



BELLEVUE 2044

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton Vision Implementation Environmental Impact Statement, Fall 2022 Appendix B: Frequently Asked Questions



What is the Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is the vision for how our city grows and makes investments. The Plan guides city decisions about where we locate housing and jobs, and where we invest in transportation, utilities, parks, and

other public assets. The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update occurs every 8-10 years. This update looks out to the year 2044.

Why is the city doing a Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update?

Bellevue has experienced significant growth in the last decade and is planning for continued growth. More people mean increased demand for public and private spaces as well as utilities, transit, and other critical services.

The city's most-recent periodic update in 2015 was built around an overall growth strategy to focus a majority of new growth in Bellevue's Downtown, which is a designated Regional Growth Center, and the BelRed area. The remainder of the growth was planned for other mixed-use areas, such as Eastgate and Factoria, and other multifamily and commercial areas across the city. This growth strategy resulted in transportation investments around six new light rail stations as well as other infrastructure and capital facilities.

Updated: September 29, 2022

FAQ CONTACT: Thara Johnson, Comprehensive Planning Manager, tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov



The current work to update the city's Comprehensive Plan, will plan for growth of at least an additional 35,000 housing units and 70,000 jobs by the year 2044.

What is SEPA?

SEPA stands for the State Environmental Policy Act. SEPA is in Chapter 43.21C RCW (Revised Code of Washington) and is a Washington state law that helps agency decision-makers, applicants, and the public understand how a proposal would affect the environment.

What is an Environmental Impact Statement?

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is an informational document that provides the city, public, and other agencies with environmental information to be considered in the decision-making process. The city has determined this periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c) to prepare an EIS. For this update, the EIS will describe:

- Existing conditions in the city
- Proposed alternatives (e.g., new policies and growth strategies)
- Potential significant, unavoidable, and adverse impacts
- Mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate adverse impacts

What is the EIS scoping process?

The EIS process is a tool for identifying and analyzing probable adverse environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives, and potential mitigation. An EIS must inform decision-makers and the public of reasonable alternatives, including mitigation measures that would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance environmental quality. The SEPA EIS process provides an opportunity for the public to comment on the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives. Community members will have the opportunity to comment during two stages:

- **Scoping Stage:** Scoping is the first step in the EIS process. Scoping helps focus the EIS by identifying specific elements like carbon emissions, wildlife habitat or resident displacement that might be affected by the proposed growth alternatives. During scoping, members of the public can learn more about the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton Vision Implementation process and the draft growth alternatives. As part of the process, members of the public can raise any concerns about potential environmental impacts of each alternative. The draft growth



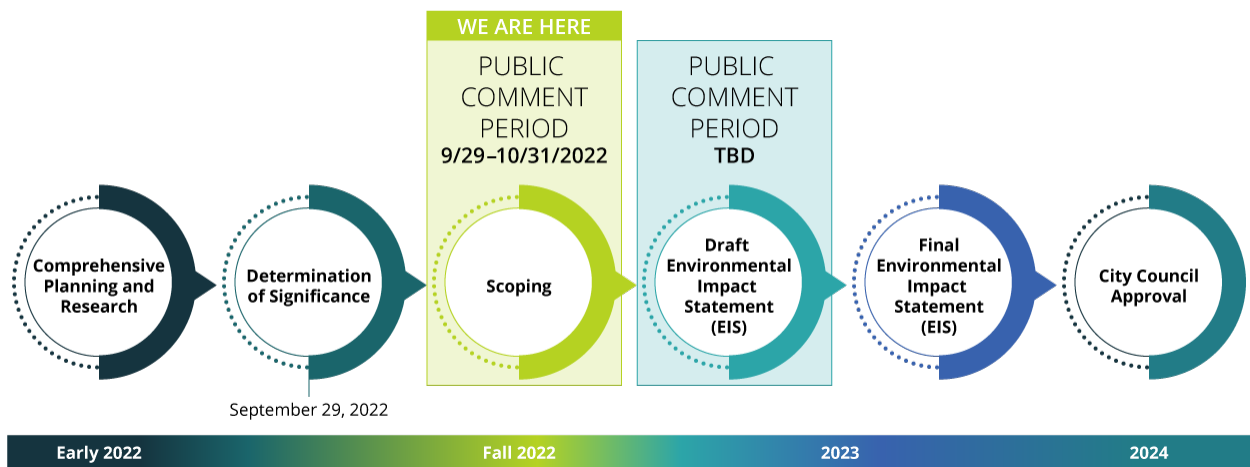
alternatives will be analyzed along with comments received during scoping. The EIS analysis will determine if the impacts are significant.

Scoping comments are most informative and relevant when they are specific to the proposed alternatives as well as the EIS scope and potential impacts that have been identified in the SEPA threshold Determination of Significance (DS) document.

Comments should address the range of growth alternatives being proposed, EIS elements of the environment and probable significant adverse impacts, as well as mitigation measures. Community members can also suggest additional areas of study or consideration for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton Vision Implementation EIS.

