

Final Review Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Recommendation
Council-initiated Amendment

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

The Community Development Department recommends that the Planning Commission forwards to the City Council a recommendation for adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update as proposed in the May 22, 2024 regular meeting, replacing Volume 1 and the Land Use Map of the existing Comprehensive Plan and limited amendments to the Bridle Trails, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria, Newcastle, Newport Hills, Northeast Bellevue, Richards Valley, Southeast Bellevue, Southwest Bellevue, and Wilburton/N.E. 8th Street neighborhood area (subarea) plans in Volume 2. This proposal satisfies the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Decision Criteria, as outlined in the relevant section below.

Application Number: 22-105259-AC

Proposal: Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Volumes 1 and 2

Elements: All elements, Land Use Map, Glossary

Subarea Plans: Bridle Trails, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria, Newcastle, Newport Hills, Northeast Bellevue, Richards Valley, Southeast Bellevue, Southwest Bellevue, and Wilburton/N.E. 8th Street

Final Review is the second step in Bellevue's two-part plan amendment review process. Proposed amendments initiated by the City Council go straight to this step, as the Council's decision to initiate validates the proposal as worthy of plan amendment consideration. Final Review evaluates the merits of proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Final Review evaluation and decision includes staff review, Planning Commission study sessions, a public hearing and Planning Commission recommendation by resolution, and City Council action by ordinance.

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

The proposal is the adoption of the periodic update of the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA). The update to the Comprehensive Plan was launched by the City Council on February 28, 2022. Council directed the update to integrate state, regional, and county requirements with the City Council's vision for the City, community feedback and guidance from City studies and plans. The scope of the update includes:

1. Update the land use map or make policy adjustments to expand housing capacity to plan for the growth targets identified in the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs);
2. Amend the housing section to be consistent with the rewritten Housing section of the King County CPPs and address the need for affordable housing;
3. Include policies that address the legacy of discrimination;
4. Update policies to manage growth in the City's identified Countywide Centers and Regional Growth Center;
5. Employ consistent, equitable outreach and engagement with diverse communities;
6. Include policies that address the causes and impacts of climate change;
7. Update, as necessary, the vision and the General Elements (Volume 1) to the Comprehensive Plan to align with the vision for growth in the City;
8. Explore amending the land use categories used in the Comprehensive Plan map to reference zones more broadly.

In addition, the proposal also encompasses limited amendments to neighborhood area (subarea) plan policies in Volume 2 to align with state law and citywide policies in Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan.

This staff report describes the proposal in greater detail, provides an overview of the process to review these amendments, and responds to the Comprehensive Plan amendment decision criteria.

More information about the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and project documents are available for public review at <https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/planning-initiatives/comprehensive-plan>. The staff contact for the project is Thara Johnson, Comprehensive Planning Manager, tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-4087.

REVIEW PROCESS

The City of Bellevue is seeking public comment on the draft Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The current draft document is the culmination of work by the Environmental Services, Transportation, Human Services, and Arts commissions and the Parks and Community Services Board over a two-year process. It has also involved extensive outreach and engagement to people who live, work, and play in Bellevue. The planning team used a variety of outreach tactics and engagement methods to help make sure diverse voices were included. Public engagement in this process contributed to an update that reflects community needs and values and sets direction for a livable city for all.

The Planning Commission is responsible for developing a consolidated recommendation on the entire plan. Following the public hearing, the Planning Commission is anticipated to continue its discussion and refinement of the draft document before making a recommendation to the City Council for their consideration. Continued input from the public, business and property owners, neighborhood groups, and other stakeholders will help the Planning Commission review the draft proposed by staff.

The public hearing before the Planning Commission on the draft Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update is scheduled for June 20 and June 26, 2024, during the Planning Commission meetings at 6:30 p.m. at Bellevue City Hall. The public hearing is conducted in a hybrid manner with both in-person and virtual options.

Anyone who wishes to comment on the draft is encouraged to testify at the public hearing or submit written comments. Before the hearing, written comments may be submitted to Thara Johnson, Comprehensive Planning Manager at tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov or PO Box 90012, Bellevue, WA, 98009-9012.

For further information, please contact Thara Johnson at tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-4087.

BACKGROUND

Bellevue has evolved dramatically since its incorporation in 1953 from a small, agricultural community of about 6,000 residents to its present-day status as a major regional center with a population of 154,600¹ and 163,800² jobs. Beginning with adoption of its first comprehensive plan in 1958 and continuing through today, the community has envisioned a future that builds on Bellevue's strengths as a desirable place to live and do business. The City's current Comprehensive Plan was originally adopted in 1993 and

¹ Washington State Office of Financial Management. 2023. Total Population.

² Puget Sound Regional Council. 2022. Total Employment (custom tabulation)

last updated in 2015, with annual amendments since that time. The GMA mandates that cities periodically conduct a thorough review of comprehensive plans and revise them as necessary to comply with the GMA. The deadline for this periodic update is December 31, 2024 (RCW 36.70A.130).

