

Public Comment on

# Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

Permit # 22-105259 AC

Comments submitted to city staff or the Planning Commission  
outside of an Engagement event or activity.

June 20, to June 26, 2024

*Note: Notice of Public Hearing published June 6, 2024*

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Alex Brennan <alex@futurewise.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 2:52 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara  
**Subject:** Bellevue Comp Plan Periodic Update Written Comment  
**Attachments:** Futurewise\_BellevueComprehensivePlanDraft\_6-20-2024.pdf

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Dear Bellevue Planning Commission,  
Please see the attached written comment from Futurewise on Bellevue's Draft Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update that you are considering at your public hearing later today. I look forward to seeing you at the hearing as well.

Sincerely,

**Alex Brennan** (he/him)  
Executive Director



**futu**

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June 20, 2024

City of Bellevue Planning Commission  
450 110<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE  
Bellevue, WA 98004

Dear Bellevue Planning Commission,

Futurewise works throughout Washington state to encourage healthy, equitable and opportunity-rich communities, and to protect our most valuable farmland, forests and water resources through wise land use policies and practices ([website](#)). We are actively engaged with the City of Bellevue and other East King County organizations to support Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update ("CPPU") process, especially as that relates to residential capacity, transit-oriented development, and affordable housing strategies.


Futurewise thanks City of Bellevue staff for their diligent, yearslong work to propose a range of growth alternatives, analyze environmental impacts, conduct broad engagement, and balance proposals with feedback from the community, stakeholders, City Councilmembers, and Commissioners. All this was done while maintaining a tight project schedule.

As the Planning Commission is poised to provide final recommendations on the [Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update](#) (vol. 1), Futurewise would like to share comment on some specific areas.

Thank you for conducting a capacity analysis as required by RCW [36.70A.070\(2\)\(c\)](#) for all economic segments of the community, including, but not limited to, government-assisted 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. For future Comprehensive Plan processes, Futurewise recommends including not just the results of the analysis and a small list of the assumptions, but also the analysis itself (Appendix R of the [FEIS](#)), such as unit and parcel data that identifies developable and redevelopable land, map analysis (GIS), identification of a full set of assumptions, calculations, etc. In effect, the public should be able to verify if the city has sufficient capacity.


The results of the Capacity Analysis included in the Comprehensive Plan draft indicate that there is sufficient capacity for all types of permanent housing. However, the results also show that there is not sufficient capacity for temporary emergency housing (2,358 units of capacity compared to 6,688 units of emergency housing need). As stated in Appendix Q of the [FEIS](#) from February 1, 2024 "The City's combined capacity for Emergency Housing – Transient, which is regulated as a Homeless Services Use, is less than the King County identified need for this type of





housing based on current regulations. If spacing and density limits are removed, the city would have capacity to meet the need for transient Emergency Housing. On the other hand, the City has capacity for Emergency Housing – Non-transient, which is regulated as Supportive Housing, without any changes to current regulations.” [RCW 35A.21.430](#) requires the city to determine that “[a]ny such requirements on occupancy, spacing, and intensity of use may not prevent the siting of a sufficient number of permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, or indoor emergency shelters necessary to accommodate each city’s projected need for such housing and shelter under RCW 36.70A.070(2)(a)(ii).” To achieve sufficient capacity for emergency shelter, we urge the City of Bellevue to modify or eliminate the spacing requirements to accommodate this type of housing. We also urge the city to reconsider any conditional use processes for permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, or indoor emergency shelters. As noted by the [Department of Commerce](#), “Conditional uses and/or public hearings add uncertainty for the applicant, and therefore time and money, to projects that, in the case of supportive housing types, are often consistent with community needs and vision.” Given the many years taken by the conditional use permit process for the Eastgate campus, the city should evaluate this process as a barrier and identify mitigation strategies following the guidance provided by commerce.

Thank you for making adequate provisions to meet housing needs at all economic segments of the population including emergency housing, emergency shelters, and permanent supportive housing. Such policies include, but are not limited to:

- HO-13. Provide incentives to encourage residential development for a wide range of household types and income levels in mixed use areas throughout the city.
  - HO-14. Ensure there are zoning ordinances and building policies in place that allow and encourage an increase in the housing supply attainable to households along the full range of income levels.
  - HO-15. Streamline permitting processes and create objective development regulations that encourage housing development throughout the city.
  - HO-21. Monitor and assess the housing production in the city to track the city’s progress toward meeting the projected jurisdictional housing needs across the entire income spectrum, consistent with state law and Countywide Planning Policies and take additional steps if needed.
  - HO-26. Partner with non-profit and for-profit housing developers to help create a variety of housing types in the community.
  - HO-33. Address the need for housing affordable to extremely low-, very low-, low- and moderate-income households, through funding, regulations, policies, procedures and other mechanisms.
  - HO-34. Explore the creation of a funding mechanism to assist extremely low-, very low and low-income households with property tax payments to prevent displacement.
  - HO-35. Create opportunities to require or incentivize affordable housing when increases to development capacity are made.
  - HO-39. Create a funding mechanism to purchase affordable housing units which become available or are likely to not remain affordable to both preserve affordable housing stock and prevent displacement.
  - HO-50. Ensure that regulations and standards support the effectiveness of bonuses and incentives to increase permanently affordable housing on any qualifying property owned by faith-based or non-profit housing entities, or on surplus property owned by public entities.
  - HO-56. Analyze major cost and regulatory barriers to the construction of affordable housing and minimize these barriers where they exist.
- 



- LU-32. Encourage reducing parking requirements in areas with good access to transit and active transportation facilities and prioritize parking options to serve the community with special needs.
- TR-137. Minimize non-residential parking in neighborhoods through residential parking zones and other measures.

In particular, housing incentives, requirements, funding, land acquisition, permit streamlining, partnership with nonprofit developers, density bonuses on faith-based land; and ongoing analysis, monitoring, and program updates are important tools and actions to make adequate provisions for housing at all economic segments of the population, including special needs housing. While some of the existing, updated, and new policies for this 2024 Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update are specific, some name policies and actions more generally. Futurewise recommends referring to [exhibit 6 of the Department of Commerce Guidance](#) to identify more specific actions that Bellevue can pursue.

Thank you for conducting a [Racially Disparate Impacts Analysis](#) to meet new planning requirements under RCW [36.70A.070](#). In Volume 1 of the update, thank you for adding new Comp Plan policies and regulations to address and begin to undo racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing caused by local policies, plans, and actions. If the City has not done so already, we recommend applying the racially disparate impacts analysis to the policy updates in [Volume 2](#) of the Comp Plan periodic update to ensure that subarea plans do not perpetuate racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing. We also thank the City of Bellevue for including a displacement risk analysis in the FEIS and for introducing anti-displacement policies into the Comprehensive Plan draft.

Finally, Futurewise thanks the City of Bellevue for updating zoning designations in the Future Land Use Map to accommodate middle housing per RCW [36.70A.635](#). We thank you for including policy HO-19 to “ensure that policies and regulations allow for middle scale housing, such as duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, small apartment buildings, cottage housing and courtyard apartments.” In the implementation phase, we recommend that regulations comply with parking reduction requirements in RCW 36.70A.635(6)(e) s and that they not be “more restrictive than those for detached single family residences” as RCW 36.70A.635(6)(6)(b) requires.

Thank you for considering our comments as you make final recommendations to Council for Bellevue’s Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

Sincerely,

Alex Brennan  
Executive Director  
Futurewise



## Nesse, Katherine

---

**From:** Christy Santos <csantos@windermere.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 3:15 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara  
**Subject:** Comments on Draft 2044 Comprehensive Plan Policy Updates

You don't often get email from csantos@windermere.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Planning Commissioners, Mayor, and City Council Members,

I'm writing to express my concerns about the proposed updates to the Draft 2044 Comprehensive Plan (CP) Policy.

The staff's idea of using an "umbrella" for land use and zoning categories should be rejected. This approach is short-sighted and benefits developers at the expense of our residents and neighborhoods. Here's why this proposal is problematic:

- It groups very different parcels together under a single category.
- It allows for too wide a range of zoning designations within a single group.
- It doesn't consider the unique characteristics of individual parcels and neighborhoods.
- It allows developers to easily shift from the lowest to the highest zoning category within the "umbrella."
- It relies solely on staff judgment based on information from developers, which is a biased approach.
- It skips the thorough Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) process.

Essentially, this would take decision-making power away from the Planning Commission and City Council, putting it in the hands of developers and city staff. This limits notice and the opportunity for residents to respond. Developers and landlords often prioritize profit over neighborhood well-being and don't have the same duty to our communities. By removing or limiting residents' safeguards, the city places future development in the hands of those seeking profit, not balance.

The current CPA process allows for public notice and gives residents time to respond to potential changes. The proposed "umbrella" approach would force residents to appeal to the City's Hearing Examiner, making it unfair and burdensome for property owners and neighborhoods.

For example, an upzone of the Newport Hills Shopping Center would greatly increase traffic in our already congested area. Newport Hills has limited two-lane roads, and rush hour traffic already causes significant delays, affecting everyone, including public transportation, school buses, and emergency vehicles.

As a 20-year Bellevue resident and 30-year residential development professional and real estate broker, I understand that every parcel and neighborhood is unique. Newport Hills is not like other neighborhood centers, and it shouldn't be treated as such. Other areas shouldn't be treated as Newport Hills either.

The proposed "umbrella" policy contradicts the city's engagement documents, which promise to:

- Maintain a unique sense of place for neighborhoods.
- Support equitable engagement with community members.
- Ensure ongoing opportunities for public participation in planning efforts.


This proposal bypasses the Planning Commission and reduces public input. It is inequitable, undemocratic, and fails to protect our residents.

I urge you to protect the voices of your citizens by rejecting this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christy Santos  
13006 SE 69th Street,  
Bellevue

Christy Santos | 425.591.3388 | [christysantos.withwre.com](http://christysantos.withwre.com)  
Broker, REALTOR |  WINDERMERE REAL ESTATE / EAST, INC.

