the visioning work, the broader and more inclusive statements may have held more appeal. It is also interesting to note that members of the Youth Council felt





strongly that commitment to urban design, preserving historic places, and providing the necessary means to allow aging in place were very important to Bellevue in 2035. Similar statements about Bellevue's unique identity (from the strong economic centers theme) that position the city as a place of architectural distinction and nurturing a culture of creativity and innovation, were also more important to youth than to other groups.

Youth Council members will be entering middle age in 2035, but their experiences of Bellevue today are likely to be different than that of adults. So while there was a lot of consensus between groups, it is interesting to explore why youth addressed issues of community identity and sense of place.

In discussions, youth identified Bellevue as a great place to raise children. They also said that although they would probably move away as young adults, they would like to return when they had their own family. Places they were interested in living as young adults were all places that have strong identities, whether from

rural Montana to New York City. Thus it makes sense that youth would place importance on the vision of Bellevue's future as a lively and exciting place with a strong sense of identity created through innovation, historic preservation, and architectural distinction. These priorities are also generationally consistent, as the Youth Council represents the tail end of the Millennial generation (or Generation Y), which has already shown a distinct preference for lively, livable, urban environments.

Similarly, the strong support by youth for aging in place is also interesting. Youth are in a unique position to understand some of the challenges to aging in place. Like many elderly they may be tied in place by limited access to automobiles for transportation or limited incomes, and can be dependent on the social and physical connections available in their neighborhood to overcome these barriers.

Other statements that highlighted components of an aging in place strategy, such as improving transportation options, creating diverse types of

housing and affordable housing, and creating better neighborhood linkages to parks, services, and stores were rated as very important by most of the groups participating in the visioning exercise, but only the youth chose aging in place as a top priority. As youth consider the idea of raising their families in Bellevue in 2035 and creating a future for themselves, it seems rational that aging in place would be important to them.

Strong Economic Centers

Like in the designed for people theme, the statements most supported about strong economic centers were those that broadly addressed issues related to economic development and creating and maintaining thriving centers. An array of mobility choices, a high quality educational system, a high quality of life, and flourishing, active centers all were very important parts of Bellevue's 2035 vision. Other statements that addressed specific issues like the workforce, Old Bellevue, or a pedestrian-friendly downtown were less supported, but still somewhat important.

“Thriving, small businesses promote economic diversity and local character”

-Workshop Participant

Nurturing community character through support for small and local businesses emerged through earlier visioning work and was strongly supported in these visioning workshops. The statement that Bellevue is Washington's center of technology and innovation did not resonate well with most participants who saw this as Bellevue trying to eclipse Seattle. Yet in other ways, the vision truly looks toward the future by pushing some major planning efforts toward their desired conclusion. Participants imagined a 24-hour downtown and thriving mixed use districts in BelRed and Eastgate that create both a vibrant community amenity and a draw for the Eastside. Statements reflecting this concept were strongly supported in both the strong economic centers theme and the arts, culture, and diversity theme.



Arts, Culture, and Diversity

In terms of arts and culture, people felt it was important for Bellevue to continue to strive to become a recognized place for arts and culture. Many people envisioned Bellevue not necessarily as a national leader, however, but as both a regional and international leader in art and culture. While at first glance this may seem conflicting, Bellevue's growing diversity and strong international business connections contribute to a growing regional identity as a center of culture. The idea of Bellevue rivaling Seattle was disliked by most, with comments at nearly every workshop emphasizing the importance of Bellevue complimenting Seattle and being attractive regionally as a great place to live, not necessarily a tourist destination.

“Leverage arts and culture for human development and community development.”

-Workshop Participant

Overall, people had trouble with diversity being bundled in a theme with arts and culture. Statements that address increasing inclusivity, recognizing diversity, and engaging all segments of the community, from both this theme and the aspirational government theme, are very important to the Bellevue 2035 vision. Several discussions included comments that diversity should not be resigned to being exclusively an expression of art and culture, but woven throughout all of the themes. Some also commented that Bellevue's vision of diversity should embrace more than just ethnic and



cultural diversity, but include economic and class diversity as well. As the vision is written, diversity should be addressed within several themes.

Healthy and Secure Community

Nearly all the statements in this section were ranked as important by workshop participants. The Eastgate group even created its own statement to summarize this theme: *Bellevue is committed to social equity and is a national model of a city that is dedicated to advancing the good of all, with an additional concern for the least fortunate and the most vulnerable.* Ensuring affordable housing, preventing crime, staying healthy, being prepared for disasters, and putting a system of human services in place are included among the basic building blocks of society. In discussions, participants talked about the role of the city, individuals, and other community providers in creating a healthy and secure community. While nearly everyone holds a vision of a future that is healthy and safe, there is some disagreement about whose role it is to make this happen. Perhaps this is why the statement that the city plays an active role in promoting health was least important in this theme overall.

“We need affordable housing so all people can afford to live and work here. Teachers, grocery clerks, and students should be able to afford to live here.”

-Workshop Participant





Aspirational Government

Open, accessible, and inclusive government, and a government that collaborates with others to solve tough issues and fund solutions to community problems, were qualities that most people envisioned for Bellevue in 2035. People also wanted to continue to maintain the high quality of facilities and infrastructure that they already enjoy. Most saw government service as a key part of the vision for Bellevue's future, but many did not like aspirational government as the name of this theme.

Statements that recognized and responded to the increasing diversity of the community were highly important to participants in this process. Although listed under the theme of Arts, Culture, and Diversity, it was very important that Bellevue be a model of inclusivity and that people of all backgrounds feel comfortable participating in the life of the city. While there are many different ways to pursue that vision, there is a strong leadership role for city government.

“Diverse communities succeed when there is the opportunity for people to connect and get to know each other.”

-Workshop Participant

It is worth mentioning that the outreach to Bellevue staff produced results that were largely consistent with the rest of the community. Staff are part of the community as residents and employees, as well as in providing service to the public through their jobs. In the aspirational government theme there were two statements chosen as very important by staff but not selected by other groups: that public infrastructure reinforces neighborhood character and quality of life and that government services are provided in welcoming locations and through the internet. The importance of these four

statements amongst staff leadership is not surprising because they align very closely with the organizational *One City* core values of exceptional public service, stewardship, and innovation. During the visioning workshop, staff discussed the importance of aligning the city's organizational mission with the vision created by the community to create the most effective results. While it would not be appropriate for the organizational mission to drive the community vision, creating a strong linkage between the two would be a benefit to the community. Potentially, both staff and the public could better understand how government works to fulfill the wishes of the community.

“Government IS the people... people aren't consumers of government but participants.”

-Workshop Participant

One statement that did not resonate with people had to do with funneling new growth where it can be served by existing infrastructure. This is similar to statements from other themes that summarize key concepts of growth management, such as completing annexations in the designed for people theme, or concentrating development in cities to regionally protect farms and forests from the natural and sustainable theme. While important concepts to managing growth at a regional or statewide level, and they may necessarily be a part of the Comprehensive Plan, these ideas are not the driving force behind Bellevue's image of itself in 2035.



Staff

- Paul Inghram, Comprehensive Planning Manager
- Erika Conkling, Senior Planner
- Michael Kattermann, Senior Planner
- Mike McCormick-Huentelman, Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator
- Julie Ellenhorn, Community Relations Coordinator
- Gwen Rousseau, Associate Planner
- Janet Lewine, Associate Planner
- David Pyle, Senior Land Use/Environmental Planner
- Max Jacobs, Real Property Manager

COMPILED RESULTS

Very Important (most groups agreed)

Bellevue is known as a “green” community that values environmental stewardship, energy efficiency, building green, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
An abundant network of green spaces support healthy people, conserve land and water resources, protect fish and wildlife, and evoke the feeling of a City in a Park.
Transit, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle paths provide healthy and sustainable options for connecting people with the places they want to go.
Neighborhoods are connected to schools, shopping, employment, and community gathering spaces by sidewalks, pedestrian and bicycle trails, or transit.
Diverse housing types reflect the variety of needs in the community, including families with children, couples, singles and seniors, and Bellevue’s changing demographics.
Neighborhoods have evolved to include a network of transportation options, proximity to community amenities, and strong social networks.
Residents have convenient, walkable access to neighborhood stores, services, parks, and community attractions.
An array of mobility choices support the city including connections to light rail, frequent neighborhood transit service, carpools, and an integrated pedestrian and bicycle system.
Flourishing mixed-use districts in Downtown, Crossroads, BelRed, and Eastgate/Factoria attract people to the heart of the Eastside.
Nationally recognized high schools and access to high quality higher education lends to the area’s economic competitiveness.
Downtown, Crossroads, BelRed, and Eastgate/Factoria have unique, dynamic cultural districts that enhance the vitality of these neighborhoods.
People from all backgrounds are engaged in civic dialog and feel comfortable accessing government services.
Bellevue is a model of inclusivity, public engagement, and providing equal access to social and economic opportunity.
People in all stages of life, especially those with low incomes or special needs, live in housing they can afford.
Bellevue is a community that cares with a system of human services responding to the needs of youth, seniors, people with low incomes, and people with special needs.
The city places a priority on protecting the community and preventing crime.
All residents enjoy clean air, healthy living conditions, and access to health care.
People who work in Bellevue can afford to live here.
Cities and government agencies collaborate to address the region’s pressing issues, such as transportation, water supply, and environmental protection.
The city government is open to and engages all members of the community, recognizing its increased diversity and cultural background
Streets, sidewalks, utilities and other public facilities are in excellent condition.

Important (more than one group agreed)

Open spaces are linked by trails and greenways that provide wildlife corridors, neighborhood connections, and magnificent views of mountains and lakes.
Environmental systems have been restored, more salmon are found in local creeks and streams, and the urban forest is recovering and the tree canopy is increasing.
A smaller environmental footprint based on compact development and transportation alternatives is an economic advantage to businesses and residents.
Greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced to below 1990 levels through increased efficiency, conservation, clean fuels, and new technologies.
Businesses and workers are attracted to Bellevue’s high quality of life, sense of community, and culture of innovation.
As the hub of the Eastside’s economy, Downtown is alive 18 hours a day with a vibrant mix of hotels, office, retail, restaurants, arts and cultural attractions, and housing.
Thriving small and local businesses promote economic diversity and reflect Bellevue’s unique character.
Its ethnic diversity, vibrant arts, and nationally recognized cultural institutions make Bellevue a “must visit” destination.
Overlake hospital provides “state of the art” medical care.
The community has planned for, and is well prepared to respond to and recover from, major emergencies and natural disasters.
Bellevue achieves its community objectives through collaboration, partnerships, and innovative methods for funding.