Bellevue and the region have experienced a significant amount of growth and change since the last major update to the Comprehensive Plan in 2015. The draft Comprehensive Plan update reflects important changes to the City and community (such as changing demographics and significant growth and development in the last decade), in regional policies (such as new state legislation, VISION 2050, King County CPPs) and investments in major transportation projects (such as development and opening of East Link light rail service) that reinforce Bellevue's important role as a regional center.

Bellevue's plan is comprised of two volumes. Volume 1 contains the eight mandatory GMA elements³ as well as four optional elements and a glossary. Volume 2 is a supplementary compendium of 14 neighborhood area (subarea) plans that provide a more detailed policy focus on specific areas in Bellevue. This update encompasses all of Volume 1 and makes a limited number of amendments to Volume 2 (see Proposal section below).

There is adequate land capacity to accommodate the housing and employment growth anticipated to occur through 2044, consistent with Countywide growth targets. The Comprehensive Plan identifies levels of service for utilities and infrastructure to respond to growth and changing community needs. In addition, the plan provides for environmental protection, addresses the impacts of climate change and building for a sustainable future, encourages economic development, supports efficient transportation systems, protects private property rights, and requires that adequate public services are available concurrent with new development. The draft Comprehensive Plan update is intended to reflect the vision and goals of the community as expressed through the robust public outreach process as well as the guidance and direction of the City's boards and commissions and the City Council. At the same time, the update is required to comply with the requirements of the GMA, including consistency with the regional policies of VISION 2050 (the Multicounty Planning Policies or MPPs) and the King County CPP's.

PROPOSAL

The proposed action is to update the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the requirements of the GMA. The Comprehensive Plan is Bellevue's foundational policy document that guides growth and development for the twenty-year period after adoption. Under the GMA, the Comprehensive Plan must be reviewed and revised every 10 years for a 20-year planning horizon through a process that includes robust public engagement. The changes in this periodic update are derived from the City Council's Vision and direction as well as changes in State Law, changes to the PSRC Multicounty Planning Policies and King County CPPs, technical analyses, direction from the City's boards and commissions and community input through the engagement process.

Robust Community Engagement

The periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan occurred through a process that has occurred over more than 2 years. Public participation is a fundamental goal of the state GMA and is central to the periodic update project and provides important opportunities for the community to help shape the plan, to learn more about the City, and to build community connections. WAC 365-196-600 establishes that

³ The Climate element is not yet required however, Bellevue does include a Climate and Environment element as one of the optional elements.

jurisdictions planning under GMA must establish procedures for early and continuous public participation in the development and amendment of comprehensive plans and development regulations. Achieving representative participation that aligns with the City's demographics was a central goal of this effort. Bellevue is the fifth most diverse city in the state, which means that the planning team needed to make an intentional effort to hear from a broad range of voices. Other demographic groups such as youth, older adults, and renters also have specific concerns that needed to be considered. Through special workshops, presentations, focus groups, and other opportunities, the planning team was able to connect with diverse groups and identify specific issues.

A report providing a summary of all community outreach and engagement conducted for Bellevue 2044 is available on <https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/planning-initiatives/comprehensive-plan>.

2044 Planning Horizon

Bellevue is required by GMA to plan for population growth consistent with the state forecast for the next 20 years. To do this, Bellevue worked with King County, Seattle and other Eastside Cities to establish planning targets for housing units and jobs. The growth allocations that resulted from this process are documented in the King County CPPs. Bellevue has targets of 35,000 new housing units and 70,000 new jobs by 2044. Bellevue is planning for a 2044 housing stock of 98,200 housing units and 218,600 jobs, an increase of about 50 percent of both housing units and jobs and more growth than Bellevue has planned for in the past. To plan for this growth, the update to the Comprehensive Plan includes revisions to policies and the Future Land Use Map.

Comprehensive Plan Changes

Changes to the Comprehensive Plan are described below for each of the elements within Volume 1. The draft Comprehensive Plan Volume 1 and Subarea plan amendments contained within Volume 2 are included as Attachments A, B and C), as well as a policy change document (Attachment D) highlighting the changes to the policies and the rationale for the change.

Community Engagement Element

A public involvement element is not required by the GMA; however, Bellevue's inclusion of a Community Engagement element is a testament to how deeply the City values community participation in planning and decision making. The policies in this element focus on how the City interacts with the community to share information and solicit feedback on plans and activities. Historically, this element was named the Citizen Engagement Element. It is proposed to be renamed the Community Engagement Element. "Community" is a more inclusive term and avoids implications related to immigration status for members of the Bellevue community. Changes to this element include,

- A greater focus on equity and inclusion to reach all members of the Bellevue community, especially those most impacted by City activities;
- Incorporating a more expansive definition of community;
- Applying innovative equitable engagement techniques;
- Encouraging two-way communication through community report backs and feedback,
- Investing additional resources in engaging historically marginalized or underrepresented communities; and
- Encouraging engagement around tribal coordination.