 Linktree

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Johnson, Thara  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 1:38 PM  
**To:** Nesse, Katherine  
**Subject:** FW: Written Communications - June 20th, 2024 - Planning Commission Meeting

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**From:** Gulledge, Kristin <[KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 23, 2024 3:09 PM  
**To:** Shull, Janet <[JShull@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:JShull@bellevuewa.gov)>; Johnson, Thara <[TMJohnson@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:TMJohnson@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Written Communications - June 20th, 2024 - Planning Commission Meeting

Sending as FYI

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**From:** Council Office <[CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2024 7:38 AM  
**To:** King, Emil A. <[EAKing@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:EAKing@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Gulledge, Kristin <[KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Written Communications - June 20th, 2024 - Planning Commission Meeting

Sending as fyi as Council was cc'd.



*Michelle*

**Michelle Luce** (She/Her) | **Centered Elguezabal** (He/Him)  
**Executive Assistants to City Council**  
425-452-7810 | [CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov) | [BellevueWA.Gov](http://BellevueWA.Gov)

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**From:** Dylan Hanson <[hanson.dylan.c@gmail.com](mailto:hanson.dylan.c@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 1:10 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission <[PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Cc:** TransportationCommission <[TransportationCommission@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:TransportationCommission@bellevuewa.gov)>; Council <[Council@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:Council@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Written Communications - June 20th, 2024 - Planning Commission Meeting

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [hanson.dylan.c@gmail.com](mailto:hanson.dylan.c@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Bellevue Planning Commission,

I'm writing today to ask that you please keep the original language of the new TR-57, to read:



"Allow for repurposing of travel lanes for other uses such as parking, transit or pedestrian and bicycle facilities where excess vehicular capacity exists and/or to optimize person throughput along a corridor."

I'm Dylan Hanson, a resident of the Everest Neighborhood in Kirkland and I frequent Bellevue multiple times a week for work, recreation, and more recently with the 2-Line opening, as a transit hub. I support high-quality transit and I appreciate & support the work the council is undertaking to increase the housing density of Bellevue, and along with it creating a more pedestrian-friendly city with their Vision Zero goal of eliminating serious injuries & deaths on our streets by 2030 and the supporting projects like Bike Bellevue, and The Grand Connection.

I have a question for the council, planning commission, and transportation commission. With plans to have the population of Bellevue increase by adding over [150,000 housing units in the next 20 years](#), how do you plan to have people move around, in, and out of the city?

I find it absolutely crucial that the cities allow for, and even prioritize the repurposing of travel lanes for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities to optimize person throughput along a corridor. If we don't prioritize this, how possibly can people move around the city with the additional cars of 150,000 housing units if there are no alternatives to personal vehicle use? It's simply not sustainable or practical.

- [This article has a helpful GIF](#) that illustrates quite literally why it is so critical to maximize the throughput of people (not cars) along roads in the city.
- On top of the simple economy of scale, that we need to focus on moving people via the existing light rail, efficient busses, and bicycles, it's also far more financially sustainable when looking at the cost per mile for the gained person throughput.
- Additionally, we must look at Bellevue's Vision Zero goals. The [high-injury network](#) must be addressed, and [Bike Bellevue](#) is a critical first step, which when fully implemented requires the repurposing of vehicle travel lanes based on the studies that the city staff already completed.
- Road diets, or reallocation of streetspace for multimodal facilities, is a industry-proven, best-practices tactic to help improve person throughput on our corridors while also increasing safety for vulnerable road users. We should not be putting up barriers to the adoption of a proven safety countermeasure.

I find myself often biking on EasTrail to get to destinations in Bellevue because it's more reliable during traffic hours than driving, taking, the 250, 255 or other transit routes. Often though I have to completely alter my plans because of poor weather, poor cycling infrastructure on streets, or dark conditions where I don't feel safe cycling. I imagine a Bellevue where I, and thousands like me, can use light rail, buses, or bikes to safely and reliably navigate all of Bellevue's streets, business districts, and neighborhood centers. Allowing for the repurposing of travel lanes for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities to optimize person throughput along a corridor is crucial to making this a reality.

Best,  
Dylan

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**Dylan Hanson, PMP** [he/him/his](#)  
Email: [hanson.dylan.c@gmail.com](mailto:hanson.dylan.c@gmail.com)

Cell: [804.380.3826](tel:804.380.3826)

[Connect with me on LinkedIn](#)

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Johnson, Thara  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 1:38 PM  
**To:** Nesse, Katherine  
**Subject:** FW: Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing

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**From:** Gulledge, Kristin <[KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov)>  
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**To:** King, Emil A. <[EAKing@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:EAKing@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Gulledge, Kristin <[KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing

Sending as fyi, as Council was cc'd.



*Michelle*

**Michelle Luce** (She/Her) | **Centered Elguezabal** (He/Him)  
**Executive Assistants to City Council**  
[425-452-7810](tel:425-452-7810) | [CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov) | [BellevueWA.Gov](http://BellevueWA.Gov)

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**From:** [kyle@sosufamily.net](mailto:kyle@sosufamily.net) <[kyle@sosufamily.net](mailto:kyle@sosufamily.net)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 4:21 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission <[PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Council <[Council@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:Council@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing

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I'm a neighbor from Kirkland, I'd like to express my appreciation for the wide breadth of changes proposed for Bellevue's comprehensive plan. This update makes huge strides in allowing for more housing, improving equity, expanding inclusivity, addressing climate change, preserving the environment, and streamlining policy language. Since the core of Kirkland isn't planned to get light rail, I might be a Bellevue resident in the future. But regardless, Bellevue will be my gateway to the light rail, and it has enormous opportunities for growth and leadership.

The plan also contains lots of language in support of expanding the city's public transit and active transportation networks. This is critical for supporting growth in the city. Cars simply do not scale well because of how much space they require on and off the road. Expanding roads to be wider is not only extremely expensive, but it's effectively impossible in many areas. However, the proposed change to TR-57 requiring a "comprehensive technical analysis and exploration of other options" before repurposing travel lanes for other uses is at best redundant, and at worst, a tool that would be used to stymie Bellevue's goals, arguing that "not enough studying was done".

Firstly, the term "comprehensive technical analysis" isn't defined in this policy, so it's unclear what standard is expected. Whenever other policies in the Comp Plan have specific requirements such as this, they refer to another piece of city policy. For example, TR-17 refers to the Mobility Implementation Plan. This policy should refer to a specific standard, or the proposed addition to the policy should be removed.

Second, this statement is redundant, as I'm sure the transportation department is already required to perform lots of analysis before any changes are made to Bellevue's streets.

Third, this hedging language against transit and active transportation is in conflict with the rest of this comprehensive plan update. When I read through the document, I see dozens of policies in at least 5 elements which outright support transit and active transportation, and policies that are complemented by a strong multimodal network. The comp plan calls for a reduction of drive-alone trips and Vehicle Miles Traveled per capita. How can that be done if there's no room on the streets for other modes? New streets are required to be Complete Streets, with space for all. Why should existing streets be treated differently, frozen in time?

This amendment to TR-57 was created in response to a request from Kemper Development, and that request was surely in opposition to Bike Bellevue. Let's not forget: Bike Bellevue is a safety-first project aimed at eliminating serious injuries and fatalities for pedestrians, bikers, and drivers. It would change intersections to be safer and create safer lane configurations for drivers. The freed-up space would then be used to create a connected, safe network for active transportation.

You know what doesn't make Bellevue feel like a "City in a Park"? Being surrounded by cars. The amended TR-57 is an attempt to keep Bellevue in the past. Make the right choice, the choices needed for the Bellevue of tomorrow. Strive to make things better; to be a world-class city; to be a leading example. Thank you.

Kyle Sullivan

P.S. Here's the list of policies I saw that align with multi-modal transportation:

LU-4: Promote a land use pattern integrated with a multimodal transportation system.

LU-10: Work toward a land use pattern that makes it possible for people to live closer to where they work regardless of household income.

LU-15: Provide for safe, accessible pedestrian connections from residential areas to nearby neighborhood services and transit in all residential site development.

LU-20: Support development of compact, livable and walkable mixed use centers in BelRed, Eastgate, Factoria, Wilburton, East Main and Crossroads.

LU-29: Provide walking and bicycle routes in and to light rail and bus rapid transit station areas that are accessible, safe and convenient, and that connect to destinations, transit and surrounding bicycle and pedestrian networks.

LU-39: Provide equitable access to parks, safe pedestrian and bicycle routes and other public amenities for all neighborhoods, prioritizing improvements for those areas with fewer public amenities.

LU-45: Implement land use patterns that promote walking, bicycling, or other active transportation modes in order to increase public health.

TR-4: Establish targets to increase the proportion of commute trips by non-drive-alone mode.

TR-20: Aggressively plan, manage and expand transportation investments to reduce congestion and expand mobility opportunities in a multimodal and comprehensive manner and improve the quality of the travel experience for all users.

TR-22: Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements into roadway projects to provide complete and connected active transportation networks.

TR-24: Increase connectivity and system completeness for all transportation modes to create a Complete Streets arterial network.

TR-48: Provide sufficient arterial rights-of-way or obtain easements to provide space for street trees and landscaping, and to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle facilities, while considering the visual and functional continuity of the corridor.

TR-50: Maintain and enhance safety for all users of the street network.

TR-52: Maintain a collision reduction program to identify high collision locations, evaluate and prioritize potential safety improvements and implement recommended changes.

TR-72: Develop and maintain safe and convenient active transportation access to transit stops and stations, through shared responsibility with transit providers and private-sector developers.

TR-94: Promote and facilitate active transportation.

TR-95: Incorporate active transportation facilities along with other mobility options in scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating and maintaining the transportation system.

TR-129: Support means to reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled and transportation-source greenhouse gas emissions.

ED-4: Maintain Bellevue's competitive advantage and attraction as a highly connected community.

CL-5: Provide regional leadership on sustainable development, climate resilience and greenhouse gas emissions reduction that extend beyond Bellevue's boundaries and require regional cooperation.

CL-14: Consider climate change impacts and limit new greenhouse gas emissions when planning for new growth, while supporting emissions reductions from existing uses.