Natural and Sustainable
Designed for People
Strong Economic Centers
Arts, Culture, and Diversity
Healthy and Secure Community
Aspirational Government

Somewhat Important (important to one group)

Commitment to urban design and preserving key historic places distinguishes Bellevue as a people-oriented place and nurtures a sense of community.
Neighborhoods have distinct identities and support a variety of lifestyles that range from single-family housing to a vibrant mix of uses in an urban setting.
Public and private gathering spaces are welcoming places that build social connections between neighbors and create stronger communities.
Access to transportation, housing options, services, and community assets supports older adults' ability to "age in place."
Bellevue communities have a strong social network that is welcoming and resilient.
The city has a dynamic and resilient economy, due in part to a highly educated work force.
Old Bellevue thrives as a unique area with a strong sense of Bellevue's past.
Downtown is pedestrian-friendly and humming with activity in a variety of public places, including Bellevue Way's "grand shopping street," and the NE 6th Street pedestrian corridor.
Bellevue is Washington's center of technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship because of its highly educated and culturally diverse workforce.
Buildings of architectural distinction signal Bellevue's identity, enliven the urban environment, and create a lasting heritage of excellent design.
Businesses and workers are attracted to the creativity and innovation found here.
The city's public infrastructure is designed to help reinforce the character and quality of the city's neighborhoods.
The community enjoys easy access to government services in welcoming physical locations and through the Internet.

Least Important

Waterfront parks provide public swimming and boating access to Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish.
Regionally, farms, forests, and open space are protected and are within the reach of Bellevue residents.
Bellevue's image as a "green" community is an economic advantage that attracts businesses.
Bellevue is collaborating regionally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and plan for the potential impacts of climate change.
Annexations have been completed within the urban growth boundary.
Firms employ people in such fields as technology, health care, finance, law, professional services, international trade, retail, and tourism.
Bellevue rivals Seattle as one of the top destinations in the Northwest.
The city plays an active role in promoting the development of healthy individuals and families.
New growth and development is focused in areas that are more efficient to serve with public infrastructure.

Natural and Sustainable
Designed for People
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Aspirational Government

Bellevue 2035

In 2035, Bellevue is a great place for families, whether they are families with kids living in the tall high rises in a vibrant downtown or older adults choosing to “age in place” on the same quiet street they’ve lived for the last twenty years. The community is a diverse blend of many people and cultures, with people choosing to live and work here because of the welcoming people, the Pacific Northwest’s abundant beauty and opportunity, the safe neighborhoods and the strength of the schools and community. People in Bellevue have a creative spirit and know that by working together they will continue to enjoy the community that they have created and grow to meet tomorrow’s challenges.

In 2035 Bellevue is...

Livable

A community of diverse neighborhoods makes Bellevue a great place to raise a family, to live and work and to grow old. Communities gather in “people places,” like local hangouts and shops, the neighborhood schools, and parks and plazas. While some neighborhoods retain their unique character even as the community evolves, other new neighborhoods take shape Downtown and around transit stations. Businesses, buildings and housing types reflect the identity of individual neighborhoods and the diversity of the community.

- Downtown is a collection of vibrant, thriving, walkable neighborhoods with distinct identities and is one of the region’s prominent urban centers.
- Walkable neighborhood centers like BelRed, Wilburton, Crossroads, Eastgate and Factoria, flourish as hubs of housing, transit and commerce.
- Older, predominantly residential neighborhoods are well maintained and retain their more relaxed, quiet, green character.
- There are housing options for families with children, couples, singles, seniors and those with special needs.
- Public places and streets are the community’s ‘front porch’ where people meet and celebrate and where design expresses individual neighborhood identities.
- In all neighborhoods, people are safe and have access to shops, services, open space, recreation and healthcare.

Natural and Sustainable

Bellevue’s abundant natural green spaces, land and water resources, fish and wildlife habitat and urban landscaping evoke the feeling of a “City in a Park.” Trails, greenways and urban paths provide access to parks, open space and lakes, and carry Bellevue’s park-like atmosphere throughout the city. The community embraces its stewardship of the environment by protecting and restoring environmental systems, building with less

environmental impact and finding ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The air and water are cleaner, salmon runs are increasing in local creeks, the urban forest is recovering and the tree canopy is expanding.

- Even as parts of the city become more urban, the city retains its green character and people have access to natural open space.
- Environmental systems are being restored, improving habitat and water quality.
- Surrounded by Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, Bridle Trails State Park, Coal Creek Park and Cougar Mountain Wildland Park, there is nearby access to the water, major parks and great open space.
- The Eastside Rail Corridor trail and Mountains to Sound Greenway are green spines that provide amazing urban hiking and bicycling opportunities and add to the park-like character of the city.
- With immediate access to parks, recreation, urban hikes and great walking streets, people in Bellevue enjoy healthier lives.

Mobile and Connected

Situated at the region's crossroads of transportation and technology, Bellevue is connected regionally and globally. Access to wireless networks and to ultra-high speed internet service connects Bellevue residents and businesses with each other and the world. A diverse transportation system helps people and goods get to where they need to go. People are less reliant on automobiles for getting around, having convenient, workable alternatives, including frequent transit service, enhanced use of car and van pools and an integrated pedestrian and bicycle system. Connections to light rail serve the parts of the city experiencing the greatest growth.

- Land use and transportation are planned together to provide enhanced mobility and walkable urban environments less dominated by the auto.
- Neighborhoods have evolved to include a network of mobility options including light rail and bus rapid transit, complete streets that support cars, buses, pedestrians and bicycles, and trails.
- Local, regional and global access helps commercial areas thrive.
- Air quality is healthful and environmental and neighborhood impacts related to transportation are reduced.
- Free wireless networks are available in many public areas, providing increased access to information and technology, while internet infrastructure supports the growth of the tech sector and other businesses.

A Place of Opportunity

Bellevue's economic strength exists because of the innovation and creativity of the educated and culturally diverse people who work and live here. They drive international corporations that lead the world in technological change and are the creative spark of

local businesses and startups. The economic opportunities in Bellevue have resulted in prosperity for many. While not all in the community started with the same means, all have access to education, training and jobs that allow them to advance economically.

- Opportunities to prosper are accessible to everyone through education and training, while local colleges and universities stimulate economic innovation.
- Families are attracted to Bellevue schools that have a national reputation as one of the best public school systems in the country.
- A variety of commercial areas, from small neighborhood centers to Downtown Bellevue, support businesses of all scales, making Bellevue a great place to launch and grow a business.
- People who work here can afford to live here.
- Local and global businesses recognize Bellevue as a smart place to invest.

The Eastside's Center of Commerce & Culture

Downtown Bellevue is alive with a vibrant mix of restaurants, stores, entertainment, hotels, office and housing. Locals love the offerings of performances and cultural events close to home, which also attract people from throughout the region. Vibrant public places make Downtown, Crossroads, BelRed and Eastgate/Factoria dynamic cultural districts. Meanwhile, art and culture are part of the everyday fabric of people's lives in the form of education, involvement, performances and public art.

- Downtown Bellevue attracts people to see world-renowned art and performers at the annual Arts Fair, the Bellevue Arts Museum, the Downtown Performing Arts Center and other venues.
- Businesses and the "creative class" are attracted to Bellevue's culturally rich and ethnic diverse community.
- The BelRed arts district is known as a place for artist shops, studios and schools.
- The youth have amazing access to arts through the Bellevue Youth Theater, Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra and Bellevue Schools programs.

Responsive to People in Need

Bellevue is a community with a strong social fabric that helps it respond to the needs of all in the community, including youth, older adults, people with low incomes and people with special needs. Community groups, businesses, the faith community, the city organization and individuals work together to address the needs of the community.

- The city is a catalyst for public and private engagement to respond to the changing needs of its people.
- The community is prepared for and ready to respond to unforeseen emergencies.

A City that Works

The community is proud to live in a well-managed city. Appropriate foresight and investment has allowed the city to maintain its aging infrastructure. New investments have improved streets, sidewalks, utilities and other facilities as needed. The majority of the city's growth is focused into areas that can be efficiently served. All of this has been done in a way that is sensitive to and helps reinforce the character and quality of the city's neighborhoods.

- People of all backgrounds feel connected and are engaged in their neighborhood, the city and the larger community.
- City actions and public infrastructure serve the city efficiently while also adding to the character and quality of the community.
- Jurisdictions throughout the region work together effectively on pressing issues such as growth management, economic development, transportation, housing affordability, water supply, environmental protection and climate change.

DRAFT

MEETING THE CHALLENGES FOR TOMORROW

Bellevue 2025

Imagine the Year 2025

The following is a mental picture of Bellevue's ideal future, assuming the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan are successfully realized.

A “City in a Park”

Bellevue's open space network reinforces its reputation as a City in a Park, providing abundant access to the natural environment, continued development of community parks, and newer neighborhood and mini-parks. An extensive waterfront park opens Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown and other parts of West Bellevue and, on the other side of the city, a major park provides swimming and boat access to Lake Sammamish. The city's open spaces are linked with trails and greenways that provide wildlife corridors, pedestrian routes, neighborhood connections, and access to magnificent views of the lakes and mountains.

A dedicated steward of environmental quality, where key natural features are preserved and restored

Bellevue takes the lead in promoting a quality, sustainable urban environment. Growth is occurring without harm to environmentally sensitive land and water resources. Many wetlands, riparian corridors and shorelines are protected in their natural state; others are being restored so they provide higher quality fish and wildlife habitat. As a result, more salmon are found in local creeks and streams, fish are spawning in several locations. The urban forest is recovering, and in many parts of Bellevue the tree canopy is increasing. These gains have been achieved through a combination of city programs, incentives, education, and regulations.

A model of superior urban design and “people places”

Commitment to urban design has helped make Bellevue a city of distinction, with “people places” that nurture a sense of community and neighborhoods that retain their unique character despite growth



Sidewalk cafes and retail shops bring local residents and business people to Old Bellevue.

and change. Key historic features are preserved, linking us to our past. Bellevue has completed the annexation of land within its urban growth boundary, and all development now occurs under the city’s design and environmental protection guidelines.

A community of diverse and vibrant neighborhoods

High quality neighborhoods make Bellevue a “great place to live.” Individual homes are well maintained, as are the public facilities that serve the residents. Remodeling and upgrading have made older neighborhoods attractive to young families, while respectful development has enabled these neighborhoods to retain their character. At the other end of the spectrum, new, higher density neighborhoods thrive in the Downtown and in mixed-use areas like Factoria.



The Crossroads Park serves a diverse community.

Neighborhood shopping centers have redeveloped to meet the needs of nearby residents, and all Bellevue neighborhoods are now linked to schools, parks, and commercial areas by a complete pedestrian system of sidewalks and trails.

A city that meets the housing needs of all citizens

The diversity of housing types and densities reflects the variety of needs in the community and Bellevue’s changing demographics. The city has options for families with children, couples, singles, and seniors. Some of these options are innovative, such as transit-oriented development, cottages and other small-lot single family housing, and accessory dwelling units. Bellevue’s support of regional efforts to create affordable housing has paid off, and people who work in Bellevue can afford to live here. Affordable housing options are available for retail and personal service workers, a significant part of Bellevue’s workforce, and for residents with low incomes or special needs.

