

Affordable Housing C-1 Strategy 20-112885 AC

Public Comments July 20 – September 11 2020

September 9, 2020

Dear Bellevue Planning Commissioners,

Thank you for taking the first steps to increasing the amount of affordable housing throughout the City of Bellevue by taking advantage of the generosity and willingness for communities of Faith, Non-Profit organizations and City surplus property. As a member of the Bellevue's task force in 2017 to increase more affordable housing, I am in support that the City pursue the C-1 policies and Land Use Code changes that would allow them to be implemented.

However, I would also like to suggest a few policy changes that could help generate more affordable housing in the City of Bellevue on these targeted properties. These suggestions of building hundreds of affordable units throughout the region through either joint venture with non-profit agencies, inclusionary or incentive-based zoning. As a region, we have been very fortunate to have the stewardship that A Regional Coalition for Housing has provided. (The City of Bellevue gets kudos for originally funding the staff of ARCH). Three examples I would like to highlight are where ARHC spearheaded the initiatives are: Greenbrier Heights in Woodinville that created over 120 affordable units that were subsidized by 67 market rate units. This community was a joint venture between DASH and CamWest Development and was recipient of many awards including the Governor's 2020 Vision Award. The second example is the South Kirkland Park n Ride that was partnership between Polygon Northwest and Imagine Housing. This generated 61 low-income housing units along 182 market rate units. Lastly, the City of Redmond has created hundreds of affordable units in the last decade by using incentive zoning that have been built on market rate developers without public subsidies.

The reason why I wanted to highlight these examples is that many times, the creative partnership between Non-Profit and Market Developers lead to more creative solutions that can be done by one entity by itself. Furthermore, by restricting affordable units to only below 50% AMI may result in less affordable units being built. Given that many of the opportunities to develop these targeted properties reside in neighborhoods without multifamily zoning, creative and collaborative approach with neighborhood groups will need to be undertaken.

Thus, here is quick outline of recommendations:

- Do not limit affordable units to only those below 50% AMI
- Do not limit developers to be a "non-profit".
- Provide a mechanism to significantly upzone the property if it is served by adequate streets and transit is located nearby.

- Look allowing buffering techniques adjacent neighbors that will enable multi-story buildings to be built on the parcel. This can be done by increasing setbacks or having less dense housing types abutting residences.

Thank you again for taking up this opportunity to build more housing throughout the City of Bellevue in a thoughtful and constructive manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric H. Campbell', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Eric H. Campbell, CEO

Main Street Property Group

From: [Chris Buchanan](#)
To: [Lewine, Janet](#)
Cc: [Matz, Nicholas](#); [Jessica Clawson](#)
Subject: C-1 strategy : proposed affordable housing bonuses
Date: Tuesday, September 08, 2020 15:40:01
Attachments: [C-1 strategy Proposed AH Bonus.pdf](#)

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Hi Janet -

Thanks for taking the time to talk today. We are very excited to see some forward movement on the C-1 Strategy that was first introduced to Council back in 2018. We believe that now is the time to make robust incentives for affordable housing development. To that end, we'd like to make the following specific proposals to implement the C-1 Strategy:

1. Apply the Bel-Red Tier 1a affordable housing incentive to all C-1 properties. That incentive provides a calculation of 4.6s quare feet of additional building area per 1 sqft of affordable housing provided below 80% AMI, and does not include affordable housing in the base density calculation for the property. The BelRed calculation is capped at 1.25 FAR we advocate for higher density and a 1.5FAR cap.
2. Encourage deeper affordability by allowing additional density for housing provided below 50% AMI: 0.5FAR or 2.5 sqft additional building area per 1sqft affordable housing, on top of the Tier 1a bonus.
3. Add density to properties close to Frequent Transit Service. The BelRed neighborhood created transit "nodes" "in order to provide the level of intensity appropriate for areas in close proximity to the highest levels of transit service." These areas are awarded increased base FAR density. Building on this transit-oriented approach, in 2020 Council took action to reduce the parking ratio required for properties in close proximity to Frequent Transit Service. We would like to see you continue this transit-oriented density effort through C-1 by increasing the allowable density by 1.5 FAR within 1/4 mile and 1.0 FAR within 1/2 mile walkshed of Frequent Transit Service as defined in 2020's council action.
4. Right-size the building height bonus for affordable housing to 12' from the existing 6'. The existing 6' height bonus prevents properties from taking full advantage of the 15% density bonus that is already in code. It needs to be corrected in order to reap the full benefits of the Affordable Housing Bonus and this is the opportunity to do that.
5. Design Review: expedite or eliminate as part of a Development Agreement.
6. Abate or provide financial assistance for required infrastructure such as new streets where designated in neighborhood plans.
7. Expand MFTE for affordable housing city-wide.