CL-67: Support sustainable and resilient net-zero and net-positive new development by phasing out fossil fuels and promoting renewable energy, energy efficiency, transportation and building electrification and electric grid integration.

PA-4: Design parks and facilities to maximize available space and benefits for users, including offering parks with multiple functions and implementation of shared use facilities.

PA-5: Increase safe, non-motorized access between dwellings and parks, trails and open space through development of additional facilities and mobility improvements.

PA-14: Develop safe pedestrian and bicycle linkages between neighborhoods and major natural areas, recreation facilities, schools and commercial centers.

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Brady Nordstrom <brady@housingconsortium.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 7:14 PM  
**To:** Johnson, Thara; PlanningCommission; Shull, Janet  
**Cc:** mmohamed@muslimcna.org; Guillermo Rivera; King, Emil A.  
**Subject:** Testimony from Mohamed Mohamed - 6/20

You don't often get email from brady@housingconsortium.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Bellevue Staff and Planning Commission,

My name is Brady Nordstrom and I work at HDC. I'm working in a partnership between *Eastside for All, Indian American Community Services, and Muslim Community Network Association* to support housing equity and affordability.

*For the planning commission meeting this evening (6/20), **Mohamed Mohamed** came in person to share his testimony with you. Not knowing how long the multiple hearings would take, he had to leave before his name could be called. Mohamed is going to try to come again next Wednesday (6/26). Even so, **I wanted honor his effort to be here tonight and share a text version of his testimony for your consideration.***

### TESTIMONY

- *Thank you. My name is Mohamed Mohamed. I'm with the Muslim Community Network Association, which is an outreach and advocacy organization that seeks to empower the community by focusing on education, engagement, and empowerment.*
- *I'm representing the Eastside Housing Equity Coalition that is a partnership between us, Eastside for All, Indian American Community Services, and Housing Development Consortium.*
- *At the Eastside Housing Equity Coalition, we believe that supporting affordable housing is one of the most important investments a community can make. It has a positive effect on the local economy and provides job opportunities. Additionally, affordable housing helps to reduce homelessness, improve overall health, and support people to achieve education for themselves and their families.*
- *Thanks for your commitment to housing policies that support affordability and accessibility for all.*

Thanks for considering Mohamed's comments.

Best,  
Brady Nordstrom  
253-886-2099



June 18, 2024

Re: Comments on Draft 2044 Comprehensive Plan Policy Updates

Dear Planning Commissioners, Mayor, and City Council Members,

I'm writing to express my concerns about the proposed updates to the Draft 2044 Comprehensive Plan (CP) Policy.

The staff's idea of using an "umbrella" for land use and zoning categories should be rejected. This approach is short-sighted and benefits developers at the expense of our residents and neighborhoods. Here's why this proposal is problematic:

- It groups very different parcels together under a single category.
- It allows for too wide a range of zoning designations within a single group.
- It doesn't consider the unique characteristics of individual parcels and neighborhoods.
- It allows developers to easily shift from the lowest to the highest zoning category within the "umbrella."
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Essentially, this would take decision-making power away from the Planning Commission and City Council, putting it in the hands of developers and city staff. This limits notice and the opportunity for residents to respond. Developers and landlords often prioritize profit over neighborhood well-being and don't have the same duty to our communities. By removing or limiting residents' safeguards, the city places future development in the hands of those seeking profit, not balance.

The current CPA process allows for public notice and gives residents time to respond to potential changes. The proposed "umbrella" approach would force residents to appeal to the City's Hearing Examiner, making it unfair and burdensome for property owners and neighborhoods.

For example, an upzone of the Newport Hills Shopping Center would greatly increase traffic in our already congested area. Newport Hills has limited two-lane roads, and rush hour traffic already causes significant delays, affecting everyone, including public transportation, school buses, and emergency vehicles.

As a 20-year Bellevue resident, I understand that every parcel and neighborhood is unique. Newport Hills is not like other neighborhood centers, and it shouldn't be treated as such. Other areas shouldn't be treated as Newport Hills either.

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- Maintain a unique sense of place for neighborhoods.
- Support equitable engagement with community members.
- Ensure ongoing opportunities for public participation in planning efforts.



This proposal bypasses the Planning Commission and reduces public input. It is inequitable, undemocratic, and fails to protect our residents.

I urge you to protect the voices of your citizens by rejecting this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Shore, Kristine Shore".

Michael And Kristine Shore

12770 SE 65th Street

Bellevue, Washington

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Nicole Myers <nicolemikomyers@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 5:58 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan Hearing comment

You don't often get email from nicolemikomyers@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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The highest priority in our Comprehensive Plan process should be to promote density that will match our growth targets and our ability to provide public services. The current land use map appears to match the DEIS growth projections of 95,000 housing units even before the density in residential areas according to state mandates is added. The FEIS recognizes that 152,000 housing units is implausible because we can't support so much growth, particularly in the transit network, but it appears that that 152,000 is not even a full build-out number, since the theoretical density in the neighborhoods is likely to exceed those assumptions once the middle housing details are sorted out.

In order to support this "adventurous" approach to growth, the two additional things we should consider are 1) the potential for impact fees to cover the costs of capital infrastructure, utilities, park acquisition, etc. 2) ensuring that our water supply matches our growth projections (see CF-7 and UT-45 as examples).

My third request is that we focus on pedestrian improvements. It is when I am walking that I connect with my community of friends and neighbors here in Bellevue. All of us are pedestrians at some times, whether we also depend on cars or bicycles or public transit. As I walk, I want:

- 
- 
- Separation from vehicle travel lanes along arterials
- 
- 
- 
- Good visibility and slow vehicle speeds on local streets
- 
- 
- 
- Trees for shade and shaded hardscape or greenscape along walking routes
- 
- 
- Low-moderate on-street parking on neighborhood streets
- 
- 
- 
- Smooth surfaces for wheelchair and stroller accessibility
- 
- 
- 
- Lighting

- 
- 
- 
- Signal timing to minimize waits
- 

I have noticed that Seattle’s draft plan has some excellent policies for people who walk:

**LU 2.12 Preserve Seattle’s existing street grid and seek opportunities for new pedestrian and bike connections to knit together neighborhoods.**

**LU 2.13 Design neighborhoods to be walkable and accessible by enhancing pedestrian connections, public open spaces, walking and biking infrastructure, and wayfinding, and by encouraging buildings with retail and active uses that flank the sidewalk.**

**LU 5.6 Limit the impacts of off-street parking on pedestrians and the surrounding areas by restricting the number and size of automobile curb cuts and by generally requiring alley access to parking when there is an accessible, surfaced alley.**

**T 1.5 Plan for transportation investments within Neighborhood Centers and to surrounding Urban Neighborhood areas that prioritize walking and biking on safe, comfortable, and enjoyable routes to meet every day needs and that enhance connections to transit.**

**T 2.5 Use pedestrian design guidance in the Right-of-Way Improvements Manual and guidance from the Seattle Transportation Plan to determine adequacy of the pedestrian realm, before allocating space to the flex zone or travel way, and, within the pedestrian realm, prioritize space to address safety concerns, network connectivity, and activation.**

**T 2.15 Design and allocate space in the right-of-way to prioritize the health, safety, and enjoyment of young children and their caregivers.**

**T 2.16 Develop strategies that prioritize walking, biking, transit, and public spaces on streets over parking.**

**T 3.20 In areas that currently lack complete sidewalks, ensure coordinated development of sidewalks and pedestrian safety infrastructure in line with anticipated higher-density development envisioned in the Growth Strategy.**

**T 5.5 Use intelligent transportation system technology to alert motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians to the presence and anticipated length of closures due to train crossings**

**T 6.8 Use complete street principles, traffic-calming, and neighborhood traffic control strategies to promote safe neighborhood streets and discourage cut-through traffic.**

**T 6.9 Improve pedestrian lighting, especially along transit routes and where connections between different travel options are made.**

**CF 6.5 Coordinate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to make it easy and safe for students and families to walk, bike, and roll to school.**

**P 1.13 Create connections between natural areas and open spaces for both people and wildlife using habitat corridors, green streets, pollinator pathways, and other green connections.**

This is only a fraction of the ways Seattle's plan prioritizes pedestrians; I hope you will take a look and add some of these to our Comprehensive Plan as well.

Thanks,  
Nicole Myers

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** p johnston <pamjjo@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 5:45 PM  
**To:** Comp Plan 2044; PlanningCommission; parkboard  
**Cc:** Hamilton, Dave  
**Subject:** Page IV-3 VISON City in a park. Is more than. Parks and open space.

Some people who received this message don't often get email from pamjjo@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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### Page IV-3 VISON

*We are a “City in a Park.” We value our abundant open space – whether it be the tranquility of a wooded trail or a paddle through the Mercer Slough. Everyone has access to activities and amenities, be they people-watching in an urban plaza, enjoying our trails, playing a favorite sport or gazing at the shimmering sun on a bright blue lake”*



“City in a Park” means more than just park land and open space around the city. It is more than one tree.

City in a Park means being able to walk out of my home or office and be in nature while I break for my cup of coffee — trees to sit under; hearing birds singing their songs; feeling the cool air of a stream; tasting the air. It is a living system that we are a part of and are nurtured by.

Please

Clarify the **City** in “City in a Park.” vision  
Beyond parks and open space, describe **Bellevue’s “City in a Park” qualities** in the vision that matches our urban design.

Where it exists  
(examples)

UD-1. Preserve and enhance trees throughout the city to **retain tree canopy and foster the city’s image as a “City in a Park.”**

UD-2. Integrate high quality and inviting public open spaces and publicly accessible privately owned open spaces into major development

*Cougar Mountain, epitomize Bellevue’s reputation as a “City in a Park” with **visually breathtaking vistas, viewpoints and recreation areas. D***

PA-39. **Develop, fund, and maintain streetscape and arterial landscaping** along transportation corridors that provides valuable aesthetic, environmental, traffic calming and storm water management benefits helping maintain **Bellevue’s “City in a Park” character**

UD-34. Use appropriate street tree species that are well adapted to urban street conditions and provide identity and continuity to street corridors. **Adequate soil volume shall be provided to support tree health** and limit damage to sidewalk and street infrastructure.