A regional economic center with a strong and diverse economy

Bellevue’s economy is dynamic and resilient, due in part to its highly educated workforce. Firms employ people in such fields as technology, health care, finance,

law, professional services and international trade. Attracted to the quality of life in this community, energetic and talented workers create a culture of innovation and new companies offer solid family-wage jobs. Retail employment continues to be another strong focus, and tourism is an expanding industry as entertainment and cultural amenities flourish.

A city with a great Downtown—viable, livable, and memorable

Downtown Bellevue is the hub of the Eastside’s economy, with a vibrant mix of office and retail employment, arts and cultural attractions, hotels, and housing, linked to the Puget Sound region by regional freeways and the High Capacity Transit system. More than 60,000 people work here, and almost 14,000 live in high quality apartments and condominiums. Vital residential neighborhoods surround the core and, in the southwest corner, Old Bellevue thrives as a unique area with a strong sense of Bellevue’s past. The entire Downtown is pedestrian-friendly, and is humming with activity in a variety of public places, including the NE 6th Street Pedestrian Corridor and Bellevue Way’s “grand shopping street.” Restaurants, theaters, museums, nightclubs, a major performing arts center and other attractions bring Downtown alive 18 hours a day.



Mixed-use developments offer additional housing choices for residents.

The Eastside’s transportation hub, offering an array of mobility choices

The city’s transportation system is based on moving people and goods rather than moving cars. Auto dependency has been reduced by convenient and workable alternatives, including connections to the High Capacity Transit system, frequent neighborhood transit service, enhanced use of carpools, and an integrated pedestrian and bicycle system. Emphasis is on balance, not on the use of one mode to the exclusion of others. Both land use and transportation work together to provide mobility and to shape a high quality urban environment, less dominated by the auto and more sensitive to air quality, energy conservation, and protection of livable neighborhoods.

The center of arts and culture for the Eastside

Supported by strong leadership in both the public and private sectors, Bellevue has a national reputation for the visibility and strength of its arts and cultural offerings and the capacity of its cultural institutions. Unique and dynamic cultural districts have emerged in Downtown, Crossroads, and Eastgate/Factoria, which enhance the vitality of these mixed use neighborhoods.



The Bellevue Arts & Crafts fair draws more than 300,000 visitors to Bellevue each July.

Based on these attractions, and its ability to celebrate its ethnic and cultural diversity through the arts, Bellevue is known as a “must visit” place in the region. This enhances the city’s attractiveness to workers and residents of all ages seeking creativity and innovation.

A community that cares for people and families in need

Bellevue is a community that cares for and nurtures all of its people. The city plays an active role in shaping and supporting a system of human services which not only assists people in times of need, but also promotes the development of healthy individuals and families. The city is a recognized leader in engaging both public and private partners throughout the region to respond to the changing needs of its people, including youth and seniors and individuals with special needs. Overlake Hospital provides “state of the art” medical care.

A safe and secure community

Bellevue residents continue to feel secure and safe, as the city places the highest priority on protecting the community and preventing crime. Preparedness remains a major focus to assure that the city can respond effectively in an emergency.

A city served by outstanding community facilities and services

Public infrastructure is in excellent shape. The city has built new streets, sidewalks, utilities and other facilities as needed, and has restored much of its older

infrastructure. All of this has been done in a way that is sensitive to and helps reinforce the character and quality of the city's neighborhoods. Bellevue has financed these maintenance, restoration and construction projects by carefully prioritizing needs, making the most efficient use of



The Eastgate Park & Ride garage provides parking for transit users along I-90.

limited funding, and in some

cases finding innovative new funding sources and partnerships. The Bellevue School District has a national reputation as one of the best public school systems in the country. Bellevue Community College educates workers in the latest job skills and enriches Eastside residents with its continuing education offerings.

A leader in meeting regional challenges

Jurisdictions across the Eastside and the Central Puget Sound region have realized they must work together more effectively if the region is to make headway on such pressing issues as transportation, water supply, and environmental protection. Bellevue is recognized and valued as a leader in finding common ground and effective solutions to these interjurisdictional issues. The region continues to work together on growth management, resulting in closer-in, transit-friendly development that is less expensive to serve with public infrastructure. Farms, forests and open space are protected, and a highly valued part of this region's character.

An active and engaged community

Bellevue enjoys high levels of civic engagement as community groups, businesses and individuals work with city staff to identify and achieve community goals. The city makes citizen involvement a high priority, and Bellevue residents feel an increasing interconnectedness and sense of community. People



Citizens in Bellevue get involved.

get involved, volunteer, and vote. The development of more community gathering places facilitates public discourse and interaction. There is an increasing capacity in Bellevue neighborhoods to participate in matters of interest, to help shape the community, and to engage in problem-solving.



3000 Landerholm Circle SE • Bellevue, WA 98007-6484 • www.bellevuecollege.edu

January 31, 2014

Paul Inghram
City of Bellevue
450 110th Ave. NE
Bellevue, WA 98009

Re: Comments on the City of Bellevue 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update

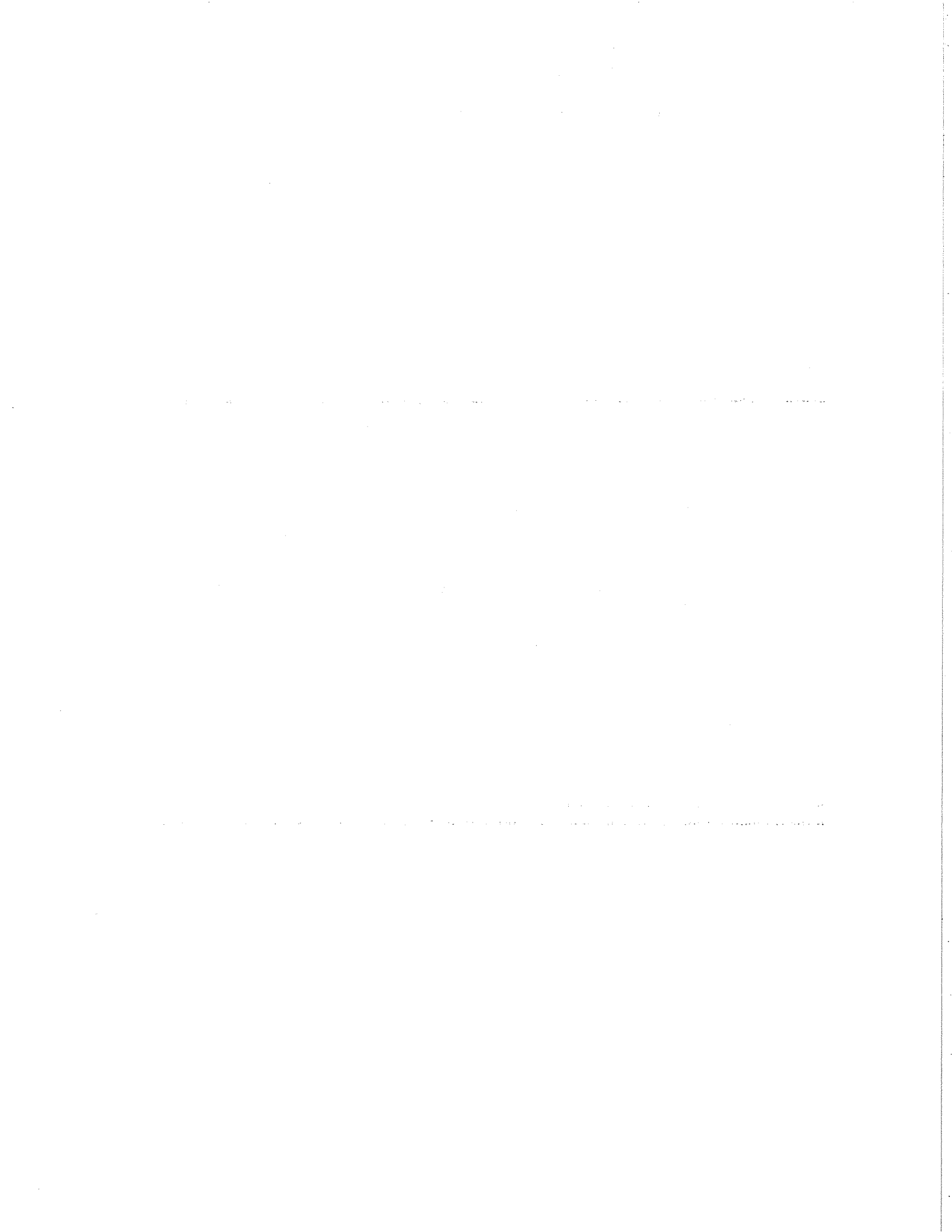
Dear Mr. Inghram:

Bellevue College wishes to submit the enclosed comments on the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update for the City of Bellevue. Comments have been informed by the current Comprehensive Plan, City of Bellevue Land Use Code and the Eastgate/I-90 Plan.

Bellevue College would like to collaborate with the City of Bellevue in identifying solutions to issues that impact the college's current and future student body.

Sincerely,

Ray White
Vice President of Administrative Services



To: Paul Ingraham, City of Bellevue
From: Bellevue College
RE: Comments to City of Bellevue Comprehensive 2014 Plan Update
Date:

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Update. Bellevue College presents a unique planning scenario for the City. The College is a major institution and asset of the City of Bellevue.

- 36,000 unduplicated students annually enroll at Bellevue College – equivalent to roughly 30% of City of Bellevue’s population – and is the 3rd largest higher education institution in Washington.
- Bellevue College contributed \$116.5 million directly to the local economy in 2011 through operating and capital expenditures, including salaries and benefits for over 2,400 full- and part-time employees;¹
- \$55.4 million in indirect contributions through the positive economic impact of employees’ enhanced skills and higher earnings.²

Bellevue College seeks to collaborate with City of Bellevue on finding and implementing solutions to issues of **housing and transportation** that impact the College community and residents of Bellevue.

Students Need Housing Solutions

Access to housing remains a serious issue for students of Bellevue College, impacting their livelihood, safety, and academic achievement. If they cannot afford rent then they move elsewhere, exacerbating costs of transportation and traffic.

- Subsidized housing, such as Section 8, requires students have an income, and it prioritizes families and people with disabilities in King County.³
- Those searching for apartments in City of Bellevue encounter rents upward of \$15,000 per year, well above what many college students can afford.⁴
- In response to these issues Bellevue College has initiated discussions for student housing on campus; however new construction cannot serve all the various housing alternatives students need.

LUC 20.20.140 – Rooming Houses

Increase access to high-occupancy housing. City of Bellevue enacted an emergency ordinance in September 2013 that limits the number of unrelated individuals who can live within single-family house, reducing occupants from 6 to 4. This ordinance intends to address a business model that increases the capacity of single-family units and accommodates multiple rental agreements. Bellevue College suggests adjusting this ordinance in a way that does not exclude solutions to the shortage of affordable housing. If the ordinance remains as written it will disproportionately impact students who cannot afford or access multi-family housing or force them to seek housing elsewhere, incurring higher transportation costs and transportation impacts in Bellevue.

LUC 20.20.128 – Affordable Housing Incentives

Increase housing alternatives with market-based solutions or targeted housing regulations.