I've attached a PDF with bullet points. Please feel free to call to discuss.
Thank you for all your efforts in this very important work!

Best,
Chris

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Sept. 9, 2020

Dear Bellevue Planning Commissioners,

Thank you for taking up the discussion on Affordable Housing initiatives and the opportunity to provide comments. This is a critical initiative that recognizes the importance of creating affordable, sustainable housing, and provides the ability for organizations like DASH to deliver solutions for this pervasive problem. In 2017, Bellevue adopted a goal of adding 2,500 new affordable housing units within 10 years. Since adopting this goal, only 583 units have been “added” (at least 200 units already existed). City Leadership is required to take quick, bold, and aggressive action to meet the City’s stated goals. These goals are likely outdated due to the economic impact of COVID-19, which has only increased the urgent need for more affordable housing.

DASH (Downtown Action to Save Housing), a Washington Non-Profit Corporation, was established in 1991 by the Bellevue Downtown Association to help preserve affordable housing in the city. In 2001, DASH acquired Evergreen Court and Glendale (ECG), a 7.5 acre site with 166 affordable housing units for families, individuals, and seniors. The property was originally built in 1972 and renovated in 1995. The ECG site is perfectly sited for housing. It is adjacent to commercial and multifamily properties, it is well-served by frequent transit, and is within two light rail walksheds. DASH is ready to redevelop this site and build hundreds of new affordable housing units for working families, individuals, and income-restricted seniors. However, DASH needs the City’s support in the form of C-1 policies and Land Use Code changes to do so.

DASH leadership recently participated in a stakeholder discussion led by city staff on the C-1 proposal to provide opportunities to increase affordable housing. We are concerned that the City continues to do a lot of discussion and talking on the issue rather than taking action; it is notable that the C-1 policy has been included in the Comprehensive Plan for years, yet there is still no concrete proposal as to what to “do” about affordable housing. Action, in the form of real incentives for non-profit and faith-based property owners, is what is needed now. To this goal, we recommend including the following policies and incentives in your recommendations to City Council:

- Apply the Bel-Red Tier 1a affordable housing incentive to all C-1 properties. That incentive provides a calculation of 4.6 square feet of additional building area per 1 square foot of affordable housing provided below 80% AMI, and does not include affordable housing in the base density calculation for the property. The Bel-Red calculation is capped at 1.25 FAR. For C-1 properties the FAR cap for incentive should be raised to 1.5.
- Encourage deeper affordability by allowing additional density for housing provided below 50% AMI: 0.5 FAR or 2.5s.f. additional building area per 1 s.f. affordable housing, on top of the Tier 1a bonus.
- Add density to properties served by Frequent Transit. The Bel-Red neighborhood created transit nodes "in order to provide the level of intensity appropriate for areas in close proximity to the highest levels of transit service." These areas are awarded increased base FAR density. Building



on this transit-oriented approach, in 2020 Council took action to reduce the parking ratio required for properties in close proximity to Frequent Transit Service. We would like to see Bellevue continue this transit-oriented density effort through C-1 by increasing the allowable density by 1.5 FAR within 1/4 mile and 1.0 FAR within 1/2 mile walkshed of Frequent Transit Service as defined in the 2020 council action.

- Right-size the building height bonus for affordable housing to 12' from the existing 6'. The existing 6' height bonus prevents properties from taking full advantage of the 15% density bonus that is already in code. A 6-foot bonus does not even afford an affordable housing building an additional story! This height bonus must be corrected in order to allow affordable housing to be built with the FAR/square footage bonus. Height and FAR must align in order for a true incentive to be created.
- Design Review: expedite or eliminate when a project includes a Development Agreement.
- Provide direction to Planning Staff that affordable housing projects take priority in review times over others; mandate specific review times for affordable housing project in order to create predictability in permitting (time is money).
- Abate or provide financial assistance for required infrastructure such as new streets where designated in neighborhood plans. This is similar to impact fee credits for affordable housing.
- Expand MFTE for affordable housing city-wide; adjust affordability levels to those that encourage owners to actually use MFTE.