CL-16. Achieve a citywide tree canopy target of at least 40% canopy coverage that reflects our **“City in a Park” character** and maintain an action plan for meeting the target across multiple land use types including right-of-way, public lands, and residential and commercial uses.

CL-17. Minimize the loss **of tree canopy, biodiversity, and natural areas** as a result of transportation and infrastructure projects, and mitigate for losses where impacts are unavoidable.

Other

**. This plan continues to enhance those qualities that make Bellevue a “city in a park”**

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-12

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Raymond Zhao <rzhao271@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 5:23 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Subject:** Attachment for tonight's public hearing on the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan

You don't often get email from rzhao271@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Commissioners, Deputy Mayor Malakoutian, and staff,

Please find the link below that I will reference in my comments this evening.

I would encourage you to review the documentation from the Federal Highway Administration showing that road diets can increase the safety of all road users and encourage active transportation.

[https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/road\\_diets/case\\_studies/roaddiet\\_cs.pdf](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/road_diets/case_studies/roaddiet_cs.pdf)

Thank you,  
Yuanmeng "Raymond" Zhao

## Nesse, Katherine

---

**From:** Johnson, Thara  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 1:38 PM  
**To:** Nesse, Katherine  
**Subject:** FW: Newport Hills Shopping center

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**From:** Gulledge, Kristin <[KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 23, 2024 3:29 PM  
**To:** Johnson, Thara <[TMJohnson@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:TMJohnson@bellevuewa.gov)>; Shull, Janet <[JShull@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:JShull@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Newport Hills Shopping center

Sending as FYI

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**From:** Council Office <[CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 1:08 PM  
**To:** King, Emil A. <[EAKing@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:EAKing@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Gulledge, Kristin <[KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:KGulledge@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Subject:** FYI: Newport Hills Shopping center

Council was cc'd on this email to the Planning Commission, Emil.



*Michelle*

**Michelle Luce** (She/Her) | **Centered Elguezabal** (He/Him)  
**Executive Assistants to City Council**  
425-452-7810 | [CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:CouncilOffice@bellevuewa.gov) | [BellevueWA.Gov](http://BellevueWA.Gov)

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**From:** [sueharms@comcast.net](mailto:sueharms@comcast.net) <[sueharms@comcast.net](mailto:sueharms@comcast.net)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 12:39 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission <[PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Council <[Council@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:Council@bellevuewa.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Newport Hills Shopping center

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**From:** [sueharms@comcast.net](mailto:sueharms@comcast.net) <[sueharms@comcast.net](mailto:sueharms@comcast.net)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 12:21 PM  
**To:** '[planningcommissions@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:planningcommissions@bellevuewa.gov)' [planningcommissions@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:planningcommissions@bellevuewa.gov)  
**Subject:** Newport Hills Shopping center

this gets undeliverable! Which was in the email sent from Bellevue!



To the planning Commission

I have lived in Newport Hills since 1965, grew up here, and raised my kids and have retired here.

The last thing this area needs is MORE TRAFFIC! It now takes OVER 20-25 minutes to get off the hill on 119<sup>th</sup> in the morning, and also late afternoon!

PLEASE ADDRESS the infrastructure BEFORE building anything more! We can't handle MORE TRAFFIC on our hill or on 405!!! Factoria is a nightmare when it comes to traffic, It has gotten to the point of NOT wanting to go out with a short window of 11-2 anymore!

Bellevue USED to be a GREAT city to raise a family, it is NO LONGER true! Quality of life here seems to deteriorate on a daily basis! Crime and Traffic is certainly a major contributors to the problem!



SUE HARMS

425-221-5450



## Nesse, Katherine

---

**From:** Troy Christensen <troyc@porchlightcares.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 1:41 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Subject:** Comp Plan  
**Attachments:** 20240620133117589.pdf

You don't often get email from troyc@porchlightcares.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Please see the attached letter from PorchLight regarding your upcoming sessions regarding the Comprehensive Plan.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best regards,  
Troy



**Troy Christensen (he/him/his)**

Executive Director

[porchlightcares.org](http://porchlightcares.org)

*Formerly Congregations for the Homeless*

E: [TroyC@porchlightcares.org](mailto:TroyC@porchlightcares.org)

M: 253-576-3720





June 20, 2024

Bellevue Planning Commission  
City of Bellevue

SUBJECT: Statement from PorchLight in reference to Bellevue Planning Commission  
Comprehensive Plan Hearings

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective on potential updates to the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan to be considered in the summer study session.

As Executive Director of PorchLight, permanent affordable housing is of the utmost importance to our organization. The core focus of our work is to shepherd our unhoused neighbors into stability and then housing. Homelessness is a housing problem. Without housing options, complicated with rising rental rates across East King County, many of the men we serve may have to face the harsh reality of never having a home of their own. If our shelter is full, then their only option is likely living on the streets of Bellevue.

While we continue to operate, with 100% capacity, 70 permanent affordable housing units, it is not enough. Our community not only needs more affordable housing, we need policies and funding to ensure these options particularly for low- and extremely-low income households.

During your summer study session, we ask that you consider the inclusion of more affordable housing in future growth and development planning and urge you to maximize mid-rise zoning that is best suited to economically viable affordable housing development.

Thank you for consideration of our position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Troy Christensen", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

S. Troy Christensen,  
Executive Director

[troyc@porchlightcares.org](mailto:troyc@porchlightcares.org)

253-576-3720

[www.porchlightcares.org](http://www.porchlightcares.org)

**Nesse, Katherine**

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**From:** Wonderful Morrison <wonderful@leadheracademy.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 10:19 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara  
**Subject:** Del Mar Woods Resident - Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Updates

You don't often get email from wonderful@leadheracademy.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Re: Comments on Draft 2044 Comprehensive Plan Policy Updates

Dear Planning Commissioners, Mayor, and City Council Members,

I'm writing to express my concerns about the proposed updates to the Draft 2044 Comprehensive Plan (CP) Policy.

The staff's idea of using an "umbrella" for land use and zoning categories should be rejected. This approach is short-sighted and benefits developers at the expense of our residents and neighborhoods. Here's why this proposal is problematic:

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- It groups very different parcels together under a single category.
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- It allows for too wide a range of zoning designations within a single group.
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- It doesn't consider the unique characteristics of individual parcels and neighborhoods.
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- It allows developers to easily shift from the lowest to the highest zoning category within the "umbrella."
  - 
  -
- 
- It relies solely on staff judgment based on information from developers, which is a biased approach.
  -

- 
- 
- It skips the thorough Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) process.
- 

Essentially, this would take decision-making power away from the Planning Commission and City Council, putting it in the hands of developers and city staff. This limits notice and the opportunity for residents to respond. Developers and landlords often prioritize profit over neighborhood well-being and don't have the same duty to our communities. By removing or limiting residents' safeguards, the city places future development in the hands of those seeking profit, not balance.

The current CPA process allows for public notice and gives residents time to respond to potential changes. The proposed "umbrella" approach would force residents to appeal to the City's Hearing Examiner, making it unfair and burdensome for property owners and neighborhoods.

For example, an upzone of the Newport Hills Shopping Center would greatly increase traffic in our already congested area. Newport Hills has limited two-lane roads, and rush hour traffic already causes significant delays, affecting everyone, including public transportation, school buses, and emergency vehicles.

As a 20-year Bellevue resident, I understand that every parcel and neighborhood is unique. Newport Hills is not like other neighborhood centers, and it shouldn't be treated as such. Other areas shouldn't be treated as Newport Hills either.

The proposed "umbrella" policy contradicts the city's own engagement documents, which promise to:

- 
- 
- Maintain a unique sense of place for neighborhoods.
- 
- 
- Support equitable engagement with community members.
- 
- 
- 
- Ensure ongoing opportunities for public participation in planning efforts.
- 

This proposal bypasses the Planning Commission and reduces public input. It is inequitable, undemocratic, and fails to protect our residents.

I urge you to protect the voices of your citizens by rejecting this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Wonderful Morrison



FB Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/leadhershshipgroup>

Biz IG: [https://www.instagram.com/leadher\\_biz\\_academy/](https://www.instagram.com/leadher_biz_academy/)

IG Profile: [https://www.instagram.com/wonderful\\_morrison/](https://www.instagram.com/wonderful_morrison/)

## Nesse, Katherine

---

**From:** Heidi Dean <technogeekswife@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2024 1:25 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara; King, Emil A.; Nesse, Katherine  
**Subject:** 'Zoning Umbrella' staff proposal  
**Attachments:** Zoning Umbrella Letter to PC 6-21-24.docx

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

Hello Commissioners & staff:

Attached are my comments opposing the utilization of a 'Zoning Umbrella' mechanism to bypass the annual Comp Plan Amendment process and go straight to a rezone.

Thank you for reading to the end. I appreciate how much work you're putting in right now. It will be over soon!

~ Heidi Dean  
Newport Hills

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Newport Hills had two annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPA) filed on our shopping center between 2016 & 2018. NE Bellevue had three CPAs filed on the Bellevue Technology Center between approximately 2012 & 2018. Northtowne experienced a CPA on The Park Apartments in 2018. Each of those CPAs failed at threshold review because the applicants couldn't prove the "significantly changed conditions" criteria.

Why is that?

How could big money land use attorneys not prove that point if it's so obvious as to ask for a CPA?

The answer is simple- in each case the affected neighborhoods had three things going for them:

- Residents who were knowledgeable about the CPA process, as well as land use code & zoning, the GMA, and the Comprehensive Plan
- An organized neighborhood association for communication with and education & mobilization of impacted residents
- Adequate time during the CPA process for the second bullet point

In 2016 I felt hopeless and helpless when Intracorp filed the first CPA on the Newport Hills Shopping Center. I didn't know what to do- I was just a housewife and a mom who knew nothing about land use and neither did my fellow Newport Hills neighbors. So... we got educated. We got organized. We fought back using the CoB's own policies and codes, as well as the GMA. In 2018, against an even more formidable developer (Toll Brothers), with an even tougher attorney, we were able to make our case. How is that possible?

Answer: the CPA process allowed us the time to do that.