Subsidized, affordable housing is not a solution for students, since students, as well as many other residents, don’t typically qualify. City of Bellevue incentivizes the construction of subsidized, affordable

¹ Bellevue College 2010-2011 Operating Budget

² “The Economic Contribution of Bellevue College,” EMSI Research, March 2011.

³ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, “Questions and Answers on the Eligibility of Students for Assisted Housing Under the Multifamily Housing Project-based Section 8 Program,” accessed January 2014, portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC_20482.pdf.

⁴ “Local Affordability Index,” HUD-USDOT, accessed 12/2013, <http://www.locationaffordability.info/lai.aspx>.

units in the Land Use Code; however, this strategy for addressing affordability is incomplete. Market solutions, such as small units, high-density housing, and targeted regulations, such as rent ceilings, protect or promote access to affordable units. Such policies protect shared-living arrangements, enact rent ceilings, or provide incentives for multi-family complexes.

Eastgate/I-90 Plan – Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

The Eastgate I/90 Plan states that nearly 800 residential units could be created through TOD as well as pedestrian connections to Bellevue College. This strategy accomplishes its goal if housing in the TOD area attracts students. Bellevue College wishes to continue collaborating with City of Bellevue in identifying designs that solve housing shortages for students as well as accomplish the development goals outlined in the Eastgate/I-90 Plan.

Transportation Plans

City of Bellevue is an instrumental partner in decreasing the impact of commuting to campus. Accessibility to multiple modes of transportation has allowed Bellevue College to reduce the impact of its size through aggressive transportation management. Single occupancy student vehicle commute trips decreased by 11% between 2010 and 2013. New parking fees on students, staff, and faculty fund ORCA card subsidies, and contribute to about half of the student population using alternatives such as transit and rideshare.

Eastgate/I-90 Plan

Transportation and Housing Goals Overlap with Students

The Factoria/Eastgate area of Bellevue has been identified as a location of focus for transit and pedestrians. The Plan identifies the potential for pedestrian friendly connections between TOD and Bellevue College. There is a significant opportunity to advance Transportation objectives if the TOD significantly addresses demand for student housing.

Policy TR-8: Incorporate transit-supportive and pedestrian-friendly design features in new development through the development review process.

This policy has significantly improved pedestrian and transportation alternatives accessing campus. We encourage the City of Bellevue to continue this policy, as it has done in the Eastgate I-90/Plan, pedestrian/cycling connections on 145th and 142nd.

Conclusion

While City of Bellevue has shown leadership in planning for transportation alternatives in the Eastgate/I-90 Area, housing for students remains a significant problem for students, especially those enrolled in workforce retraining, transfer programs, and international programs. Bellevue College hopes to collaborate with the City of Bellevue on policy and development solutions that serve students and the community.



DATE: February 5, 2014
TO: Chair Tebelius and the Planning Commission
FROM: Nicholas Matz AICP 425-452-5371
SUBJECT: 2014 annual Comprehensive Plan amendment applications received

We received two privately-initiated site-specific applications for the 2014 annual Comprehensive Plan amendments. Their application information is provided below. This memo is provided to you to alert you to these recent applications. You will be asked at a later study session date to consider the expansion of geographic scoping for each of these applications. A Threshold Review hearing will be scheduled in the future.

If you have any questions on these proposals, please let staff know so that we can prepare the necessary information.

14-123945 AC Crossroads Subarea Comprehensive Plan Amendment

This proposal would replace **Policy S-CR-66** in the Crossroads Subarea Plan. This policy applies to the Unigard (now called the Bellevue Technology Center) site located east of 156th Avenue NE between Northrup Way and NE 24th Street.

The existing policy:

Policy S-CR-66: Office use as a conditional use is appropriate for the property east of 156th Avenue NE between Northrup Way and NE 24th Street (commonly known as Unigard).

Discussion: This area should be developed under a conditional use permit with attention given to retaining large stands of trees, views through the site from adjacent streets and the open character of the site.

The policy proposed by the applicant for this site:

Policy S-CR-XX: Encourage potential uses and/ or development standards for the property east of 156th Avenue NE between Northrup (sic) Way and NW (sic) 24th Street (commonly known as the Bellevue Technology Center, formerly the Unigard campus) that allow additional development on the property compatible with neighboring development, that address potential traffic congestion and the preservation of the Property's existing open character, tree stands and views through the site from adjacent streets.

14-123964 AC Mountvue Place Comprehensive Plan Amendment

This proposal would amend the map designation for 4.67 acres of property at 14510 NE 20th Street in the BelRed Subarea from (split) BR-CR and BR-GC to (all) BR-CR.



Planning Commission Schedule

February 12, 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

<u>Date</u>	<u>Tentative Agenda Topics</u>
Feb 26	Economic Development Strategy Comprehensive Plan Update 2014 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments Eastgate Plan
Mar 12	Speakers Session – Community Health Introduce upcoming code amendments
Mar 26	Joint commissions meeting – diversity forum
April 9	<i>At South Bellevue Community Center</i> Eastgate Plan Comprehensive Plan Update Potential review of code amendments
April 23	Comprehensive Plan Update
May 14	Comprehensive Plan Update
May 28	Potential review of code amendments
June 11	Comprehensive Plan Update
June 25	Comprehensive Plan Update
July 9	Potential review of code amendments
July 23	tbd

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

January 8, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Ferris

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Inghram, Scott MacDonald, Department of Planning and Community Development; Patrick Foran, Camron Parker, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Ron Sher, Metrovation/Crossroads; Heidi Dean, Newport Hills Community Club

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:44 p.m. by Chair Tebelius who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Laing, who arrived at 7:36 p.m., and Commissioner Ferris, who was excused.

Chair Tebelius introduced new Commissioner John deVadoss.

Councilmember Robertson praised the Commission for scheduling meetings in different neighborhoods in the city in an attempt to find out what should be included in the next Comprehensive Plan.

3. SPEAKERS EVENT - NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS AND COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACES

Chair Tebelius introduced Ron Sher of Metrovation/Crossroads. He said in undertaking any project, the bottom line is that retailers and tenants will not be there unless they can make money. As the Commission evaluates what is needed to make the community work, it should keep in mind the fact that retailers and tenants must be visible, must have some parking, must have enough critical mass in terms of other businesses, and their customers must be able to get to them easily. People like to shop in local community areas in part because they will meet those they know.

Mr. Sher explained that the concept of third places was described by Ray Oldenburg in his book *The Great Good Place*. He implies that in the lives of people there are three places: the place people live and interact with their families, the place where people work and interact with

workmates, and the places where people can sit and encounter others. Third places include spaces like parks, cafés and plazas. The best third places are predicated on civility.

The question is how to get neighborhoods to be third places. Density helps because where there is density people can walk or bike to their destinations. Once people get into their cars it is easier to visit more distant locations and the neighborhood locations often lose out. Third places need several things going on; it is difficult enough to make third places happen, and their locations should be chosen with an eye on having enough things happening to serve as a draw, including successful retail and services. Cities can help third places thrive by making a commitment to defer some costs to the tenants or by providing excellent programming aimed at drawing crowds. People have to be trained to come to third places. Property values around great third places tend to rise as the gathering places thrive.

Commissioner Carlson asked about parking and Mr. Sher said parking is needed but not too much of it. A parking supply large enough to accommodate everyone all of the time argues against a sense of neighborhood, but there should be enough teaser parking to give people the feeling that they usually can park there. Parking for employees should be provided, but it should be hidden. Over time, successful centers can get away with less parking. Whether or not to charge for parking depends on a number of factors, including retail rents and property values. Certainly areas that are struggling, and probably all suburban centers, should provide free parking.

Commissioner Hamlin noted that there was talk at one time of developing residential as part of the Crossroads shopping center. Mr. Sher said talks are under way with a senior housing developer about senior housing at Crossroads. That will give people a way to age in place in a welcoming community, and will at the same time support the Crossroads businesses. The same principle could be applied to a number of areas.

Answering a question from a member of the audience, Mr. Sher said tearing down the old movie theater, developing a new theater and an anchor grocery store provided evidence to the community that Crossroads was moving forward. That was followed with the public market, several restaurants and entertainment, along with a commitment to programming and advertising. No attempt was ever made to compete with Bellevue Square, rather the strengths and diversity of the Crossroads area was made the focus and celebrated. The high-density multifamily apartments in the Crossroads area has certainly contributed to the success of the center.

Commissioner Carlson commented that it is easy to relax at the Crossroads shopping center because it feels safe and he asked how the issue of security is handled. Mr. Sher said one of the most important steps is taken on the leasing side. Diversity and energy are important, and there should be things for the kids to do, but not so much that all of the kids will be drawn to hang out there. In the early days when tenants were desperately needed a lot of kids did hang out there, even so a video arcade tenant was turned down because it would have invited the wrong mix. Crossroads shoppers represent all the ages and much of that is due to managing the tenant mix.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Hilhorst, Mr. Sher said in time the shopping center may want to go multistory, but that will not occur for many years as Bellevue continues to evolve.

Chair Tebelius thanked Mr. Sher for his participation. She then introduced Newport Hills Community Club president Heidi Dean.

Ms. Dean said connectedness is what makes neighborhoods healthy. Connectedness evokes a sense of belonging and being welcomed, as well as a sense of being a part of and invested in something. The benefits of connected neighborhoods include emotional health and a sense of wellbeing, improved safety, a strengthened neighborhood identity, and improved property values. Connectedness also reduces the need to travel far from home for social opportunities. The opposite of connectedness results in political and emotional isolation as well as reduced property values.

There are three components to creating neighborhood connectedness: physical, social and communication/technological. Physical connectedness involves walkability and being able to easily get from one place to another using sidewalks and pathways. Social connectedness involves gathering places and spaces, or third places. Newport Hills is fortunate to have a shopping center that can fill a portion of the need, but social connectedness can also come about through park programming and at churches and schools. Communication/technological connectedness comes about through information sharing in the form of bulletin boards, kiosks, newsletters, informational signage, and online resources.

The characteristics of a health community gathering place are well-lit and open spaces, spaces that are pleasant and comfortable to be in both indoors and outdoors, the potential for quiet interactions, versatility in terms of usage, spaces that facilitate communications between people, and accessibility for all. Technology has made it possible for people to reach out and touch people around the world, but many long for a return to being in touch with the people next door. Places in which to make that happen are needed; such places include open spaces, cafés, town squares and meeting rooms.

Ms. Dean said the Newport Hills Shopping Center is both a blessing and a curse for the local community. It is a blessing when it is full and there is lots of business going on, but it is a curse when it is empty and unused. Gathering places can be identified, however, through an inventory of neighborhood assets, including schools, churches, parks, retail and commercial facilities, clubs, libraries, and even vacant lots where the owner gives permission for their use. In any event, concerted efforts on the part of communities are needed to make them successful.