Land Use Element

The Land Use element is about how the City decides where to allow different activities, or uses, and the buildings for those activities, such as housing, restaurants and retail, services, offices, manufacturing and other commercial or industrial uses. It is a required element under the GMA and must include the general location of different land uses, which can be found in the Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map had been found in the Neighborhood Area (Subarea) Plans in Volume 2 in the past. This update moves the map into the Land Use element in Volume 1. Key policy update areas include,

- The identification of Countywide Centers (as established in the King County CPPs) and updating policies related to Mixed Use Centers;
- The identification of Neighborhood Centers and the creation of a framework to identify future centers; and
- Expanding the City's use of land use incentive systems to recapture some of the increase in development value of property to benefit the community.

Land Use Map Amendments

The Future Land Use Map is adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan and shows the vision for the future use of land within Bellevue. In this update it has been moved to the Land Use element (Map LU-1). To accommodate the anticipated growth, a key policy change is to update the Future Land Use Map to add capacity for housing and jobs. Updates to the Future Land Use Map include,

- A broader grouping of zones under Future Land Use designations, including a key that uses images to describe the character of development expected in the different designations;
- New Future Land Use designations focused on mixed use development;
- Land use parameters consistent with the recent state legislation, including changes to the GMA resulting from the adoption of House Bill (HB) 1110 and HB 1337, allowing more than one unit per lot; and
- Focusing mixed use style development in Mixed Use Centers and Neighborhood Centers.

Neighborhoods Element

The Neighborhoods element is about how the City supports safe and inclusive interactions between people in Bellevue. The Neighborhoods element is not a required element under GMA but reflects the City's focus on creating a livable community. Key policy updates in this element include,

- A new section, "Community Safety" and two new policies to expand the focus on safety in the City; and
- More specific language to describe the intent of a policy and changing language to be explicit about balancing aesthetics with other City priorities.

Housing Element

The Housing element is about how the City makes sure housing is available and affordable to meet the needs of all sizes and types of households. The Housing element is a required element under GMA. Since the last update, new requirements have been added to the GMA that need to be addressed in this element. In addition, there were significant changes to the King County CPPs Housing element.

Therefore, the draft Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update includes more changes to this element than most of the other elements in the Comprehensive Plan. Key policy updates in this element include,

- Applying an equity lens to housing and addressing racially disparate impacts, including recording, referencing, and remedying past inequities/injustices and emphasizing underserved and/or underrepresented community members in future efforts (as required by the GMA);

- Numerous policies are proposed to be updated so they do not perpetuate inequitable outcomes in housing, especially for underserved and/or underrepresented community members;
- More comprehensive policies to address homelessness, including strengthening existing policies and adding policies that support the provision of emergency housing, increased outreach and community education, and the provision of human services alongside emergency housing and shelter projects;
- Increasing (affordable) housing options and overall supply (as required by the GMA);
- Support for many strategies such as anti-displacement efforts; and
- Emphasize areas where gaps are identified such as for low-income households, and providing a wider range of (affordable) housing options in every neighborhood including the increase of ownership opportunities.

Capital Facilities Element

The Capital Facilities element is about how the City plans for, acquires and maintains public land, facilities, buildings and other public property. Capital Facilities is a required element under GMA and must include an inventory of the City's facilities. This element was primarily updated to reflect the current conditions of the City, however additional updates include,

- Supporting the City's role as a leader in environmental preservation and enhancement; and
- Planning for resiliency in City systems and creating a framework for City facilities to adapt to climate change.

Utilities Element

The Utilities element is about how the City manages public water, wastewater, surface and stormwater systems as well as access to private utilities like electricity, internet, and gas. The Utilities element is required under GMA and must include the location and capacity of utilities such as water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications systems. This element was primarily updated to reflect the current conditions of the City. Additional updates include,

- Reorganization of policies in the Non City-managed Utilities sections to clarify the applicability of the policies;
- Policies that support stormwater management using the current best practices and latest technology; and
- Policies to plan for resiliency in City systems to withstand extreme weather and natural disasters and to adapt to climate change.

Transportation Element

The Transportation element is about how people get around the City from walking and biking to cars, buses and light rail. The Transportation element is required under GMA. Updates to this element were fairly limited as it has been recently updated to provide foundation for the Mobility Implementation Plan (MIP) and the Curb Management Plan. Key policy update areas in this element include,

- Aligning with the language used in the CPPs and using the term "Mobility Hub" to refer to areas where people transfer between many different modes of transportation (such as a park and ride);
- Policies regarding multimodal transportation to create a framework that helps the City measure performance through Performance Targets set in the MIP;
- Revise policies to give general direction in the Comprehensive Plan and refer to the relevant functional plan or implementation plan for details and to repeal policies that are redundant with the purpose and content of the functional/implementation plans; and

- Reduced the number of policies, so the element is more focused on overall direction of the City’s transportation network.