Did you know that about 70% of Bellevue's neighborhoods lack associations, meaning they lack the ability to quickly communicate an issue to their residents and mobilize? Imagine being one of those neighborhoods and facing a CPA that will make catastrophic changes to the character and functionality of your neighborhood- that's pretty daunting! Now imagine it's the same proposed change but filed as a rezone that requires less notification, less time in the decision making process, less stringent decision making criteria, and forces you to hire an attorney to fight the CoB & the applicant in front of the Hearing Examiner. That's the situation you're being asked to place ALL Bellevue neighborhoods in with the staff's "zoning umbrella" proposal. Some neighborhoods will fare better than others, but all will be at a huge disadvantage compared to wealthy property owners and developers with time, resources, and legal knowledge to make their case. Remember that EQUITY is one of the keystones of this Comp Plan update & the word appears many times throughout the document.

The "zoning umbrella" was presented to you on 2/14/2024 as a streamlining of process for applicants and as a decrease in workload for you as commissioners. While true, staff has repeatedly failed to



acknowledge how this proposed process change will significantly reduce residents' ability to have a say in what happens to their neighborhoods.

The proposed change would apply to all zoning designations and land use categories, but I believe the real target of this proposal is to achieve upzones of the Neighborhood Centers, particularly those where applicants couldn't pass threshold review in the past, as well as those where requests for massive upzones were submitted during the DEIS comment period (Northtowne, Newport Hills). At the request of a couple commercial property owners the land use category for ALL Neighborhood Centers in the city would have received a massive increase without proper process or notification. It was only because Commissioner Lu & I were at the 6/14/2023 meeting to catch it, and the Newport Hills Community Club spoke up against it, that it didn't happen. In fact, Commissioner Lu was the author of the letter submitted by the NHCC that opposed change to Neighborhood Centers' land use categories for the FEIS.

The "Planning Commission Cookbook Series" Vols 1 & 2 outline your role & responsibilities as Planning Commissioners. It stipulates that you

- Act as fact-finders and citizen advisors to the city council
- Review staff recommendation carefully
- Listen to and consider public testimony

I'm asking you to not only consider the staff's recommendation on the "zoning umbrella" proposal carefully, but also the input of residents, especially those who've been through the process of opposing a land use application. I believe that, while the "zoning umbrella" proposal might lighten your workload, it will diminish your overall role as Planning Commissioners as well as diminish the voice of Bellevue residents in important decisions re: their city & neighborhoods. I've been attending PC meetings regularly since 2016, so I know the hours you put in on issues. I ask you not to make a decision based upon what might be easier for you while having devastating consequences for residents who need a robust public process (CPA, \*then\* rezone if criteria met) in order to be fully heard. Staff will tell you that other cities do it. I say: "we're not other cities, we're Bellevue".

Final point: As-yet-to-be-defined new zoning designations should NEVER be lumped in with existing & defined zoning designations when critical decisions are being made. That's like asking the Planning Commission to sign a blank check for a very large amount of money. I believe most of you wouldn't do that in your personal life so why would you do it as a Planning Commissioner? Ex: MU-L/M= undefined and not yet passed into Bellevue's zoning code.

Please vote "no" on moving forward with the "zoning umbrella" proposal allowing applicants to skip over the CPA process and go right to applying for a rezone if they wish to change to a new zoning designation within their "umbrella".

Thank you,

Heidi L Dean

23 year resident of Newport Hills, 25+ in Bellevue

## Nesse, Katherine

---

**From:** jenidennis <jenidennis@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2024 1:59 PM  
**To:** Heidi Dean; PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara; King, Emil A.; Nesse, Katherine  
**Subject:** RE: 'Zoning Umbrella' staff proposal

You don't often get email from jenidennis@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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First of all I would like to acknowledge and thank Heidi for all her years of dedication to preserve our communities in the face of unrelenting aggression by developers who very often are not a part of our communities. Without her engagement, our neighborhood center would already be lost to a complete sham of a rezone.

I would also like to publicly support her position outlined in this letter. Our community was being bullied into submission, and only survived intact because of the organized response. Allowing a bypass of the current requirements to zoning changes takes the people out of the picture.

We vote for our representatives and pay taxes to allow for staff for one simple purpose. To represent and protect us as we go about our lives.

Clearly these developers have made major inroads in building relationships within our hired staff. Massive budgets, teams of lawyers and full-time commitment can influence most processes.

I would encourage you to remember that your citizens that make this city what it is cannot show up at your meetings on a regular basis. We are tending to our children, coaching sports, volunteering with youth programs, social programs or community groups.

We are living our best lives in the city we have decided to call home. We entrust you to allow this to continue, and we compensate you for fulfilling that pledge.

I work hard in my community, for my family and for those who cannot defend or care for themselves. I prefer to keep my efforts where they are, but i have been forced into political engagement in the past. I will do so again with vigor and determination if I once again find that your efforts are directed to outside interests or deep pockets, rather than the citizens and community you have been hired to serve.

Please don't let us down. I will be watching closely.

Sincerely,  
William Dennis  
Newport Hills

----- Original message -----

From: Heidi Dean <technogeekswife@yahoo.com>

Date: 6/21/24 1:25 PM (GMT-08:00)

To: planningcommission@bellevuewa.gov

Cc: Thara Johnson <tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov>, "Emil A. King" <eaking@bellevuewa.gov>, Katherine Nesse <knesse@bellevuewa.gov>

Subject: 'Zoning Umbrella' staff proposal

Hello Commissioners & staff:

Attached are my comments opposing the utilization of a 'Zoning Umbrella' mechanism to bypass the annual Comp Plan Amendment process and go straight to a rezone.

Thank you for reading to the end. I appreciate how much work you're putting in right now. It will be over soon!

~ Heidi Dean  
Newport Hills

**Nesse, Katherine**

---

**From:** Ann Brashear <abrashear@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 23, 2024 7:59 PM  
**To:** Bhargava, Vishal; Goeppele, Craighton; Ferris,Carolynn; Khanloo, Negin; Cuellar-Calad, Luisa; Lu, Jonny; avillaveces@bellevuewa.gov; Malakoutian, Mo  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara; Nesse, Katherine; King, Emil A.; Carlson, Diane (she/her); Council  
**Subject:** Comments on Draft Comprehensive Plan Policy Updates - Newport Hills Shopping Center  
**Attachments:** Planning Commission response to comments offered 6-20-24.pdf

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

Dear Planning Commissioners and Deputy Mayor Malakoutian,

I am transmitting a public comment in response to oral communications from your public hearing of June 20, 2024.

Thank you for your attention.

Ann Brashear

Dear Planning Commissioners and staff,

I feel compelled to respond to comments you were offered by members of the public concerning the Newport Hills Shopping Center, at your June 20, 2024, Comp Plan hearing.

Several commenters – mostly retired, long-time residents of the Lake Heights neighborhood, down the hill from Newport Hills proper – recalled how the Newport Hills Shopping Center, along with the other commercial parcel across the street, was once a vital retail center. I too remember those days, having moved to Newport Hills at age seven in 1964 – the complex had two full-service grocery stores, a drugstore with a pharmacy, a bank branch, two dry cleaners, a liquor store, a hardware store, a barbershop, a hair salon, a hamburger stand, and I don't remember what else. It was the only commercial center in the area in those days; the closest alternative was Eastgate, which had a similar mix of services.

Then residential development began expanding and filling in the spaces between Bellevue, Renton and Issaquah. Factoria Mall and the surrounding area became a commercial center, as did Newcastle. Both of these larger, at the time-fancier commercial centers are less than a mile from Newport Hills, and present stiff competition to the Newport Hills commercial district, then and now. Newport Hills lost its Tradewell and Albertsons, but had a Red Apple grocery store until shortly after Eastside Catholic moved to Sammamish. The drugstore held on until around then too.

What remains in the Newport Hills Shopping Center are beloved local businesses that serve our hill and also draw customers from the surrounding area. But frankly, the buildings are falling down around these tenants. The owner of the shopping center has allowed both structures and parking lot to deteriorate for many years; I understand they routinely turn away prospective tenants and even some potential buyers of the property. I assume that they have fully depreciated their investment and simply want to exit at the greatest possible sale price. Their previous two CPA applications were designed to allow two different housing developers to replace the shopping center with 130+ townhouses and stacked flats, with a small fringe of retail along the 119<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE frontage.

As I and other commenters have repeatedly pointed out, Newport Hills is at the top of a fairly steep hill. Access is via two-lane roads that cannot be widened (at least without exercising very expensive eminent domain). We are nowhere near light rail. Bus service is very limited, and expanding it would leave the more frequent buses sitting in the exact same traffic to get in and out. The BRT stops are a mile away, up or down hills that most would-be riders would find challenging. Adding hundreds of new housing units at the NHSC site would mean adding at least one car per unit, exacerbating the congestion.

Nor would an appreciable number of these hundreds of new housing units be “affordable” – site and other costs are simply too high. For the same reason, a center redeveloped by a for-profit developer would not include meaningful public gathering spaces or green space.

And hundreds of new housing units piled onto the top of our hill are not going to bring back the glory days of retail in Newport Hills – to believe otherwise is a fantasy. Retail has undergone huge changes in the last few decades. The competition now isn't just Newcastle and Factoria – it's Costco and Fred Meyer and WalMart and Target and Trader Joe's and WinCo and all the

international and specialty grocers. And it isn't just other brick-and-mortar stores, it's Amazon and the rest of the internet. No feasible number of new housing units is going to entice a Trader Joe's or a PCC to locate in Newport Hills – there simply isn't enough pass-by traffic to make it an attractive site for them.

The thing that makes sense for Newport Hills is a new model: a modest-sized shopping district filled with interesting ground-floor businesses and gathering spaces that both serve the immediate neighborhood *and* draw customers in from farther away – with adequate off-street parking to accommodate those who don't walk or bike in, and yes, with a proportional amount of residential units on upper floors or in another portion of the complex. Quite a few of our current businesses have loyal followings and would add value under this model: Grey Coast Crossfit, the Mustard Seed (sports bar and general community gathering space), Resonate Pizza & Brewpub, Cloud 9 Burgers, Stod's (the only batting cages anywhere in the area, and now popular with cricket-players too). Across the street are S Mart (a family-owned international grocery store) and Terry's Kitchen ("comfort food" beloved by regulars from as far away as Beacon Hill). Chain stores and restaurants would likely not be interested, given the "off the beaten path" location, which will make financing a wholesale redevelopment challenging – but we know of at least one senior-living developer that was eager to take this property on.