Commissioner Hamlin asked if consideration has been given to siting something at the Newport Hills Shopping Center that would draw from more than just the local community. Ms. Dean said what is needed is a balance of businesses with a local and more widespread appeal. She said there had been talks about partnering with the Spiritwood folks and with Bellevue College representatives about redeveloping the shopping center with housing above retail for students, but it was determined to be too far from the college. Some zoning changes may be necessary to bring about a successful conclusion.

Chair Tebelius asked Mr. Bill Pace what was behind his decision to expand his fruit stand business to Newport Hills. He responded by saying that the East Link light rail line will eventually shut down his operation in South Bellevue. He said his interest in Newport Hills stemmed in part from the urging of Ms. Dean, in part from the fact that the neighborhood is fully supportive, and in part from the belief that his business could help revitalize the neighborhood shopping center.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Martin Selig, 3123 163rd Place NE, spoke to the idea of getting neighborhoods to work together. He said his neighborhood of Ashbrook, which has 19 homes, has a wetland which at one time was overgrown with blackberries. Several in the community took it upon themselves to chop down the blackberries and replant with native plants. Ultimately the action brought the community members together. The Commission should similarly provide opportunities for citizens to improve their neighborhoods, particularly with regard to parks and vacant properties.

Chair Tebelius noted that the city of Mercer Island called for citizens to volunteer to help chop down invasive plant species. The program has made a big difference.

Ms. Tandana Tolug, 15923 NE 27th Place, said in Redmond said an organization called Green Redmond partners with the city to assist in sprucing up parks and trails. The same model could be implemented in Bellevue.

Commissioner Hilhorst said Newcastle has a similar program, and indeed Bellevue has a partnership program. In Newport Hills the citizens worked with the parks department to plant trees at the pipeline trailhead.

Councilmember Robertson said the Arbor Day program is active in Bellevue as well as other volunteer programs. The city does make some matching dollars available.

Commissioner Laing noted that the city also has a fairly robust network of neighborhood associations, and the city's recently hired neighborhood outreach manager, Michael McCormick Huentelman, who is putting a lot of energy into his role. There is information available on the city's website.

BREAK

7. STUDY SESSION: Parks and Community Centers

Parks and Community Services Director Patrick Foran said the mission of his department is to help build a healthy community. A lot of elements must come together in order to create third places, and the people are more important than the place. In addition to parks and recreation responsibilities, the department focuses on human services and adult misdemeanor probation. On the volunteer front, the department spearheads three major volunteer opportunities: Stewardship Saturdays, the Master Gardeners Program at Lake Hills, and the Master Naturalist Program. There are other volunteer programs as well to which citizens donate some 18,000 volunteer hours annually. It is good to see work done, but the real strategy is to see people come together around a common task. The city is also focused on creating commercial third places.

Mr. Foran said for planning purposes it is critical to understand why people come to third places. Some spaces are successful and others are not and it all comes down to what people want to do and how they envision the space.

Bellevue has been a gathering places for generations. In the early 1900s the Leschi ferry from

Seattle let its passengers off at Meydenbauer Bay. The passengers would then make their way to the Wildwood Park bandstand where they would gather. Currently people choose to use parks for a variety of purposes: some want to sit alone, others want to join in groups for fun and recreation. Downtown Park is a good example where people can come to the park alone and sit alone but still watch people and enjoy all the activities. People come to Bellevue parks to connect with others having similar interests and abilities. They want places in which they can feel comfortable and welcomed, and community centers certainly fill that desire for persons of all ages and ability levels. Parks and community center programs create environments in which people who do not necessarily know one another participate collectively. Third places are also relied on as places to remember things of importance or significance.

Mr. Foran said the Lake Hills and Newport Hills communities were developed specifically to accomplish community. They both include a neighborhood shopping area, recreation facilities, a park and a school. The neighborhood schools in Bellevue serve as third places, but additionally throughout the city there are community organizations that are actively providing third places. Cyber space is quickly gaining ground as a de facto fourth place. The city has on the books an intent to link all of the parks in the system via trails and paths, and stream restoration is a large part of that element. Done right, the trails and streams can become third places in and of themselves. The Burlington Northern/Sante Fe right-of-way is a large-scale opportunity that will over time have a bit impact in leveraging other developments that may want to create a third place by serving as a facilitator. The pedestrian corridor is also a connection feature that serves as a third place; ultimately it will connect to Meydenbauer Bay.

The city has for several years been working with the Newport Hills community and the owner of the Newport Hills Shopping Center to bring about a success. A meeting of the minds is needed relative to mutual and competing interests. The Commission will have a role to play in encouraging that to happen.

The Comprehensive Plan should include an acknowledgment of how important the school district policy is relative to allowing children to attend the schools in their neighborhoods. That policy plays a very important role in keeping Bellevue's neighborhoods strong.

Commissioner Laing said he would like to see a multimodal pedestrian/bicycle grade-separated path following the light rail alignment through the city. He suggested the coming of light rail gives the city a legacy opportunity to provide for safe pedestrian/bicycle connectivity along an easy grade. The city should adopt a sidewalk/trail standard for Sound Transit to follow as they tear up and rebuild facilities along the light rail alignment. Mr. Foran agreed.

7. STUDY SESSION: Comprehensive Plan Update

A. Neighborhood Centers and Community Gathering Places

Comprehensive Planning Manager Paul Inghram briefly reviewed the comments made by the speakers relative to what works well and the achievements accomplished. He asked the Commissioners to think about the policies needed to set things in motion with regard to neighborhoods centers and community gathering places.

Chair Tebelius observed that the restaurant located next to the Lake Hills library for many years served as a community gathering place. She noted that it has since burned down and she asked if in such cases the city gets actively involved in encouraging a similar use to locate there. Mr.

Inghram said there have over the years been local institutions that for one reason or another are no longer around, and the city is keenly aware of how much they are missed by the local populations. He allowed, however, that the city does not have a policy calling for active involvement in seeing similar commercial uses brought in.

Mr. Inghram said streets are not often thought of as public places, but they can often be transformed into public places to accommodate certain events. Museums and churches also serve as third places. He shared with the Commissioners a map of known gathering places and noted concentrations in Factoria, the east part of Bel-Red, Crossroads, and in the downtown, as well as the city's parks, community centers, visitor centers, schools and churches. He urged the Commission to consider the health of the existing commercial neighborhood centers; to consider how to leverage some of the non-commercial spaces; and to consider what if anything should be done in those areas where there are gaps.

Chair Tebelius observed that commercial gathering places must be profitable or they will not remain. Mr. Inghram agreed and pointed out that in 2007 the city worked closely with the Crossroads community and Mr. Sher to create more of an interface between the shopping center and the park. Traditionally, parks in Bellevue have been intentionally designed to be isolated, but more recently that view has been tempered with an eye on energizing adjacent properties. Various pieces are in place in Newport Hills awaiting reimagining that will connect them in ways that will leverage each.

Answering a question asked by Chair Tebelius, Mr. Inghram said the element of closeness has two components. First is the dimensional standard that measures how far one is physically from a third place asset, and there are some areas in the city that are not within a comfortable walking distance from a gathering place. Second is the fact that with the development patterns associated with residential neighborhoods, even being dimensionally close does not mean it is easy to get there. The experience of getting from one place to another certainly is a critical factor to the success of neighborhood centers and gathering places. At the same time, no one has suggested that every neighborhood should have the exact same opportunities and the same number of amenities within an easy distance.

Commissioner Laing pointed out that community gathering places most often include establishments that sell food. If the challenge is a lack of desirable places that provide food, the bigger question would be whether or not there is something from a land use policy standpoint that must be done to allow for food establishments, even if only on a small or limited-scale basis. Most of the larger places include some food services and people do tend to congregate there. Chair Tebelius suggested the issue may in fact be one of economics rather than zoning.

Mr. Inghram said a key question is how to keep zoning from getting in the way while continuing the long-standing policy of protecting the individual identity and character of each neighborhood.

Commissioner Hilhorst pointed out that progress relative to the Newport Hills Shopping Center stalled because the site was lumped in with the Neighborhood Business zone, which applies to multiple areas around the city. The community tried to take an area of 20,000 square feet and allow it to be parted out so that multiple businesses could locate in there, but the zoning did not allow that. Changing the code to accommodate Newport Hills would have in fact been injurious to North Towne by allowing for the construction of a very large space. The Comprehensive Plan should look at ways to move away from a one-size-fits-all approach to a flexible approach that

can be made to fit the individual locations.

Commissioner Laing commented that the approach in place in Bellevue is that zoning and Comprehensive Plan designations must nearly mirror each other. Comprehensive Plan changes are cumbersome but are allowed to occur annually, whereas zoning changes that are site-specific can be accomplished relatively quickly through a quasi-judicial process. The process in fact makes it very difficult to be responsive and flexible. The Commission may want to recommend to the Council adopting a different model like many jurisdictions in the state have done which allow for a variety of uses under general Comprehensive Plan designations.

Commissioner Hamlin commented that the policies in the Comprehensive Plan are in fact rather broad in defining the Comprehensive Plan designations. Without going too far, it might make sense to allow for some variation within the zones as they relate to specific areas that would result in a Newport Hills Neighborhood Business and an Old Bellevue Neighborhood Business.

Chair Tebelius asked if it would take Council approval to move in that direction. Mr. Inghram said he did not believe that would be necessary. He suggested the Commission should first work on policy language that would provide some aim and leaving the task of remapping the entire city to become a work program item to be addressed over time.

B. Urban Design

Assistant Planner Scott MacDonald explained that the Urban Design element of the Comprehensive Plan is about people and design. It is about people in the sense of how residents, visitors and workers experience the city, and it is about design in the sense that it guides the built environment in the city. The goal of the element is to create a city that is dynamic and engaging, aesthetically appealing, and functionally understandable. The element guides private and public development and investments. The element is currently divided into four main sections: 1) design quality; 2) public places and connections; 3) community design; and 4) landmarks and historic resources.

In 2004 the city made some modest updates to the urban design policies. The planned development of Bel-Red, the building boom in the downtown, increased diversity of the population, and the updated growth projections that have come about since 2004 all necessitate a need to once again review the policies. Mr. MacDonald said staff have identified policy approach, arts and culture, pedestrian space, neighborhood centers and community gathering centers, and environmental design as key topics in need of special attention during the update process.

Urban design applies citywide and evokes the vision of Bellevue. However, within the individual neighborhoods there should be room for a more diverse palette for defining character.

Commissioner deVadoss stressed the need to look for patterns in reviewing the policies in terms of similar geographic areas, populations and attributes to learn what has been done by other cities.

Mr. MacDonald allowed that the current policy language focuses on only two types of neighborhoods: downtown and residential. The update should seek to vary the policy options to apply to the different neighborhoods, particularly given the city's diversity.

Mr. Inghram said the urban design policies get implemented in a number of different ways. They are used during the design review process for major commercial projects. They influence specific programs, including the public art program, and they influence how public projects are designed.

Commissioner Laing said his biggest concern would be to move toward a very prescriptive language in the Comprehensive Plan where aspirational goals and policies absolutely regulate development. The more prescriptive the policy language in the Comprehensive Plan, the more inflexible it becomes. If anything, the Comprehensive Plan language should be streamlined and any overly prescriptive policies should be removed in favor of a higher level of generalization.