Economic Development Element

The Economic Development element is about how the City supports existing businesses and attracts new businesses to the city. Economic Development is a required element under GMA. Key policy update areas in this element include,

- Policies around arts and culture are strengthened, especially to capture new and/or emerging arts and culture opportunities;
- Additional policies around tourism, recognizing the interdependence of tourism, retail, and the downtown economy; and
- Policy support for combatting involuntary commercial displacement.

Climate and Environment Element

The Climate and Environment element is about how the City restores, protects, and enhances Bellevue’s ecosystem both on public lands like parks and on private property. A climate element is not yet required of cities like Bellevue, however, the environment is a priority for the City and this element was updated to address many of the items that will be required of a Climate element. The name of this element was changed from “Environment” to “Climate and Environment”. Key policy update areas in this element include,

- Updates to stormwater management policies to reflect the current best practices and latest technology.
- Update policies to make low impact development (LID) a preferred or required practice
- An increased focus on climate change to:
 - (1) direct the City to implement standards, goals and benchmarks to reduce the City’s impact on the environment and provide support for the Environmental Stewardship Initiative;
 - (2) plan for resiliency in City systems, such as the City’s utilities and transportation networks, to withstand extreme weather and natural disasters; and
 - (3) create strategies to adapt to climate change.
- A new section titled “urban forestry” as well as many new policies to add more support for the enhancement of the tree canopy.

Human Services Element

The Human Services element encompasses a range of programs, services, and investments provided by the City that foster stability and enhance the well-being of marginalized residents. The Human Services element is not a mandatory element under the GMA but is an important part of City planning to ensure the health and safety of the community. Key policy updates in this element include,

- Placing an equity lens on all policies, and amending policies to address specific needs among communities that face additional challenges, and adding language that calls for addressing inequities for historically marginalized community members;
- Align the policies focused on homelessness more closely with the Housing element and add new policy language to address the housing and homelessness crisis; and
- Updates that focus on the needs of specific populations such as, elevating youth participation and development, including older adults and members identifying as LGBTQIA+.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space element is about how the City plans for, acquires and maintains parks, trails and open spaces and how it develops recreational activities and programs. This is a mandatory element under GMA. Key policy updates in this element center on urban forestry, and creating and maintaining inclusive recreation spaces.

- Policies to restore ecological health where needed in forested areas of the city;
- Ensuring inclusive recreation spaces include playgrounds, trails, parks, community buildings and other recreationally focused areas that are accessible to people of many different abilities and backgrounds; and
- Explicitly stating that access should include people of different abilities and to prioritize access for historically underserved populations.

Urban Design & the Arts Element

The Urban Design & the Arts element is about how the City guides the design of the built environment and provides programs and funding for all the services that support visual and performing arts in Bellevue. This is not a mandatory element under the GMA but includes direction on issues that are important to the Bellevue community around the visual landscape of the City and support for the arts and cultural scene. Key policy updates in this element include,

- Policies to capture new and/or emerging arts and culture opportunities;
- Policies focused on the development of BelRed Arts Districts;
- Policies to support coordination with tribes;
- An new section on historic resources and landmarks as well as additional policies supporting planning for these cultural resources; and
- The element has also been reorganized so there is a clearer indication as to where urban design policies apply geographically. This reorganization also helps to address the placement of new policies that are specific to areas where more development is expected, such as in the City's Mixed Use Centers (Downtown, BelRed, Wilburton, Crossroads, Factoria and Eastgate) and Neighborhood Centers located throughout the City.

Neighborhood Area (Subarea) Plans

Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan contains neighborhood area (subarea) plans. Each neighborhood area plan has a set of policies and a land use plan map. Neighborhood area plans have been an important tool for addressing the changing needs and conditions of specific parts of the City. Bellevue has sixteen neighborhood areas, each containing a few to many smaller neighborhoods, that cover the full extent of the City.

The neighborhood area boundaries were updated in 2014 to better align with community expectations and to facilitate long-range planning. The 2014 subarea plan policies for any given site remain in effect until and unless they have been superseded by new planning area boundaries and policies. As neighborhood plans are updated, these new boundaries will be applied. The boundary between the Wilburton and BelRed neighborhood areas would be modified with the adoption of the Wilburton Vision Implementation Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

Fourteen neighborhood (subarea) area plans are in effect today. Policy changes to current neighborhood area plans are limited and will only be updated to incorporate map amendments and revise those policies that would otherwise conflict with the Land Use Map amendments; other updates to Volume 1 policies; and to align with state law, specifically the changes to the GMA resulting from the adoption of

HB 1110 and HB 1337 which were both passed in 2023. A comprehensive update of each of the neighborhood area (subarea) plans will happen periodically through the neighborhood area planning process including extensive engagement with the local community.