DASH has been working with for four years to increase zoning at the ECG site to build affordable and senior housing adjacent to light rail. At every turn we have been told to “wait” for the next planning effort (Bel-Red lookback, Wilburton, C-1, etc.); these planning efforts continually seem to die on the vine for unknown reasons beyond our control. We cannot wait any further. We know what the problem is, we know exactly how to fix it, and we now need bold City leadership to deliver policies to allow for more affordable housing near frequent transit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kim Loveall Price

Executive Director, DASH

Proposed Affordable Housing Bonus for Non-profit & Faith-owned properties

Bonuses to be added to underlying zoning.

Constraint	Bonus
100% of units at/below 80% AMI	+ 1.5 FAR
50% of units at/below 50% AMI	+ 1 FAR
Use <i>same language</i> as BelRed	AH doesn't count towards FAR calc
Within .25 mi Frequent Transit Svc	+ 1.5 FAR
Within .5 mi Frequent Transit Svc	+ 1 FAR
Increase building height	+12' per 1FAR
Design Review: expedite or eliminate	
Required infrastructure improvements paid by City	
MFTE for affordable housing city-wide	

From: [James McEachran](#)
To: [Lewine, Janet](#)
Cc: [meghana@hopelink.org](#); [robin.amadon@lihi.org](#); [Beckib@oppc.org](#); [sboyd@bellwetherhousing.org](#); [lenb@shelterresourcesinc.com](#); [chrisb@dashhousing.org](#); [hollyb@highlandcovenant.com](#); [eric@mspgroupllc.com](#); [jessie@mhseattle.com](#); [marc@parkviewservices.org](#); [sharon@earlybirdinvestmentgroup.com](#); [kjirstend@westminster.org](#); [mdickins@sacredheart.org](#); [hclcpastor@comcast.net](#); [hal@spectrumdevsolutions.com](#); [kathy@attainhousing.org](#); [markgriffith1@gmail.com](#); [faridahakim@hotmail.com](#); [sierra@hansenpa.com](#); [marty@housingconsortium.org](#); [anhle97@gmail.com](#); [sharonl@lihi.org](#); [amy.liu@microsoft.com](#); [chris@elap.org](#); [jmadigan@sacredheart.org](#); [villetten@imaginehousing.org](#); [gpetrie@goodmanre.com](#); [kloveallprice@transformingage.org](#); [josmith@bellwetherhousing.org](#); [patrick.sullivan@habitatskc.org](#); [jsutton@seattleymca.org](#); [joseph.thompson@mercyhousing.org](#); [ptippy@hhaofwa.org](#); [mallory@housingconsortium.org](#); [jayw@shag.org](#); [allend@imaginehousing.org](#); [Johnson, Thara](#); [Pratt, Toni](#); [Matz, Nicholas](#); [Brod, Brooke](#)
Subject: Re: Affordable Housing Lunch and Learn - Next Steps
Date: Tuesday, September 08, 2020 17:35:15

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I am totally in for the long haul and a clear path to fulfill the goals of TAG+ Jim



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On Tue, 8 Sep 2020 at 17:22, Lewine, Janet <JLewine@bellevuewa.gov> wrote:

Affordable Housing Stakeholders,

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Thank you for your time and input at last Thursday's Lunch and Learn on the City's C-1 initiative—a proposed density increase on qualifying faith, non-profit housing and public surplus properties. A lot was learned in that hour that our Planning team will bring forward in developing a proposal. I've attached information below on the September 9 Planning Commission meeting that will discuss the C-1 Action. We encourage your comments by email to the Planning Commission. Instructions are found below.

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We have also scheduled an **Affordable Housing Town Hall on Thursday, September 24th** from **6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.** to discuss the C-1 Action. Please spread the word to your board members, congregants and supporters. To RSVP go to <https://tinyurl.com/AffordableHousingTownHall>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing a link and instructions on how to join the meeting.

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I hope you will stay engaged in this project and help create affordable housing opportunity!