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Stage: The EIS analyzes the particular environmental concerns that were identified. A separate analysis is prepared for each alternative. The purpose of the analysis is to estimate the nature, severity, and duration of impacts that might occur and to compare the impacts of the alternatives. The draft EIS is made available to the public for review and comment. Comments will be received on the analysis of the affected environment, the impact analysis for each of the alternatives included in the DEIS, and potential mitigation measures for each of the alternatives.

What is the schedule?



The city is due to complete the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update in May of 2024. This scoping period and the future DEIS comment period provide public comment opportunities that will inform development of a Final EIS (FEIS).



How can the community submit public comments during the scoping process?

The city issued a DS and requests comments on the scope of the EIS on September 29, 2022. The 30-day public comment period begins 8:00 AM on Thursday, September 29, 2022, and ends at 4:30 PM on Monday, October 31, 2022, PST.

What are the environmental elements the city proposes for analysis in the EIS??

The city is considering the study of the following environmental elements in the EIS analysis:

- Earth and water quality
- Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
- Plants and animals
- Energy and natural resources
- Noise
- Land use patterns and urban form
- Historic resources
- Relationship to plans, policies, and regulations
- Population, employment, and housing
- Transportation
- Public services
- Utilities

What are the additional areas of study that the city is proposing to be analyzed to support the EIS analysis?

The city is providing additional information on:

- Displacement analysis
- Equitable impacts analysis
- Economic analysis

What is an alternative? How do the draft alternatives relate to the objectives?

Alternatives are different ways of achieving the project's purpose and need and serve as the basis for environmental analysis relative to elements of the environment. Potential alternatives have been drafted to give the community an idea about how growth might be distributed and what form it might take. Key questions for the community to answer related to the potential alternatives during the scoping phase include:

- Thinking of the potential growth alternatives: are these the right ones to study? Why or why not?
- What topics of emphasis should we focus on in this update?

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How will the preferred alternative be selected?

Alternatives are different ways of achieving the project's purpose and need and are the basis for environmental analysis. Environmental analysis is the process of studying each alternative and forecasting impacts or different elements of the environment such as water quality, noise, or historic resources.

Plan updates must include an alternative that represents no action. Action alternatives allow the city to evaluate a range of growth scenarios and test ideas, implications, benefits, and impacts.

This EIS will analyze several alternatives. The Alternatives include a No Action Alternative and three Action Alternatives. The alternatives being proposed below include ideas to be analyzed which will lead to development of specific alternatives. The city anticipates having all the alternatives analyzed and brought forward for future discussion.

For purposes of the No Action Alternative, it is assumed that development would occur within the City of Bellevue based on the existing comprehensive plan land use, zoning, and development standards. It is anticipated that the action alternatives will be based on variations of elements such as the amount and distribution of growth, and the implementation of new policies and infrastructure.

Analyzing different alternatives, and especially the differences between them, allows decision-makers and the public to compare the effects of different options and ultimately to select a preferred alternative.

The action alternatives are described in more detail on the project webpage found at www.bellevuewa.gov/2044-environmental-review.

How did the city determine its housing and job growth targets?

The King County Countywide Planning Policies or CPPs adopt growth targets for jobs and housing units across cities in King County, including Bellevue. The 2019-2044 Bellevue jobs target is 70,000 new jobs. This will accommodate employment growth announced by specific companies and additional growth in the city. The 2019-2044 Bellevue housing target is 35,000 new units. Target setting occurred through a multi-year process in coordination with other cities and the county using policy guidance from Vision 2050, Bellevue's calculated capacity for new development, and the council vision and guidance.



Why is the city proposing analyzing beyond the minimum 35,000 additional housing unit target?

The city is proposing to analyze beyond the 35,000-unit housing target to meet the needs of the growing region and address the housing crisis.

Why is another DEIS for the Wilburton study area being conducted if one was already issued in 2018?

There have been many changes within and surrounding the Wilburton study area that make it challenging to pick up directly from the 2018 DEIS. This current DEIS will consider additional housing compared to what was analyzed in the 2018 DEIS. In addition, including the Wilburton study area in the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update EIS gives the city the ability to assess and communicate the impacts of the proposed Wilburton study area growth alternatives within the context of citywide growth.

How is this related to the Wilburton Commercial Area Study that was conducted by a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) in 2017-2018?

The Wilburton study area alternatives build off the vision and recommendations from the Wilburton Commercial Area Study while considering updates to housing policy, affordable housing, growth targets, sustainability, equitable access, multimodal transportation, Grand Connection integration and impacts, and universal design. Alternatives will also incorporate the input of stakeholders and community members not previously engaged in the 2017-2018 effort.

Where can I learn more about the plan and the SEPA process?

Visit our website and sign up for project updates: www.bellevuewa.gov/2044-environmental-review

ACCESS AND INCLUSION

The City of Bellevue assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and related statutes, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any City of Bellevue program or activity. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated may file a complaint with the ADA/Title VI Administrator. For Title VI complaint forms and advice, please contact the ADA/Title VI Administrator at 425-452-6168.



If you have any questions regarding the ADA statement above or need help, please reach out to ADA Coordinator Blayne Amson, bamson@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-6168.

Project Contact Information:

Project Manager

Thara Johnson, Comprehensive Planning Manager, tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov

SEPA Lead Agency Contact

Elizabeth Stead, Land Use Director and SEPA Responsible Official, estead@bellevuewa.gov