Finally, the land use plans are moved out of the neighborhood area (subarea) plans with the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Each current neighborhood area plan has a land use plan attached showing land use designations within their respective boundaries. As a result, the neighborhood area plans will reference the citywide Future Land Use Map and classifications in Volume 1. Having one map, instead of a separate map for each neighborhood area, makes it easier to administer the Future Land Use Map and ensure consistency across the entire Comprehensive Plan as future updates are made.

Shoreline Management Element

Since the Shoreline Master Program will be updated in a separate process, no policy changes related to the Shoreline Management element are included in the Comprehensive Plan Period Update.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT DECISION CRITERIA

The decision criteria for a Comprehensive Plan amendment are set forth in the Bellevue Land Use Code, see LUC 20.30I.150. Based on the criteria, Community Development Department staff has concluded that the proposed amendment merits **approval**. This conclusion is based on the following analysis:

B.1. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other goals and policies of the City, the County Planning Policies, the Growth Management Act and other applicable law; and

The proposed amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the MPPs, the CPPs, the GMA and other goals and policies in these planning documents for urban growth development.

Comprehensive Plan and Other Goals and Policies of the City

The proposal is a major update and review of the Comprehensive Plan that looks at the plan as whole, updating facts and figures, and revising the narrative, goals and policies to reflect the community's current conditions and future vision. The proposal builds on the overarching Comprehensive Plan Vision which describes a future state, the community's desire for how the City should develop to continue to be a place people want to be in 2044. The vision is ambitious, yet achievable and creates a dynamic tension that will challenge the community to continue to work to improve the qualities of the City. The vision is based on the City Council Vision and priorities, which also guide efforts throughout the City to improve affordable housing opportunities including the update of the Housing element. The proposal also incorporates the change that has occurred since the last major update in 2015 and provides City policy direction on the City's growth strategy for the next twenty years.

Growth Management Act

The proposal is consistent with the GMA because it contains the required elements as well as several optional elements; demonstrates how growth targets can be accommodated in terms of land capacity, infrastructure and urban services; amends policies to reflect the community's vision and to provide internal consistency among the elements; and addresses other requirements related to regional coordination and consistency (see below). The draft Comprehensive Plan supports a strategy for managing growth and development in a manner

that is consistent with the regional strategy and directs most of Bellevue's growth to the City's Mixed Use Centers (Downtown, BelRed, Wilburton/East Main, Crossroads, Factoria and Eastgate). These areas are served by a full range of transportation options, major commercial centers and the focus of future residential growth. The update supports the GMA's fundamental provisions, including coordinating land use planning with the provision of streets, utilities and other infrastructure, and planning for housing needs of the community.

Multi-county Planning Policies (VISION 2050)

VISION 2050 is a regional plan prepared and adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) in 2020. Cities and counties within the four-county region of PSRC are required to be consistent with the MPPs in VISION 2050 as part of their individual comprehensive plan updates. VISION 2050 designates Bellevue as one of five metropolitan cities in the region and Downtown Bellevue as a regional growth center. As a result, Bellevue is expected to accommodate a greater share of regional growth with new housing and jobs focused in areas that have convenient access to high-capacity transit and serve as a civic, cultural, and economic hub.

PSRC has created a system of Regional Growth Centers which are foundational to the regional growth strategy (see MPP-RGS-2, MPP-RGS-8, and MPP-RGS-9). In addition, PSRC created a framework and formulated policies to support the creation of Countywide Centers (MPP-RC-8, MPP-RGS-11) and local centers (MPP-DP-25). As reflected in the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, most of the City's growth is directed to the Downtown Regional Growth Center as well as candidate Countywide Centers designated as focal points for local and county planning and investment to support a concentration of jobs, housing, shopping, transportation mobility options and recreational opportunities. Bellevue identifies mixed use areas in Wilburton, BelRed, Crossroads, Factoria and Eastgate as Countywide Centers. The proposal demonstrates the ability to accommodate future population and employment growth consistent with the regional designations.

In addition, the proposal includes policies to address consistency with the MPPs related to regional collaboration, regional growth strategy, environment, climate change, development patterns, housing, economy, transportation, and public services. For example, policies are proposed to provide equitable access to all communities, especially the historically underserved, and prioritizing investments to address disparities, in line with MPP-PS-2. Other Comprehensive Plan policies are proposed in response to MPPs that call for jurisdictions to support development of more diverse housing and housing that is affordable to low- and very-low-income households.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update is consistent with the PSRC VISION 2050's MPPs noted above and identified below:

MPP-RGS-2. Use consistent countywide targeting processes for allocating population and employment growth consistent with the regional vision, including establishing: (a) local employment targets, (b) local housing targets based on population projections, and (c) local growth targets for each designated regional growth center and manufacturing/industrial center.