The city can help – first of all, by definitively signaling to the NHSC owner and its consultant that the parcel will not be rezoned to permit a massive residential development either in place of or layered on top of the retail complex. Second, I know that the city's staff has expertise in urban/suburban planning and community development – can some of that expertise not be deployed to help find a buyer who wants to redevelop the shopping center parcel in a way that will enhance our neighborhood rather than overwhelm it? And third, the city could participate in the revitalization of our shopping center by coming in as a tenant – perhaps a mini-City Hall, a community meeting room, a Bellevue Police Department substation – and let's think big, by creating a community center at Bellevue Schools' Ringdall Middle School campus. Newport Hills is still a sought-after, safe, walkable neighborhood – with your help, the top of our hill could again be a shining example of a vibrant neighborhood center.

Thank you for your attention.

Ann R. Brashear

**Nesse, Katherine**

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**From:** Ann Brashear <abrashear@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 23, 2024 7:47 PM  
**To:** Bhargava, Vishal; Goeppele, Craighton; Ferris,Carolynn; Khanloo, Negin; Cuellar-Calad, Luisa; Lu, Jonny; avillaveces@bellevuewa.gov; Malakoutian, Mo  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara; Nesse, Katherine; King, Emil A.; Carlson, Diane (she/her); Council  
**Subject:** Comments on Draft Comprehensive Plan Policy Updates - on behalf of Newport Hills Community Club Board  
**Attachments:** memo to Planning Commission re zoning umbrella June 2024.pdf

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

Dear Planning Commissioners and Deputy Mayor Malakoutian,

I am transmitting a public comment on the current Comp Plan process on behalf of the Board of the Newport Hills Community Club.

Thank you for your attention.

Ann Brashear, NHCC Secretary

To: Bellevue Planning Commission  
From: Newport Hills Community Club Board of Trustees  
Date: June 23, 2024  
Re: Zoning Designations “Umbrella” Proposal

### **Introduction and Appreciation**

Thank you, Planning Commissioners, for your hard work on the update to Bellevue’s Comprehensive Plan. As this work nears its finish line, the Board of the Newport Hills Community Club would like you to carefully consider the implications and, perhaps, unintended consequences of the Community Development staff’s “zoning umbrella” proposal. **We ask you to reject this proposal.**

### **Summary of Proposal**

As we understand it, under this proposed “umbrella,” zoning designations with “similar development styles” (K. Nesse, 6/20/24) would be grouped together into larger categories, and the process of moving a specific parcel from one zoning designation to another within the same umbrella would be greatly truncated. Instead of the present Comp Plan Amendment process, a property owner could request a rezone within the umbrella for their parcel and CoB staff would determine whether the rezone was appropriate, with extremely limited public notice and opportunity to comment. Once a change was approved, if affected neighbors wanted to contest it, their sole recourse would be an appeal to the Hearing Examiner.

### **Adverse Consequences for Residents and Neighborhoods**

While we are sympathetic to the desire of owners and potential developers to have a quicker process for securing zoning changes, we believe that adopting this umbrella methodology as proposed would have adverse consequences for Bellevue residents and neighborhoods. In particular, **as proposed the umbrella methodology would essentially cut neighbors, other residents and the Planning Commission itself out of the decision-making process, and as a practical matter would limit the information considered by the city to that provided by the proponents of a rezone.**

### **Importance of the Current CPA Process**

As you know, the CPA process provides ample notice to residents and others who might be affected by a proposed zoning change, which gives them time to assess the proposal and its potential consequences, and to organize a response. After notice, the CPA process provides a public forum in which comments – information that should bear on the decision – are received, heard and factored in. And the CPA process requires that the proponent show “significantly changed conditions” that would justify changing the zoning of the particular parcel.

### **Issues with the Proposed Methodology**

The proposed umbrella methodology would reduce the public notice and comment process to meaninglessness and would eliminate the requirement of significantly changed conditions.



## **Unique Nature of Each Parcel**

As you well know, when it comes to real estate, every parcel is unique. Just because a group of parcels might have “similar development styles” does not mean that the same type or degree of development would be appropriate for all of them. There should **always** be a thorough analysis of the effect a particular zoning change would have, not just on the parcel in question but on adjacent or nearby parcels and the surrounding neighborhood as a whole. **And this analysis should not be based solely on information provided by the proponent, its consultants, and neighbors cherry-picked because they’re known to support the zoning change.**

## **Specific Concerns for Newport Hills Shopping Center**

Every parcel in Bellevue could be affected by a change to this umbrella methodology; but of course our particular concern is with the Newport Hills Shopping Center. And we see that the owner’s consultant and its cherry-picked “neighborhood representatives” (the majority of whom do not actually live in Newport Hills) are already flooding city staff, the Planning Commission and the Council with the assertion that the Newport Hills Shopping Center is no longer functioning as a shopping center or neighborhood hub but is an eyesore and even a safety hazard, and that the only thing that will “solve the problem” is a big upzone (doubling the allowable building height). **Without the CPA process, actual Newport Hills residents who would have different perspectives and data to offer won’t have meaningful advance notice nor a meaningful forum in which to present that information.**

## **Duty to Residents**

We acknowledge that, in our society, owners and developers have no duty to choose a course of action that benefits anyone but themselves. They have no duty to consider the effect of their course of action on our neighborhood, or any neighborhood. They are free to choose the course of action that they expect will provide them with the greatest financial return – **such as allowing a neighborhood shopping center to deteriorate for years in hopes of obtaining an upzone** that could vastly increase the sale price of that center.

**But the city does have such a duty.** It is the city’s job – through its elected officials, its citizen boards and commissions, its staff – to thoroughly consider the effect of any given course of action on Bellevue residents as a whole and on neighborhoods and residents who will be particularly affected, and to choose wisely. And the city cannot fully consider, or choose wisely, when the information it has about any given proposal is skewed in favor of the proponent. A primary function of the Planning Commission is to serve as fact-finders. **The umbrella zoning proposal would be an abdication of this basic function.**

## **Conclusion and Call to Action**

**We are counting on you, the Planning Commission, to preserve an equitable balance between property owners’ desire for zoning changes and the desire of nearby residents and property owners to preserve livable neighborhoods.** To do so, you must reject the umbrella zoning methodology proposed by staff.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

THE NEWPORT HILLS COMMUNITY CLUB BOARD

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Ann Brashear <abrashear@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 23, 2024 7:32 PM  
**To:** Bhargava, Vishal; Goepple, Craighton; Ferris,Carolynn; Khanloo, Negin; Cuellar-Calad, Luisa; Lu, Jonny; avillaveces@bellevuewa.gov; Malakoutian, Mo  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara; Nesse, Katherine; King, Emil A.; Carlson, Diane (she/her); Council  
**Subject:** Comments on Draft Comprehensive Plan Policy Updates - on behalf of Newport Hills Community Club  
**Attachments:** memo to Planning Commission re zoning umbrella June 2024.pdf

You don't often get email from abrashear@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

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Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

THE NEWPORT HILLS COMMUNITY CLUB BOARD

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Peggy Price <peggprice@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 23, 2024 11:56 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara  
**Subject:** Umbrella Proposal

You don't often get email from peggprice@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Thank you for your careful consideration of proposals for new processes.

I'm concerned about the effort to bypass the Comprehensive Plan's zoning categories. City staff can bring up a wish list of proposals, but they do have an apparent conflict of interest in this case. Please think through the consequences of any proposed changes from the points of view of the City, developers, and residents with an eye toward doing the most good for the most people long term. That good isn't always monetary. Checks and balances count, as well.

Your diligence is greatly appreciated.

Peggy Price  
Owner, Rockwood 1409  
1409 140<sup>th</sup> PL NE  
Bellevue, WA 98007-3963  
Cell: (425) 829-2196

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Deborah Duitch <duitchdeborah@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 1:08 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan-umbrella zoning

[You don't often get email from duitchdeborah@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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

Dear Planning Commission,

I am Deborah Duitch and I have been a resident of Newport Hills for over 42 years.

I am writing to support the adoption of the umbrella zoning process that has been proposed. In my neighborhood there exists a shopping center that has within it contains a number of contiguous land parcels. Several of them contain long time vacant spaces and it is in a state of significant disrepair. Its appearance, and the limited number of retail businesses currently operating, presents a poor image of my Bellevue neighborhood. It provide little gathering space to meet the needs for our diverse ethnic and family types that now exist.

I believe that the "umbrella" zoning would increase the city's effectiveness and efficiency and would result in a more cohesive re-development plan. I am in full support of the inclusion of community gathering space in the Newport center and believe this process would better support this goal.

Currently there is no public community space available in the core of our neighborhood. The new Woodlawn park has added an outdoor public venue and we are grateful for it. Having a year round location with sheltered access during inclement weather is also very desirable.

As the Newport area continues to evolve and welcome new residents, re-development provides the opportunity to include a community component and promote stronger neighborhood connections.

Thank you for listening.

Deborah Duitch  
12574 se 52 street  
Bellevue, Washington 98006  
206-229-5240

Sent from my iPhone

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Julie Tzucker <jtzucker@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 12:24 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara  
**Subject:** No Rezoning in Newport Hills!

You don't often get email from jtzucker@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Planning Commission,  
What are your motives in taking away public voices for Newport Hills neighborhood zoning? I'm very disturbed by your attempts, which aren't new, to destroy our neighborhood.

We have overdeveloped Bellevue, and it's time to stop. You have chopped down over 65 acres of our tree canopy in the past 5 years. We see it and we are angry! The environment can only take so much. Development is not always progress. This seems to be about money and nothing else. You are claiming "affordable housing, " but this usually turns out ugly and barren of trees. I do not trust or believe you.