Chair Tebelius commented that the Comprehensive Plan is supposed to be broadly written. The tighter and more specific the policy language, the less broad and the less flexible the Comprehensive Plan is. Mr. Inghram agreed policies should not be overly prescriptive.

Commissioner deVadoss cautioned against using diversity as an attribute in the context of the urban design policies in the spirit of not being overly prescriptive. Chair Tebelius concurred, noting that using diversity as a criteria could divide more than unite.

Mr. MacDonald noted that the Urban Design Element is the primary home of the arts and culture policies. Bellevue residents enjoy the arts and the schools have a high level of arts education. Arts practitioners, artists and arts organizations all say that cultural facilities are lacking in Bellevue, and there has been no mechanism for addressing that issue. The top voted idea in Bellevue's Best Ideas was the creation of a large performing arts center in Bellevue.

Mr. MacDonald proposed elevating the section of arts policies to make a clear home for policies regarding arts and culture, and noted the need to expand the policy direction to cover art programs, facilities and the performing arts in addition to public art. He also noted that the public has repeatedly stressed the need to focus on pedestrian spaces relative to walkability, pedestrian amenities, and connections. The pedestrian experience hits on a number of different issues, including public health, aging in place, and even neighborhood identity. The current urban design policies promote similar rather than compatible design; the former is strict whereas the latter allows for variation while still maintaining function. The Commissioners concurred.

Mr. MacDonald said residents have also been clear about their desire to see neighborhoods connected to local services. Specifically they want walkable connections.

Chair Tebelius observed that over the years walkability has meant different things. Some time ago it simply referred to neighborhoods having sidewalks. The sidewalks that have been provided, however, are not necessary conducive to walking in that they are hard, they get dirty and often they are slick with moss. Mr. Inghram explained that walkability goes beyond mere functionality and includes the notion of experience. The city's pedestrian/bicycle plan talks a lot about connectivity across the city. The problem is many cannot even get to things that are already in their neighborhoods. While there is a desire for citywide connections, the urban design policies need to call for local connections that are both safe and enjoyable.

There was agreement that some of the current policies are duplicative and should be either eliminated or consolidated.

Commissioner Hamlin stated that access across the freeways in the downtown is very poor for

pedestrians. He suggested the policies should speak to improving the crossings for the benefit of pedestrians.

Noting in the staff memo the suggestion to identify specific street corridors as priority locations for streetscape improvements, Commissioner Hamlin said that approach would be too specific and prescriptive. Mr. Inghram said there is a map in the current Comprehensive Plan that specifies such streets. He suggested the better approach might be to review the streets individually to determine if they in fact should be called out as needing streetscape improvements. He clarified, however, that the policy does not dictate what the streetscapes should be or which projects will be done in which year; it simply puts in place a program for effecting street beautification.

A motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes was made by Commissioner Hilhorst. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Laing and it carried unanimously.

Mr. MacDonald commented that the current Comprehensive Plan is almost silent with regard to environmental design. What is needed is policy language that allows for solar, wind and any kind of new technology. Low-impact development elements such as green roofs, green walls and rain gardens can both limit stresses on stormwater facilities and serve as interesting for pedestrians to view.

Commissioner Hamlin suggested policy language encompassing sustainability would be broader and would cover more than just building elements. Mr. Inghram noted that the section is intended to address the urban design aspects of environmental building elements.

Commissioner Hilhorst commented that while some wind power generators are relatively small, some are large structures. The policy language should be aimed at making sure things fit in and will not negatively impact views.

8. STUDY SESSION: Eastgate Area Plan

Senior Planner Erika Conkling said the Eastgate/I-90 CAC in its final report recommended a number of changes to the policies for the subarea. The changes were well received by the community and the Council.

Ms. Conkling noted that the Eastgate/I-90 study area included portions of three subareas: Richards Valley, Factoria, and Eastgate. Focusing on the changes proposed for the Richards Valley subarea, Ms. Conkling said the policy recommendations for the light industrial area included maintaining the light industrial uses while allowing for some flexibility to permit technology or research and development uses. The policy recommendations include enhancing and protecting the environmental elements of the subarea.

To the south of the industrial area is what in the report was called the King County site. The area was singled out by the CAC as appropriate for new development, primarily office but with some retail and commercial businesses.

Commissioner Hamlin said the CAC concluded that office fits the King County site because of its low elevation. He stressed, however, that the CAC did not have any strong feelings about how the site should be used.

Chair Tebelius informed the Commissioners that a large capital campaign is under way to raise funds to redevelopment the King County Human Society use on the King County site in Eastgate. The new state-of-the-art facility will serve as a training center for Washington State University veterinarian students. There is the possibility that in time the facility will need to expand to adjacent properties.

Ms. Conkling highlighted the need to make sure a variety of uses will be permitted for the King County site so that as development proposals come in they can be quickly acted on.

Commissioner Laing said it will be necessary to carefully consider the allowed FAR so that the allowed heights can be realized. Commissioner Hamlin clarified that the CAC focused on uses rather than FARs. Ms. Conkling said a process of testing FARs will be done to determine what will work in terms of visual aesthetics and economics.

A motion to extend the meeting for 15 minutes was made by Commissioner Hamlin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Laing and it carried unanimously.

Ms. Conkling the policy changes relative to the Richards Valley subarea will include mention of the Eastgate vision; new language supporting ecological improvements; language regarding pedestrian/bicycle safety; modification of some existing design policies to encourage the city in a park ambiance; and the question of light industrial property.

With regard to the Factoria subarea, Ms. Conkling said most of the recommendations that came out of the CAC reinforced the 2005 Factoria planning effort. Some small changes are needed, however, to incorporate the Eastgate/I-90 CAC's final report. The existing FAR will be maintained, but language regarding the creation of an activity node around the planned transit hub in Loehmann's Plaza would be appropriate. Some height and FAR increases may be appropriate for the area to the east of the T-Mobile headquarters building. The Mountains To Sound Greenway will need to be mentioned, and the land use policies may need some tweaking to include hotels as an allowed use.

Ms. Conkling said the Eastgate subarea has five subdistricts. The proposed transit-oriented development is centered around the existing Eastgate park and ride close to Bellevue College. The area is anticipated to have the greatest increases in uses and development potential. The area will need to be enhanced with some design features marking it as a gateway.

There was agreement to continue review of the Eastgate subarea plan at a future meeting.

9. OTHER BUSINESS - None
10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCILS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS - None
11. COMMITTEE REPORTS - None
12. STAFF REPORTS - None
13. MINUTES
 - A. November 13, 2013

B. December 11, 2013

It was agreed to delay approval of the minutes to the next meeting.

14. NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

A. January 22, 2014

15. ADJOURN

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

Chair Tebelius adjourned the meeting at 10:55 p.m.

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

January 22, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Inghram, Erika Conkling, Janet Lewine, Department of Planning and Community Development; Emily Leslie, Department of Parks and Community Services; Michael Yantis, Human Services Commission; Eileen Rasnack, Network on Aging

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

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 with the exception of Commissioner Hilhorst who arrived at 6:45 p.m.

Chair Tebelius took a moment to introduce Councilmember John Stokes, new Council liaison to the Commission. Councilmember Stokes said he looked forward to working closely with the Commission.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Alex Clark, 11211 NE 68th Street, Apt 3, Kirkland, said he serves the student body at Bellevue College as the environmental and social responsibility representative. He said he has been focused on getting the City Council engaged on issues affecting the students, including the recent emergency housing ordinance. He noted that the students want to be considered and engaged in all planning efforts that will affect Bellevue College.

5. STUDY SESSION: Eastgate Area Plan

Senior Planner Erika Conkling noted that previously the Commission identified three issues for

further review: light industrial properties citywide; the future of the King County site; and the FAR and height recommendations relative to economic feasibility and character compatibility.

Ms. Conkling said there are five subdistricts within the Eastgate subarea portion of the Eastgate/I-90 study. The key focus is on the area called out as appropriate for a transit-oriented development near the park and ride and adjacent to Bellevue College. The recommendation is to create a critical mass with a mix of uses to create a center with a main street having services and ties to Bellevue College. The recommended FAR ranges between 1.5 and 2.0 in buildings ten to twelve stories tall.

Commissioner Carlson asked who the major employers are in the area, not counting car dealerships and the college. Ms. Conkling said there are office developments, including the Lincoln Executive Center, a Key Bank, King County Public Health, Music Works Northwest. For the most part, the corridor is populated with small businesses. T-Mobile is located across I-90 in the Factoria subarea.

Commissioner Ferris noted the CAC included a recommendation encouraging development to charge for parking but suggested that is a function of the market not the city. He said the role of the city in that regard is to adopt policies that discourage surface parking.

Commissioner Ferris also commented that FAR ranging from 1.5 to 2.0 is low. One lesson learned in the Bel-Red corridor is that even with additional height allowed FAR can constrain to the point of making development unviable; the Bel-Red CAC also recommended FAR ranging from 1.5 to 2.0 and testimony was given before the Commission that argued the range was too low to achieve the vision. The same argument can be made for the Eastgate area. Comprehensive Planning Manager Paul Inghram pointed out that the T-Mobile building has an FAR of about 1.25. Commissioner Ferris said the numbers need to be carefully reviewed to make sure there is no disconnect.

Commissioner Hamlin pointed out that the CAC spent most of its time talking about the vision for Eastgate; it spent very little time focused on FAR. Ms. Conkling said a comprehensive analysis on the development potential is planned.

Commissioner Laing said FAR and height are zoning tools that implement Comprehensive Plan policies. He cautioned against being overly prescriptive in drafting policy language to allow for maximum flexibility and said he would not want to see any reference to FAR in a Comprehensive Plan policy.

Councilmember Stokes agreed with Commissioner Hamlin that the CAC talked about height as part of the overall vision for the area. He said FAR was talked about generally but not specifically.

Chair Tebelius commented that currently development in Eastgate does not include highrise buildings so there is more of a feeling of openness. If ten-story buildings are allowed to spread throughout the corridor, the look and feel of the corridor will change dramatically. She also stressed how close the corridor is to residential areas that will ultimately be impacted by increased traffic. Commissioner Hamlin noted that the area near the park and ride was targeted by the CAC as being the most intense, which is separated from residential areas, with lower buildings in the other parts of the study area.

Commissioner Laing noted that the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC has talked about

charging for parking as a means of discouraging people from driving. Stakeholders have come forward, however, to say that the practice can actually price out the people who may have the least access to transit and must commute by automobile. The issue of charging for parking needs to be very carefully thought through.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Ferris, Mr. Inghram explained that Bellevue does not count parking areas toward the FAR calculation. Affordable housing and ground floor retail are also exempted in some zones. Commissioner Ferris suggested that where above-grade parking is developed it should be screened or otherwise hidden by design.

Commissioner Ferris added that the topography in and around the transit-oriented development area means taller buildings there will limit the impact to surrounding single family areas. Ms. Conkling said the CAC put forward some good recommendations for policies about buffering and creating separation between new development and existing single family neighborhoods.