MPP-RGS-8. Attract 65% of the region's residential growth and 75% of the region's employment growth to the regional growth centers and high-capacity transit station areas to realize the multiple public benefits of compact growth around high-capacity transit investments. As

jurisdictions plan for growth targets, focus development near high-capacity transit to achieve the regional goal.

MPP-RGS-9. *Focus a significant share of population and employment growth in designated regional growth centers.*

MPP-RGS-11. *Encourage growth in designated countywide centers.*

MPP-DP-25. *Support the development of centers within all jurisdictions, including high-capacity transit station areas and countywide and local centers.*

MPP-PS-2. *Promote affordability and equitable access of public services to all communities, especially the historically underserved. Prioritize investments to address disparities.*

Countywide Planning Policies

CPPs for King County were updated in 2021, including revised targets for population and employment growth. The proposed Comprehensive Plan update provides adequate land capacity and urban level services to accommodate the revised growth targets. The proposal also includes policies to address consistency with the CPPs related to environmental sustainability, including adopting and implementing policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emission per CPP-EN-27; development patterns; housing; and public facilities and services per CPP-DP-2, DP-3, DP-4, DP-14. New Comprehensive Plan policies are proposed to address the King County Centers Designation Framework, for establishing and planning for Countywide Centers per CPP-DP-31. Furthermore, in line with several CPPs including CPP-DP-23, the proposed Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update adds policies to include tribal governments in coordination efforts. Several new policies are proposed to identify, document and address the local history of racially exclusive and discriminatory land use and housing practices and their impacts per CPP-H-6. A number of new policies have been added to address the new CPPs relating to meeting housing needs equitably, increasing housing supply, expanded housing options and affordability with access to transit, housing stability and the framework for meeting regional housing need.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update is consistent with the following King County's CPPs, as noted above:

CPP-EN-27. *Adopt and implement policies and programs to achieve a target of reducing countywide sources of greenhouse gas emissions, compared to a 2007 baseline, by 50% by 2030, 75% by 2040, and 95%, including net-zero emissions through carbon sequestration and other strategies, by 2050. Evaluate and update these targets over time in consideration of the latest international climate science and statewide targets aiming to limit the most severe impacts of climate change and keep global warming under 1.5 degrees Celsius.*

CPP-DP-2. *Prioritize housing and employment growth in cities and centers within the Urban Growth Area, where residents and workers have higher access to opportunity and high-capacity transit. Promote a pattern of compact development within the Urban Growth Area that includes housing at a range of urban densities, commercial and industrial development, and other urban facilities, including medical, governmental, institutional, and educational uses and schools, and parks and open space. The Urban Growth Area will include a mix of uses that are convenient to and support public transportation to reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicle travel for most daily activities.*

CPP-DP-3 *Develop and use residential, commercial, and manufacturing land efficiently in the Urban Growth Area to create healthy, vibrant, and equitable urban communities with a full range of urban services, and to protect the long-term viability of the Rural Area and Natural*

Resource Lands. Promote the efficient use of land within the Urban Growth Area by using methods such as:

- a) Directing concentrations of housing and employment growth to high opportunity areas like designated centers and transit station areas, consistent with the numeric goals in the Regional Growth Strategy;*
- b) Encouraging compact and infill development with a mix of compatible residential, commercial, and community activities;*
- c) Providing opportunities for greater housing growth closer to areas of high employment to reduce commute times;*
- d) Optimizing the use of existing capacity for housing and employment;*
- e) Redeveloping underutilized lands, in a manner that considers equity and mitigates displacement; and*
- f) Coordinating plans for land use, transportation, schools, capital facilities and services.*

CPP-DP-4 *Focus housing growth in the Urban Growth Area within cities, designated regional centers, countywide centers, locally designated local centers, areas of high employment, and other transit supported areas to promote access to opportunity. Focus employment growth within designated regional and countywide manufacturing/industrial centers and within locally designated local centers*

CPP-DP-14 *All jurisdictions shall accommodate housing and employment by:*

- a) Using the adopted growth targets as the land use assumption for their comprehensive plan; b) Establishing local growth targets for regional growth centers and regional manufacturing/industrial centers, where applicable;*
- c) Ensuring adopted comprehensive plans and zoning regulations provide sufficient capacity at appropriate densities for residential, commercial, and industrial uses that is sufficient to meet 20-year growth targets, allocated housing needs, and is consistent with the desired growth pattern described in VISION 2050;*
- d) Ensuring adopted local water, sewer, transportation, utility, and other infrastructure plans and investments, including special purpose district plans, are consistent in location and timing with adopted targets as well as regional and countywide plans; and*
- e) Transferring and accommodating unincorporated area housing and employment targets and housing need as annexations occur*