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If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Janet Lewine at jlewine@bellevuewa.gov or Brooke Brod at bbrod@bellevuewa.gov.

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Janet Lewine

Senior Planner, Community Development, City of Bellevue
jlewine@bellevuewa.gov | 425-452-4884 | BellevueWA.gov

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The September 9, 2020 Planning Commission packet is available on <https://bellevue.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

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This will be a virtual meeting.

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The City of Bellevue Planning Commission meeting for September 9, 2020 will be conducted virtually via Zoom Webinar. The public can access the meeting by connecting to the Zoom Webinar using Webinar ID: 992 4326 8420 and Password: 685397. For those members of the public unable to access internet services, a telephone option will be made available to listen to the proceedings. The phone number to access the meeting is 253-215-8782, Webinar ID: 992 4326 8420.

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There will be no opportunity for oral communication at this meeting. All written comments received prior to 3 p.m. on September 9, 2020 will be summarized into the record at the meeting. If you wish to provide written comment to the Planning Commission, please email PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov with the subject line "Written Communications - September 9". Opportunities for public comment and testimony at scheduled public hearings will be provided for at upcoming Planning Commission meetings. Instructions for participating at future meetings will be included on the agenda.

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From: [James McEachran](#)
To: [PlanningCommission](#)
Subject: Fwd: Affordable Housing Strategy C-1
Date: Thursday, September 3, 2020 3:14:58 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL Notice!] Outside communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.

With respect, please include this letter to City Council within the path of members of the Planning Commission.

Thank you, Jim McEachran

----- Forwarded message -----

From: James McEachran <mceachranj5@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, 3 Sep 2020 at 15:01
Subject: Affordable Housing Strategy C-1
To: <council@bellevuewa.gov>

With respect,

I write in clear support of the development of Strategy C-1 of the City of Bellevue Affordable Housing Strategy.

Each of you know well of our common work to insure affordable/attainable housing. It is time to advance whatever it takes to address this as we move out of these scrambled times.

As an advocate of housing for all, now into my 36th year, and serving by appointment on several teams, including the Technical Advisory Group, the Wilburton, CAC, and two terms on the Human Services Commission, I know we have the means to create land use and permitting paths to become a model for municipalities.

I am concerned that many of the initiatives in some places are "Seattle-Centric," I trust we can move in bold collaboration to address this within the unique needs of our community and sub-regions. And be a model!

I have a particular interest in faith-owned Multi-Family and MIxed Use and Single Family Properties. I believe there are over 80.

In post-Covid-19 times, when needs for housing become even more urgent, we can work as one to insure a clear track to move in a way that engages meaningful conversation and clarity on what we are doing to ensure the needs are met and exceeded.

I believe it is important to create several case studies on each of these kinds of land which show leadership in the judicatories that manage and guide conversations with failed /declinin)faith communities who recognize that selling land for profit may be a plan, but not ensuring affordability in housing with supportive services.

My mantra has been: "One can raise money, but you can't create land!" I am willing and able

to be a presenter/partner in providing the narrative which might move those who own/manage faith communities to be proactive.

There are many stories that warm the heart and mission of our cities and faith communities. You know them well. Saint Margaret's and Saint Luke's. There are also those who have not followed similar paths, but might if presented the story and the path to development based on land use, good stewardship, and movement along the way of the common good.

On June 27, 2017, TAG wrote: "This Strategy should be viewed as the beginning of a concerted and sustained effort by Bellevue...The TAG believes it is necessary to unlock city resources to fund this effort. We encourage the City Council, as stewards of the public trust in Bellevue, to implement all of the strategies in order to bring bold leadership and actions that will make a difference for current and future residents of Bellevue."

I also recall the section on Preferred Urban Design Framework, in the Wilburton Commercial Area Study on Affordable Housing. Key to economic development.

A recent Virtual Lunch and Learn provided feedback from over 40 individuals who have been and are deeply engaged in matters of housing for all. In each instance of comment the crescendo was "Yes" and let us move forward through the process which can be celebrated in the next years with quality and care for our city, our region, and the current deficit of over 5500 housing units for those earning less than 50 percent AMI.

Thank you for reading. I am here to serve in any way that I am asked, in partnership with each of you.

Be-welling, Jim McEachrann