Ms. Conkling said the idea regarding the multimodal main street is to create a pedestrian-friendly area connecting up the hill to Bellevue College, possibly via a terraced walkway with park-like areas. Enhancing the connection will make it more enjoyable and will help to create an off-campus atmosphere for the main street mixed use area. The CAC envisioned bringing the main street notion online through the use of an incentive system tied to increased development potential.

With regard to Bellevue College, Ms. Conkling reiterated the desire of the CAC to promote strong connections between the campus and the transit-oriented development area. She also stressed the need for the city's policies to support the master planning the college is currently undertaking. There is also much to be said in favor of creating connections between the campus and the businesses in the Eastgate core and in Richards Valley. The college does not have much of a street presence at its main entrance on 148th Avenue SE. One way to anchor the entrance would be to include some institutional uses mixed in with retail uses; the retail service uses could serve the college and the adjacent neighborhoods.

Commissioner Laing commented that there is really nothing from a land use standpoint the city can do to facilitate the growth and development of Bellevue College. No current or proposed policies or regulations are standing in the way. It speaks well of the city relative to how the institution is valued that it is called out in the Comprehensive Plan even though the college does not have to comply with them and despite the fact that no prescriptive zoning regulations or design guidelines will be adopted and imposed on the college. Mr. Inghram agreed the city has no prescriptive land use tools to apply to the college, but there are other tools in the kit, not the least of which is having a good relationship with both the college and the state.

Councilmember Stokes said the city is working to develop a more collaborative relationship with the college, particularly around the issues of housing and street access, issues over which the city certainly has influence. Commissioner Laing suggested the part that is missing is what Bellevue College has said about what it would like to see included in the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Ferris said in his private life he works with colleges on the development of campus housing. He said in working with Pacific Lutheran College they elected to site their book store toward the entrance of the campus and included services that are attractive both to students and the local community. Visibility from the street is what makes it all work. Bellevue College would benefit from taking a similar approach on 148th Avenue SE. He added that the development of housing for use by college students will serve to reduce the overall number of

daily trips to and from the campus and thus reduce the amount of parking needed.

Commissioner Hamlin reminded the Commission that the CAC had a representative from the college and they talked about a full range of issues, including parking, housing and the need for more of a presence on 148th Avenue SE.

Commissioner deVadoss suggested the city needs to have a good understanding of where the college intends to be in 10, 15 or 20 years out, and with that information in hand the city should seek to facilitate the plans. Housing likely will occur as a side effect.

Chair Tebelius asked if it would be appropriate for the Commission to make overtures to the college seeking their input in developing plans that will affect them. Councilmember Stokes said that would be a good idea. Bellevue College is a jewel in the rough that the city has not done a good job of leveraging. Having the Commission express a desire to work with the college in planning for the future would make sense.

Commissioner Hilhorst commented that the college is seeking to build some housing to the north of the campus but is facing the fact that the area is not served by sanitary sewer. In any partnership conversations that issue should be addressed.

With regard to Sunset Village, Ms. Conkling observed that the site is currently dominated by Michaels Toyota. The CAC recommended continuing to support and encourage the existing businesses there, though they called for putting zoning in place that favor a pedestrian-oriented mixed use environment. In addition to calling for a more intense mix of office and commercial uses and a slight increase in height and FAR, the CAC encouraged tying into the Mountains To Sound Greenway and sustainable site planning.

Ms. Conkling said there are some major employers in the I-90 Office Park area, including Microsoft, Boeing and Avanta. The CAC recommended modest increases in FAR and height, encouraged ground-floor retail in any new development, and called for non-motorized improvements such as walkways connecting to some of the parks and recreation resources in the area. The CAC also recommended ensuring the continued protection of the Phantom Lake watershed.

Commissioner Ferris said he would favor proactive policy language aimed at improving stormwater facilities and reducing the impacts to Phantom Lake. Commissioner Hamlin commented that Phantom Lake residents attended the CAC meetings and spoke in favor of protecting Phantom Lake. He said the CAC was sympathetic to what the Phantom Lake homeowners want to see happen.

Commissioner Laing pointed out that most of the I-90 Office Park properties are developed to their maximum potential under the current regulations and are unlikely to redevelop in the near future. He said that is disheartening relative to Phantom Lake in that if there is no redevelopment it is unlikely there will be any improvements put in place for treating stormwater. There will be no meaningful change without taking a basin-wide approach to the water quality and quantity issues facing Phantom Lake. If the city does not get involved, nothing will happen.

Commissioner Hamlin expressed the need to be cautious in light of the fact that there is no absolute proof that development in the I-90 Office Park caused the Phantom Lake issues. Mr. Inghram noted that the office park was developed under a different set of regulations and if there were to be new development it would face a different standard. What is needed is an approach

that both encourages some level of redevelopment and recognizes that the area is not appropriate for a lot of growth given its proximity to single family and its distance from transit accessibility.

Ms. Conkling said the Eastgate Plaza is located on the south side of I-90 and is home to a shopping center with a grocery store and neighborhood retail uses that serve the surrounding neighborhood. Other uses in the area include a large church and an RV park. The CAC recognized the need to maintain the neighborhood shopping base and called for increasing the mix of uses to include residential, office, retail, eating and drinking establishments, general commercial and lodging. The CAC recommended allowing modest increases in both FAR and height but stressed the need to ensuring new development will not adversely affect the nearby residential areas.

Commissioner Ferris commented that while there may be some redevelopment of the site over time, it will continue to be auto-focused and is not a place to encourage pedestrian-oriented development. Mr. Inghram agreed but pointed out that the CAC called for integrating the Mountains To Sound Greenway improvements and landscaping to improve the city in a park notion.

Ms. Conkling reviewed with the Commissioners the proposed basic subarea plan changes. They ranged from corrections to outdated facts and figures to policies needed to preserve auto sales and retail uses. There are currently on the books policies that limit multifamily housing that does not have direct arterial access, and that specify zones where housing is inapplicable; those policies will need to be changed to coincide with the recommendations of the CAC.

Commissioner Laing said if the desired outcome is to avoid having an inconsistency in the Comprehensive Plan about the location of multifamily housing within the subarea, policy S-EG-7 is not out of line. The most prominent land use in the subarea continues to be single family residential and to eliminate the policy would be to suggest that the single family character of the subarea is not to be maintained.

Commissioner Ferris said the simpler approach would be to simply state the goal of preserving the single family. Controlling multifamily by saying it must be accessed from an arterial is confusing.

Ms. Conkling pointed out that if the transit-oriented development center is created, the associated multifamily housing would not be accessed directly from an arterial, thus a change to policy S-EG-8 language is needed to allow that circumstance. She agreed that preservation of the single family housing would be preserved by not allowing multifamily anywhere except along the corridor. Mr. Inghram allowed that the intent of the proposed policy change should be made clear.

Chair Tebelius asked about the proposal to eliminate policies S-EG-29 through S-EG-36 and policy S-EG-39. Ms. Conkling said those policies refer specifically to zones that may be eliminated as part of the process.

Answering a question asked by Chair Tebelius regarding the proposals for additional review involving policy S-EG-11, Ms. Conkling said the issue of student housing in the Spiritwood neighborhood has pointed to a larger issue with the cost and supply of student housing in the area. The CAC's report and recommendations did not anticipate that issue but did provide a solution by saying generally the city should increase the amount of housing in the corridor. The approach to affordable housing in the Eastgate subarea as a whole is to preserve the single family

neighborhoods. Consideration needs to be given relative to approaching the issue of affordable housing in light of some of the citywide discussions that are ongoing. If affordable housing ultimately ends up as part of the public benefit amenity system in the corridor, there will need to be a policy addressing it.

Commissioner Ferris suggested that affordable housing is an issue facing the city and the region as a whole, not just the Eastgate subarea.

****BREAK****

6. STUDY SESSION: Comprehensive Plan Update - Housing Element

Associate Planner Janet Lewine briefly reviewed the discussions to date relative to updating the Housing Element. She also shared with the Commission the schedule going forward.

Human Services Commission Chair Michael Yantis said the Human Services Commission supports the development of new shelter housing with supportive services by removing Land Use Code barriers in commercial and mixed use districts. Currently, shelter with supportive services is not permitted in commercial and mixed use districts, and that makes siting new shelter facilities very difficult.

Chair Tebelius asked where the use is currently permitted and Human Services Manager Emily Leslie answered that the use is allowed in the downtown and in the R-20 and R-30 zoning districts. The winter shelter for men is temporarily located in the Bel-Red corridor in a building owned by Sound Transit; a year-round shelter would not in fact be permitted in that location. Chair Yantis added that shelters need buildings of a certain size, but very few buildings with sufficient size are in zones that allow shelters.

Commissioner Laing asked what areas are deemed inappropriate for locating a homeless shelter. Ms. Lewine answered that single family districts are not viewed as appropriate because shelters are a multifamily use. Commissioner Laing suggested the focus should be on specifically identifying the areas where shelters should not be allowed and permitting them in all other districts.

Commissioner Carlson asked how many shelter beds are available in the city and what proportion of them are supplied by the state and what proportion are private. Ms. Leslie said the winter shelters being supported by the city are operated by Congregations for the Homeless, a non-profit organization. The men's shelter has a capacity of about 70 and is seeing that many men per night. That organization's year-round shelter rotates among various congregations and offers about 35 beds per night. The year-round women's shelter operated by the non-profit Sophia Way has 21 beds, and their winter shelter averages about 20 women and children nightly. There are no shelters for homeless families in Bellevue; there are some in Kenmore and Redmond.

Commissioner Ferris commented that there is a fine line between emergency shelter and transitional housing. There are a number of facilities around the Eastside that offer short-term transitional housing units.

Chair Tebelius suggested the Commission needs to have shelter housing defined, an understanding of what services currently exist, and a good idea of what the need is before opening all commercial and mixed use districts to the use.

Chair Yantis said the Human Services Commission also has an interest in seeing the affordable housing policies updated and implementation of a wide range of mandatory regulations and incentives aimed at achieving a full range of affordability. The statistics show that the city comes up short of its established goals for affordable housing. Continuing down the same path is not the correct option. Redmond has mandatory requirements and how development there has been affected should be investigated.

Chair Yantis said the Human Services Commission supports increased public funding for the Housing Trust Fund and encourages affordable housing in proximity to transit and services. The Commission also supports addressing the important issues facing the city's existing single family neighborhoods, including an aging population that wants to remain in the community; extended families, particularly in certain ethnic groups, that desire larger homes to accommodate multiple generations; older residents who want neighborhood choices that include single-story ramblers and small yards; and balancing neighborhood reinvestment with maintaining traditional neighborhood character.

The Human Services Commission favors increasing housing choices in Bellevue for young workers and diverse communities, including efficiency units or apodments, and accessory dwelling units. Ms. Leslie said the city's ethnic diversity has changed dramatically since the Comprehensive Plan was last updated, and input from those communities is needed relative to their housing needs.