Stop the agenda and consider what is actually the right thing to do for our community.

Thank you,  
Julie Tzucker  
Resident and worker in Bellevue WA

## Nesse, Katherine

---

**From:** warren <wmarquardson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 10:48 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission; Johnson, Thara  
**Subject:** June 26, 2024 hearing umbrella zoning - we oppose.

You don't often get email from wmarquardson@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

We have lived in Newport Hills since 1979 - our 45th year. We came for a family friendly community with a wonderful mix of homes, stores, and schools.

We have monitored council hand wringing over the years about what can be done to support Newport Hills. We got speed bumps, a dog park, some sidewalks, and three signs mentioning the shopping center. Thanks. But sometimes it seems Newport Hills is considered by staff to be Bellevue's "poor sister" because it does not measure up to the wealth and status of other neighborhoods.

We are concerned that the proposed "umbrella" zoning plan will have the effect of further isolating and limiting Newport Hills voices in land use and zoning considerations because it has been historically hard to organize here. We fear this plan is an unspoken but intended effort toward ultimate demolition of our community shopping center to bring in high density housing as pushed by wealthy developers and encouraged by staff. The developers want to make money - good for them. Staff may support it because it will make parts of Bellevue more like the ever taller and more dense apartment blocks that modern urban planners apparently love.

Our shopping center has fallen on hard times. We realize that change is inevitable. But we don't want a "smoother" approval procedure that makes it harder for us to evaluate and react. We worry that this plan will limit Newport Hills input - with the effect of more likely than not changing our community.

We love it here. ***We want a continued opportunity to have a say without a procedure of umbrella zoning that handicaps our ability to be involved in the decisions. Please don't limit us, but allow us to continue to try to be fully involved in our own neighborhood where we live.***

Warren Marquardson

Warren Marquardson



## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Brady Nordstrom <brady@housingconsortium.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 2:23 PM  
**To:** Council  
**Cc:** PlanningCommission; Jesse Simpson  
**Subject:** HDC Comment on Wilburton CPA (6/25/2024)

You don't often get email from brady@housingconsortium.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Bellevue City Council,

My name is Brady Nordstrom and I'm the (new) associate director of government relations and policy at Housing Development Consortium. I am writing to share a brief comment on the Wilburton Comprehensive Plan Amendment ("Wilburton CPA") that is being briefed tonight (6/25) at the Council meeting and confirmed later in July.

Housing Development Consortium wants to lift up the great work that the Planning Commission and city staff have done to shape, and confirm, their Wilburton CPA recommendations. They engaged stakeholders, including those from the nonprofit sector, over many months to fine tune the proposal, especially regarding housing capacity, TOD, and affordable housing. This hard work was evident at the Planning Commission Wilburton CPA hearing on June 6th: an overwhelming majority of public testimony was strongly in favor of the Commissioner's final recommendations.

**HDC supports the full Planning Commission recommendations for the Wilburton CPA, including the highrise mixed-use designation across the street from the hospitals.** We believe that the full Planning Commission recommendations will complement the vision of Wilburton as a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood with a range of affordable housing options for workers and residents near frequent transit. HDC looks forward to continuing dialogue with City Council, staff, and planning commissioners on the land use code amendment phase of the work in Wilburton.

Thank you for considering this brief comment and for all the work that you are actively undertaking to advance affordable housing in Bellevue. The City has been making impressive progress; we look forward to partnering with you on what's next. We are deeply grateful for your leadership.

Best Regards,  
Brady Nordstrom  
253.886.2099

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Dana Wehrman <danawehrman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 9:05 PM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Subject:** Public Hearing Comment - 6/26

You don't often get email from danawehrman@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Commissioners,

I'm writing in support of keeping the original TR-57 language that prioritizes lane repurposing for multimodal transportation, and not as a method of last resort. I am a Woodinville resident but I use a combination of the bus and light rail to get to and around Bellevue on a weekly basis, and walk all over downtown. I've been encouraged by the progress I've seen in recent years regarding pedestrian and cyclist safety, but still believe the city can do more to make it safe, comfortable, and practical to get around without a car.

I have heard a lot of lip service paid to climate goals and Vision Zero all over the region, but have been disappointed in the unwillingness to take concrete, bold action in actually achieving these goals that we are claiming to care about. Small changes in language surrounding our transportation objectives are exactly the kind of dithering that serves to make these objectives all "talk" and no "action." I know many people who would love to switch from car travel if only the alternatives were a little more accessible, a little more safe, a little more practical for their lifestyles. Please consider those people, and those of us who already use transit, bikes, and walking to get around, ahead of developer interests.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Dana Wehrman

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Heidi Dean <technogeekswife@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 1:06 PM  
**To:** Bhargava, Vishal; Goeppeler, Craighton; Ferris, Carolyn; Cuellar-Calad, Luisa; Khanloo, Negin; Lu, Jonny; Villaveces, Andres; Malakoutian, Mo  
**Cc:** Council; Johnson, Thara; King, Emil A.; Nesse, Katherine; McCormick-Huentelman, Mike; Tanus, Trisna; Carlson, Diane (she/her)  
**Subject:** Ethics involved in decisionmaking

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

June 25, 2024

Dear Planning Commission, Council and Staff:

The repeated requests for an upzone on the Newport Hills Shopping Center this late in the Comprehensive Plan update process made me wonder if both Heartland LLC and their 'mouthpieces' in my neighborhood have been given hope that such an action will take place in the near future.

**The public records I've recently received clearly demonstrate that Heartland and the pro-upzone folks have been provided with special treatment by staff (personal guidance re: how to achieve an upzone against the neighborhood's will), that some councilmembers have actively helped facilitate organization of Heartland's (very small) pro-upzone neighbors group, and that promises to vote for an upzone have been made by some councilmembers and Planning Commissioners to Heartland and members of their pro-upzone group.**

Such actions violate multiple parts of the Council's mission, vision, and core values. They violate multiple parts of the code of ethics governing the council and boards/commissions. They violate the code of ethics governing city employees. And, most importantly, such actions instill distrust of every level of Bellevue city government.

We're only at the Planning Commission public hearing stage of the Comp Plan update. No decisions re: Newport Hills Shopping Center should have already been made by commissioners, nor is it their responsibility to advocate on behalf of Heartland, as I heard at the 5/8/2024 Planning Commission meeting.

In the same vein, councilmembers shouldn't be making promises re: an upzone to Heartland and certain members of the Lake Heights & Newport Hills neighborhood. Council has yet to receive the Planning Commission's recommendation on the Comp Plan update. Council's own public hearing won't happen until Fall. REMINDER: Newport Hills

Shopping Center was studied as Neighborhood Business, under the MU-Lowrise category, in the FEIS. Agreeing to change anything about that at this point in the process amounts to a spot rezone, which the CoB doesn't do during the Comp Plan update process.

Outreach for the Newport (subarea) Neighborhood Area Plan will not even begin until September. That is when you will have a chance to hear from ALL of us here on the hill, not just Heartland's 'mouthpieces', re: the vision for OUR neighborhood. Documents received in my records request show that Heartland started meeting with planners Thara Johnson and Teun Dueling in April to discuss the Neighborhood Area Plan update. Heartland expressed a desire to be involved in drafting the policies that will shape the future of the Newport Hills neighborhood. I can't imagine the majority of Newport Hills' approximately 2,700 households will be pleased to hear that. It's unacceptable for real estate advisors representing a commercial property owner to influence important policies that will shape the future of OUR neighborhood when they have zero stake beyond the fee paid to them by the commercial property owner.

Heartland's Divya Kapuria said the quiet part out loud during the 6/20 public hearing: "future developers". What was true in 2016 and true in 2018 is still true to this day: Rainier Northwest-University LLC (owners) have NO PLANS to redevelop the shopping center themselves. They're asking you to grant them an upzone FOR THEIR PROFIT when they sell, pure & simple. They can talk 'public amenities' and 'affordable housing', etc., all they want. As soon as you grant them an upzone and they sell then any promises that were made go with them as the new property owner will have no obligation to fulfill those promises. And before anyone suggests a Development Agreement (DA) know this: well-known land use attorney Rick Aramburu advised us in 2018 to NEVER accept a DA because they are always written to benefit the property owner and the city, and they are rarely enforceable if the city or property owner fails to uphold their end. Also, in a neighborhood of 2,700 households no single person or organization may sign a DA on behalf of the entire neighborhood as there's no mechanism for accurately measuring the opinions of all households. I will remind my Newport Hills neighbors of that point.

Going forward, I request that all staff members, commissioners, and councilmembers conduct their business re: Newport Hills Shopping Center and/or the Newport subarea in a transparent and ethical manner. No more 'wine nights' or workday lunches at Sue Baugh's home to discuss the center. No more directing pro-upzone people to Heartland to build their "stakeholder" group. No more appointing people to the Planning Commission that you know have met with Heartland and who you know are in agreement with an upzone. Stop stacking the deck and just carry out your duties fairly & ethically, please. Otherwise, everything about this Comp Plan update will have been a sham, and any 'outreach' done for the NAP update will be government kabuki theater, simply going through the motions to check legal boxes because the fix was already in for Newport Hills and its beloved Neighborhood Center.

Thank you,

*Heidi L Dean*

Heidi L Dean

23 year resident of Newport Hills, 25+ years in Bellevue

Copies provided to:

Newport Hills Community Club Board

One Bellevue

Bellevue United

Neighborhood Associations List (CoB website)

Published on Nextdoor

Jonathan Choe, independent journalist & Bellevue resident

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** PlanningCommission  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 1:35 PM  
**To:** p johnston; PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Comp Plan 2044; Shull, Janet; Bahnmiller, Hannah  
**Subject:** RE: COMP PLAN: Religious organization housing policy

Pam,

This policy provided direction for the development of the C-1 land use code changes which is an action in the City's Affordable Housing Strategy. Action C-1 calls for "*Increasing development potential on suitable land owned by public, non-profit housing, and faith-based entities for affordable housing*". This policy also addresses State House Bill 1377 (SHB 1377) which was passed in 2019. The legislation requires cities planning under the Growth Management Act to provide an increased density bonus consistent with local needs for any affordable housing development for real property owned or controlled by a religious organization. This affordable housing must be part of a binding obligation that requires the development to be used exclusively for affordable housing purposes for at least 50 years, even if the religious entity no longer owns the property.