CPP-DP-23. *Coordinate the preparation of comprehensive plans with adjacent and other affected jurisdictions, military facilities, tribal governments, ports, airports, and other related entities to avoid or mitigate the potential cross-border impacts of urban development and encroachment of incompatible uses.*

CPP-DP-31. *Focus housing and employment growth into designated regional growth centers, at levels consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy, and at densities that maximize high-capacity transit.*

CPP-H-6. *Collaborate with diverse partners (e.g., employers, financial institutions, philanthropic, faith, and community-based organizations) on provision of resources (e.g., funding, surplus property) and programs to meet countywide housing need.*

CPP-H-10 *Adopt policies, incentives, strategies, actions, and regulations that increase the supply of long-term income-restricted housing for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households and households with special needs.*

CPP-H-11 *Identify sufficient capacity of land for housing including, but not limited to income restricted housing; housing for moderate-, low-, very low-, and extremely low-income households; manufactured housing; multifamily housing; group homes; foster care facilities;*

emergency housing; emergency shelters; permanent supportive housing; and within an urban growth area boundary, duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes.

B.2. The proposed amendment addresses the interests and changed needs of the entire City as identified in its long-range planning and policy documents; and

This proposal includes new and amended policies in every element that address the changing needs of the entire City and reflect the Comprehensive Plan Vision. The City's interest is in seeking to meet the challenge of accommodating future growth and preserving what community members love about Bellevue, makes sure housing is affordable and affordable to meet the needs of all, maintains an urban level of service for public facilities and utilities, supports and attracts businesses to the City, and embraces its stewardship of the environment for a growing population that is increasingly diverse.

Specific changes to Bellevue's Comprehensive also stem from changes recommended by study documents that focus on a specific topic or policy area in the plan, such as the Racially Disparate Impact Analysis. The analysis completed in June 2023 showed that racial disparities in housing exist in Bellevue today and some existing policies in the Comprehensive Plan contribute to sustaining the disparities. Policy changes are proposed for the Housing element as well as the Land Use and Neighborhoods elements to use more specific language that can be enforced objectively and to avoid subjective terms. Other key updates are based on state law including consistency with county and regional requirements. An important example is a set of proposed Comprehensive Plan policies to ensure that middle-scale housing is allowed per CPP-H-16 and CPP-H-18, also in line with recent state legislation, including the changes to the GMA resulting from HB 1110. Another key set of changes relates to functional plans and implementation plans that guide the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The current Comprehensive Plan references these plans but provides details that focus on a shorter time horizon. The key policy changes are to revise policies to give general direction in the Comprehensive Plan and refer to the relevant functional or implementation plan for details and to repeal policies that are redundant with the purpose and content of the functional/implementation plans. This has the added benefit of reducing the number of policies so the Comprehensive Plan, and specifically the Transportation element, is more focused on overall direction.

B.3. The proposed amendment addresses significantly changed conditions since the last time the pertinent Comprehensive Plan map or text was amended. See LUC 20.50.046 for the definition of "Significantly Changed Conditions;" and

Significantly changed conditions are defined as: Demonstrating evidence of change such as unanticipated consequences of an adopted policy, or changed conditions on the subject property or its surrounding area, or changes related to the pertinent Plan map or text; where such change has implications of a magnitude that need to be addressed for the Comprehensive Plan to function as an integrated whole. *This definition applies only to Part 20.30I Amendment and Review of the Comprehensive Plan (LUC 20.50.046).*

The proposal addresses a wide range of significant changes affecting the City since the last major update adopted in 2015, some of which include:

- New countywide growth targets and updated growth projections that expect the City to accommodate 35,000 new housing units and 70,000 new jobs by 2044.
- Addressing the City's housing goals and mandates under new housing legislation, specifically requirements to allow middle-scale housing and accessory dwelling units on the majority of residential lots.
- Planning for Countywide Centers, areas designated by King County in the CPPs as centers of future investment in transportation.
- Support planning for future development in Downtown, Wilburton and BelRed, all areas with many transportation options and investments in the parks system and environmental enhancements to support this growth.
- Increased mobility options and expansion of Bellevue's multimodal transportation network.

B.4. If a site-specific proposed amendment, the subject property is suitable for development in general conformance with adjacent land use and the surrounding development pattern, and with zoning standards under the potential zoning classifications; and

N/A – This criterion does not apply as the proposed amendment, a periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan, is not site-specific but citywide.

B.5. The proposed amendment demonstrates a public benefit and enhances the public health, safety and welfare of the City.

The proposal demonstrates a public benefit and enhances the public health, safety and welfare of the City by providing adequate land capacity and urban level services to accommodate growth, reinforces environmental protection, encourages economic development, supports efficient transportation systems, protects private property rights and requires that adequate public services are available concurrent with new development.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)

The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update was determined to need further environmental review under SEPA at the time of application. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) consistent with the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) in Washington State was prepared for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and the Wilburton Vision Implementation CPA and LUCA. The EIS identified and analyzed environmental impacts to help agency decision-makers, applicants, and the public understand how the proposal could affect the environment.