Commissioner Hilhorst urged caution in considering the notion of larger homes accommodating multiple generations, saying it could be a very slippery slope.

Eileen Rasnack, Chair of the Bellevue Network on Aging, said the group has had a strong interest in housing since its beginning. The Network recognizes that there are a lot of older citizens who have lived in Bellevue all their lives and who want to continue living in the city but who because of changing health conditions or other factors find their homes no longer suitable. What they need are choices when it comes to housing type and variety, and services readily available to them in proximity to their established neighborhoods and activities.

Chair Tebelius commented that it is not unusual for people to downsize their homes as they grow older and no longer have a need for houses large enough to raise a family. Downsizing involves moving to a smaller home and does not necessarily equate to moving to an assisted living facility. She suggested that trend has been going on for quite some time. Ms. Rasnack agreed but pointed out that affordability is often an issue, especially in relation to assisted living facilities. In most cases it becomes necessary to move quite a distance from their home neighborhoods to find affordable options. Rather than making the change, many would prefer to simply stay in their homes. Adult family homes and assisted living options need to be incorporated into various communities.

Commissioner Ferris suggested the Commission needs to know more about where senior housing options are currently allowed and whether or not opening the door wider will result in more affordable options for seniors.

Commissioner Hilhorst said one of the options discussed in regard to the Newport Hills Shopping Center was including housing. The neighborhood has voiced its support for including senior living. Mr. Inghram pointed out that the city's role is to facilitate the creation of a mix of housing types, the lion's share of which will be constructed by the private market. There are

places like Newport Hills and Hilltop where the community has voiced support for having options that will allow their seniors to remain in their neighborhoods.

Commissioner Ferris suggested pulling together a panel of developers who specialize in senior housing to talk to the Commission about what is needed to make projects work. Mr. Inghram agreed that would be a good idea.

Ms. Rasnack said the Network on Aging believes variety is the key and has spent time discussing the fact that incentives will be needed in order to achieve affordable housing for low-income and very low-income residents. In addition, builders need to be encouraged to focus on universal design in constructing new homes to address the issue in the years to come.

Commissioner Carlson said there is an adult family home operating in his neighborhood that fits in very comfortably.

Commissioner Laing said he suspected that there is nothing in the Comprehensive Plan that acts as an impediment to the creation of alternate types of housing for seniors, and that there are policies that at least generally support it. If there are goals and policies that in fact are impediments, the Commission should be made aware of exactly which ones need to be addressed.

Chair Tebelius asked Ms. Rasnack what the Network on Aging meant by the statement "Include more proactive policies around engaging under-served population groups. Given our rapidly evolving aging and diverse community, simple 'we will not discriminate' policies are no longer sufficient. Goals for social justice, equity, anti-racism and cultural competence are needed to direct how the City will approach this issue moving forward." Ms. Rasnack replied that the statement came from a joint meeting of the Human Services Commission and the Network on Aging. Bellevue's diversity is changing and it will be important going forward to take notice of that fact and to be inclusive.

Commissioner Ferris said policy language does not always result in the desired outcome. The problem is the details of how a particular policy will be implemented will not be discussed until the policies are in place. Separating policy development from implementation strategies does not result in a positive outcome. Mr. Inghram explained that it simply is not possible to rewrite the Comprehensive Plan and all of the implementation tools simultaneously. The Comprehensive Plan addresses every aspect of the city from finances to traffic control. When the Comprehensive Plan was updated ten years ago, policy language was included with regard to examining the employment centers of the city to ensure their vibrancy. In the intervening years the work plan has included visiting those sites one at a time and initiating different planning studies. At the time the policy language was written, there was no way of knowing what the outcome would be. The Comprehensive Plan establishes the vision for the future of the community and identifies the problems and barriers that need to be overcome in order to achieve the vision.

Commissioner Carlson highlighted the need for policy language that is simple, clear, and readily understood by everyone.

Commissioner deVadoss agreed with the need to have clarity on what the real problems are. He also stressed the need to think about possible unintended consequences.

Commissioner Laing commented that Commissioner Ferris gave a presentation on affordable housing to the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC in which he outlined the existing policies. In his presentation, he noted the goals are not being reached because of a lack of implementation that occurs at the zoning level. He allowed that while the aspiration and the vision is in place, there is a disconnect in how it is implemented.

A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) director Arthur Sullivan pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan is not a land use-only document; it is the document that guides all city actions. The Council cannot decide to fund affordable housing without a policy to that end in the Comprehensive Plan. Senior housing can be benefitted by programs that aim to get single family rehab money focused on helping seniors stay in their homes. For diversity, it may mean having programs that are designed for lower income residents that work for people who are English-language challenged. The policies in the Comprehensive Plan set the stage for future actions. As soon as the Comprehensive Plan update is completed the Commission will be involved in strategy planning aimed at coming up with explicit details.

Commissioner Laing commented that all of the city's boards and commissions are supposed to coordinate their Comprehensive Plan planning efforts with the Planning Commission, and the Planning Commission is to make a final recommendation to the City Council. While the Planning Commission is predominantly focused on land use issues, all elements of the Comprehensive Plan are in the Commission's bailiwick, including aspirational policies.

Ms. Lewine suggested that current policy relative to shelters and homelessness is indirect. In the years since the Comprehensive Plan was last updated there has been a great deal of forward movement relative to addressing homelessness. The current Comprehensive Plan does not even mention the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness, an aspirational goal that has had a huge impact on the region and which guides the city's funding for homelessness programming. Over the past three years the focus has been on getting people housing ready, one element of which has been employment training. During the economic downturn Bellevue got involved in foreclosure mediation to keep people from becoming homeless in the first place. Energy has been focused on veterans as well to help prevent homelessness.

Commissioner Carlson said he would like to see a homeless strategy aimed at getting people back to a sense of stable independence. That should be the ultimate goal of the city's homeless policy.

Commissioner Hilhorst said panhandling is often associated with the homeless. She asked if it would be appropriate to include in the Comprehensive Plan language aimed at limiting the amount of panhandling that occurs on Bellevue's streets. Mr. Sullivan said policy language can be specific about supporting programs aimed at helping people stabilize their lives and move on, but it cannot be specific about panhandling given the constitutional rights and issues involved.

With regard to mixed use housing, Ms. Lewine observed there is current Comprehensive Plan policy language that supports it. However, the unique mixed use neighborhoods Bellevue is creating in the downtown and Bel-Red are not addressed in the current Comprehensive Plan. Policy language is needed to reflect an approach that has become much more prevalent.

Mr. Inghram said there is also a need to monitor the housing being produced to facilitate moving from known needs to implementation. One useful datapoint would be the level of affordability being provided by the market.

Mr. Sullivan pointed out that many jurisdictions in east King County are relying on their mixed use zones to meet their housing growth targets. Many of the mixed use zones are not historically residential areas and that could have implications for the entire subregion relative to the jobs/housing balance, which is why monitoring is critical.

Commissioner Ferris commented that Lake Heights historically has had both commercial and residential, but the commercial is no longer working well so it is transitioning to mixed use. He suggested there may be other neighborhoods that could benefit from having a designated commercial area transition to mixed use, but that would need policy support in the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Lewine said there are existing policies that address affordable housing that are behind the city's support of ARCH and partnerships with non-profits to preserve existing and create new affordable housing units. The Comprehensive Plan language, however, reflects the old Countywide Planning Policies targets rather than the more recently adopted policies that speak more to strategies for meeting the identified need.

Commissioner Ferris said he would like to see language calling on the city to implement programs and regulations enabled by the state to encourage the production and preservation of affordable housing.

Mr. Inghram commented that there is an existing policy that supports accessory dwelling units. Over the past few years there has been feedback received from certain neighborhoods that has highlighted the need to refine the policy to better address the concerns regarding neighborhood compatibility. Flexibility is needed to be able to apply the rules differently in different parts of the city.

Chair Tebelius said she opposed the notion of allowing some neighborhoods to say they will accept accessory dwelling units and other neighborhoods to say they will not.

Mr. Sullivan clarified that in Bellevue accessory dwelling units are only allowed as attached units, whereas in almost every other city in east King County they can be detached. There are limits regarding size, and city approval is needed before the accessory unit can be rented out.

Commissioner Ferris added that in Bellevue the property owner is required to occupy one of the units.

Ms. Lewine said much has been heard from the Network on Aging and from the public about the city's aging population that wants more housing choices that will allow them to stay in the community. Implementation of universal design principles allows housing and residents to age together. While the Countywide Planning Policies support universal design, there is no language in Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan addressing the issue.

Commissioner Ferris said the concept is sound but has challenges. When applied as a housing design requirement, all new units constructed must have doors and hallways of a certain width, and must include other elements which taken together can impact room layouts. That layer has never been applied across the board to single family homes. Mr. Inghram allowed that it may be necessary to differentiate between public and private development.

Commissioner Laing said he could support policy language aimed at exploring the use of incentives to see universal design concepts implemented, but to outright require it would be problematic. He pointed out that the additional layer can add significantly to the cost of construction.

Mr. Sullivan said the ARCH website has an entire section on the topic of aging in place that was done in cooperation with the Network on Aging and other senior agencies. For many, being able to remain in their homes and avoid assisted living is the most affordable choice.

Mr. Inghram said the population of Bellevue is growing older and there has been a strong interest voiced by seniors in favor of being allowed to remain in their homes and their neighborhoods. There is not, however, any proposal to require universal design or anything else to single family homes. There are programs in place that help people maintain and adapt their homes for those not able to do the work themselves. Policy language is needed to continue such programs, and is also needed to allow for services in proximity to where seniors live.

A motion to extend the meeting to 10:15 p.m. was made by Commissioner Laing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carlson and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Sullivan said the question is whether or not the Comprehensive Plan should include policies aimed at finding non-regulatory ways to support Bellevue's aging population remain in their homes. There was agreement to make that clear in moving forward.

Ms. Lewine said student housing is not a topic addressed by the current Comprehensive Plan. There have recently been concerns raised by citizens about how the need has been addressed in some neighborhoods, and while a single population has been targeted, the real underlying issue is a lack of affordable housing options.

Commissioner Ferris cautioned about being too specific with regard to housing for students at Bellevue College. If another institution of higher education were to locate in Bellevue, policy language that is tied only to Bellevue College would quickly become dated. What is needed is policy language aimed at encouraging the development of housing that is attractive to students.

Mr. Sullivan said the apartments in Redmond are home to a number of people who work at Digipen, but they are good examples of housing that would interest students.

Mr. Inghram said the market is responding to the need in the form of people renting single rooms in single family homes for a low rent.

7. OTHER BUSINESS - None
8. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS - None
9. COMMITTEE REPORTS - None
10. STAFF REPORTS - None
11. DRAFT MINUTES REVIEW
 - A. November 13, 2013

Chair Tebelius encouraged the Commissioners to submit any revisions to the minutes in writing.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Hamlin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Laing and it carried unanimously.

- B. December 11, 2013

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

12. NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
 - A. February 12, 2014
13. ADJOURN

Chair Tebelius adjourned the meeting at 10:22 p.m.