More generally, the EIS is the most detailed form of environmental review under SEPA, and the EIS provides a tool for identifying and analyzing probable adverse environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives, and potential mitigation. An EIS informs decision-makers and the public of reasonable alternatives, including mitigation measures that would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance environmental quality. Preparation of an EIS is required for actions that have the potential for significant environmental impacts. The EIS prepared for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton Vision Implementation is a non-project EIS that analyzes the proposal and alternatives broadly across the study area. For the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, the EIS describes:

- 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.

The EIS process included the following steps: (1) initial research, issuing a determination of significance, and scoping the contents of the EIS with agencies, tribes, and the public; (2) preparing a Draft EIS with a comment period; (3) responding to comments and developing a Preferred Alternative; and (4) issuing the Final EIS to inform development of legislation. Community members had the opportunity to comment during two stages of the EIS process: the scoping stage and the DEIS stage.

The Draft EIS (DEIS) was issued April 27, 2023, and the City issued the Final EIS (FEIS) on February 1, 2024. Following the issuance of the DEIS and review of the comments received, the City developed a Preferred Alternative. The No Action Alternative and the selected Preferred Alternative are analyzed in the FEIS. The Preferred Alternative includes a distribution of growth that aligns with regional requirements for equity, climate change, and housing, as well as recently adopted vision and priorities by the City Council. The EIS also includes a subarea-specific analysis for future land use and associated environmental impacts for the Wilburton study area (which consists of portions of the Wilburton/NE 8th Street and BelRed subareas).

The following elements of the environment were analyzed in the EIS for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update:

- Land use patterns and urban form.
- Plans and policies.
- Population and employment.
- Aesthetics.
- Housing.
- Air quality and GHG emissions.
- Noise.
- Public services and utilities.
- Transportation.

The DEIS and FEIS may be viewed on the City's website at: <https://bellevuewa.gov/2044-environmental-review>. Also, the action alternatives are described in more detail on this project webpage and information can be reviewed regarding the EIS process for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT

The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update project was noticed at the time of application for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment permit (May 19, 2022) as required by LUC 20.35.415. The public hearing has been noticed on June 6, 2024, as is required by LUC 20.35.420, through the Weekly Permit Bulletin and Seattle Times and emails to parties of record. A public hearing on the proposal is scheduled for June 20 and June 26, 2024.

Bellevue 2044 – Building a Livable City for All is the City's call to action for the community to be involved in the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Over the past two and a half years, the planning team has worked with the community to identify development priorities, address key challenges, tackle the need for more housing, and center equity. The need for inclusive and equitable engagement was paramount. Bellevue is the fifth most diverse city in the state – 61% of the population is non-white and 43% were

born outside the U.S. This engagement effort used a range of methods and tools to involve as many community members as possible. Highlights include:

- Engaging over 7,000 individuals.
- A postage-paid, mailed questionnaire to every household, with online translations that received over 3,300 responses.
- 78 events including in-person workshops, virtual presentations, focus group conversations, and pop-up events in the community.
- 46% of these events were targeted for groups that are historically marginalized or typically underrepresented in city planning process, including workshops in Spanish and Mandarin, listening sessions with people experiencing homelessness, youth workshops at Bellevue schools, and presentations to other groups.
- A statistically valid survey.
- Grant based work done in collaboration with other Eastside cities to engage with BIPOC communities around the topic of middle housing.
- Formation of a Bellevue 2044 Strategy Team that brought together representatives from the business community, developers, nonprofit leaders, neighborhood leaders, and partners from the local school district to engage in deliberative dialogue around key issues.

A report providing a summary of all community outreach and engagement conducted for Bellevue 2044 is available on <https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/planning-initiatives/comprehensive-plan>.

Additional public comments that were sent to staff outside of one of these activities or comments sent to the Planning Commission have been compiled and are available on the Comprehensive Plan website.

NEXT STEPS

We request the Planning Commission to conduct the public hearing at its meetings on June 20 and June 26, 2024, discuss the proposal, and ask questions of staff. It is anticipated that the Commission will continue its review, deliberation and refinement of the proposals at additional meetings following the close of the public hearing. It is anticipated that, following review of comments and deliberations the Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the changes to the Comprehensive Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Bellevue 2044 Draft Comprehensive Plan – Volume 1
- B. Bellevue 2044 Future Land Use Map
- C. Bellevue Volume 2 Subarea Plan Amendments
- D. [Final Environmental Impact Statement \(FEIS\), 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton Vision Implementation](#)
- E. Policy Change Tracker – Volume 1
- F. Policy Change Tracker – Volume 2