Best Regards,

Thara Johnson



### Thara Johnson

Comprehensive Planning Manager, City of Bellevue  
[tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov) | [425-452-4087](tel:425-452-4087) | [BellevueWA.gov](http://BellevueWA.gov)

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**From:** p johnston <pamjjo@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 5:29 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission <PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov>  
**Cc:** Comp Plan 2044 <CompPlan2044@bellevuewa.gov>  
**Subject:** COMP PLAN: Religious organization housing policy

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

HO-27. Allow properties in residential designated areas on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan map to reclassify to higher density residential designations when they meet all the following criteria:

1. one hundred percent of the housing being developed will be permanently affordable housing; and
2. the property is owned or controlled by a religious organization; and
3. the property is located near high capacity transportation infrastructure and services; and
4. the property is located near other multifamily residential or commercial use districts.

Was this intended to encourage religious organization to purchase land to create housing? If so, why only religious organizations?

-p

**Nesse, Katherine**

**From:** p johnston <pamjjo@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 4:37 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Comp Plan 2044  
**Subject:** COMP PLAN: Land Use Comments

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Land Use Strategy	Comments
P1=Necessary change, P2=Should Change, P3=Change If no impact elsewhere, P4=suggestion	
LU-1. Focus the city’s growth and development as follows: 1. Direct most of the city’s growth to the Downtown Regional Growth Center, other Countywide Centers and to other areas designated for compact, mixed use development served by a full range of transportation options.	P2 Define: designated for compact, mixed-use development in terms of scale terms that are already defined.
LU-2. Retain the city’s park-like character through the acquisition, preservation and enhancement of parks, open space, and tree canopy throughout the city.	P2 Add Water and Stir  Add through Low impact development and restoration
LU-3. Prioritize the redevelopment on under-developed land over vacant land, open space and environmentally sensitive areas.	😊
LU-5. Maintain a critical mass of light industrial land in the Richards Valley area and other appropriate areas to serve local needs.	Define “Richards Valley Area”.
<i>Growth Management</i>	
LU-8. Encourage new residential development to achieve a substantial portion of the maximum density allowed on the net buildable acreage.	P1: Clarify that Low Impact Development (LID - Ecology) must still be followed.
LU-10. Work toward a land use pattern that makes it possible for people to live closer to where they work regardless of household income.	Define “possible”. Does this mean same number of jobs at each income level + more housing for those that don’t work, e.g. retirees?
<i>Residential Areas</i>	
LU-13. Apply contextually appropriate design techniques and development regulations to transition between low density and high density areas, particularly in residential areas.	Change to: <b>LU-13.</b> Apply contextually appropriate design techniques and development regulations to transition between low density



	and <b>middle and</b> high density areas particularly in residential areas.
LU-14. Assess the compatibility of commercial uses and other more intense uses when located in mixed use and predominantly residential areas.	P4:Clarify trigger or add “ <b>on a periodic basis</b> ”
LU-15. Provide for safe, accessible pedestrian connections from residential areas to nearby neighborhood services and transit in all residential site development.	P2: Encourage easements to be used as pedestrian connections. P2: Encourage volunteer easements for 0pedestrian connections.
<i>Neighborhood Centers</i>	
LU-18. Encourage new retail and services alongside residential in Neighborhood Centers, ensuring easy pedestrian access, and enhancing the livability of the neighborhood.	Define Livability factors
<i>Mixed Use Centers and Countywide Centers</i>	
	P1: Change <b>Mixed-use Centers</b>
LU-19. Sustain Downtown’s designation as a Regional Growth Center, with the density, mix of uses and amenities, and infrastructure that maintain it as the financial, retail, transportation, and business hub of the Eastside.	Clarify: Other than “residential areas” and industrial, where is mixed use discouraged?
<i>Citywide Policies</i>	
LU-38. Preserve open space and key natural features through a variety of techniques, such as sensitive site planning, conservation easements, transferring density, land use incentives and open space taxation.	I oppose the use of Open Space taxation for less than 10 acres and for golf courses or other non-native areas
LU-40. Provide opportunities for increased density and height to accommodate clustering, efficient site planning and significant preservation of trees and open space on parcels over 10 acres.	😊
LU-49. After annexation, transfer all review authority for all land currently undergoing development review in King County to the City of Bellevue.	ADD: Encourage the transition all land designed as park but is not part of regional park to City of Bellevue.

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## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** p johnston <pamjjo@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 4:11 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Comp Plan 2044  
**Subject:** Comp Plan: Community Engagement Polices

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POLICY	COMMENTS
<i>Building Community Capacity</i>	<p>P3 <u>Define community capacity</u> or , preferably, remove it.</p> <p>Building Community Capacity sounds like <b>more building and development</b> – more built environment.</p> <p>Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• people who are willing to be involved</li><li>• skills, knowledge and abilities</li><li>• community cohesion</li><li>• ability to identify and access opportunities</li><li>• motivation and the experience to carry out initiatives</li><li>• community organizations, supportive institutions and physical resources</li><li>• leadership and the structures needed for participation</li><li>• economic and financial resources</li><li>• enabling policies and systems</li></ul> <p><a href="https://generationsworkingtogether.org/">https://generationsworkingtogether.org/</a></p>
<p>CE-1. <b>Build relationships and coordinate engagement between the city and diverse cultural groups across the city and region through programs and partnerships such as a cultural liaison program or <b>grants to community-based organizations</b> to increase community engagement.</b></p>	<p>P2 GRANTS :</p> <p>ADD unbiased</p> <p>Why not unbiased professionals?</p> <p>With the cultural liaison program, the city is the unbiased conduit. Grants to community based organization must be transparent and unbiased. Audits may be needed. Compare to Human services grants.</p>
<p>CE-2. <b>Support identification and mentoring of potential community leaders, particularly those that support a diverse and representative leadership pool, to increase community capacity to participate in engagement processes.</b></p>	<p>P4 If “community capacity’ is understood, then “community capacity to participate in engagement processes.” redundant</p>
<p>CE-9. <b>Encourage the use of plain language writing and design within public-facing engagement</b></p>	

materials to ensure information is concise, inclusive and easy to understand. Periodically review materials to ensure content remains accessible.	
CE-10. Encourage and support engagement with the entire community, including residents, employees, business owners, and visitors to the city or area of the city under consideration.	1. Add “transparent “ (especially for visitor)
CE-11. Cultivate constructive community dialogs for mutual understanding and sharing of diverse perspectives, ideas, experiences and expertise to support community engagement beyond the minimum required.	😊
CE-13. Reduce barriers to community engagement by considering the needs of specific groups, especially marginalized populations.	? Lack of digital devices → marginalized
add	Use terminology that is from the readers/community perspective. Example “Engaging Bellevue” vs. “Bellevue Engaged”  I prefer “participation” over “engagement” in for this same reason.

-12

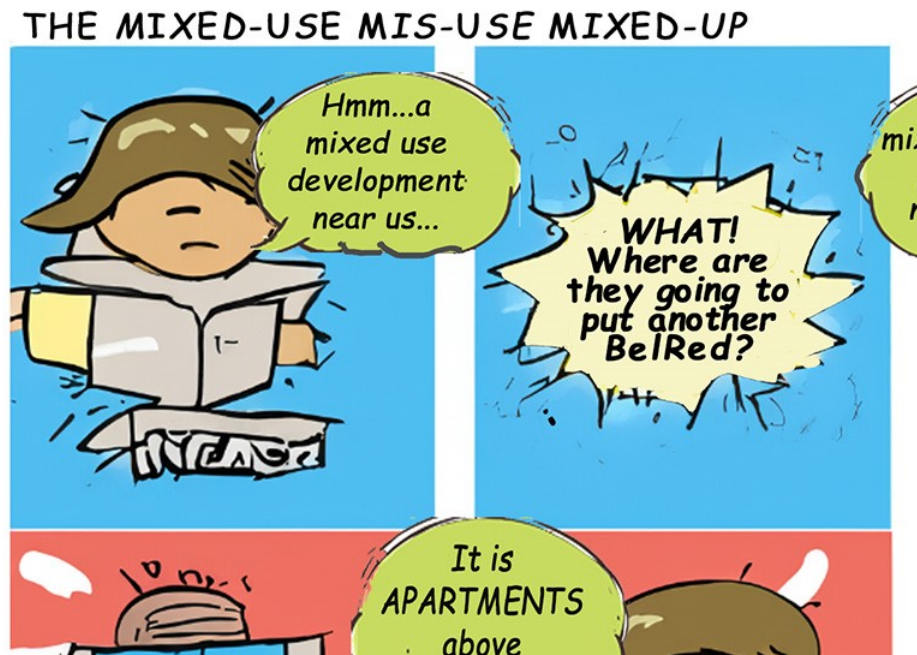
## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** p johnston <pamjjo@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 3:06 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Comp Plan 2044  
**Subject:** Comp Plan Priority :Terminology: "Mixed Use Center" "Countywide" "Urban Centers"

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I empathize with residents having to tackle the planning terms. **Mixed-use development vs. Mixed Use Zoning vs Mixed Use Center vs. Mixed-Use Area.** Development/Zoning/Center/Area all follow "mixed use". Sometimes there is a hyphen -- Sometimes not.

- The term **Mixed Use Centers** is too confusing
- Plain language text but terms are confusing
- **Mixed-use development** can happen outside of mixed-use centers
- **Neighborhood centers** have mixed-uses but are not mixed-use centers.
- **Mixed-use centers** don't require mixed uses everywhere
- **Mixed-Use Neighborhoods** does not prohibit a neighborhood center.
- **Mixed-use centers** are not defined by Bellevue, but there is not a 1-1 correspondence with [King County Center terms](#),
- The **nodes** in BelRed will be confused with **Mixed-Use Centers**. Is the term Node defined
- In BelRed, are the nodes or the Centers the heart?

Imagine trying to find the right information when searching the City website or code for "mixed use"<sup>†</sup> It took me hours to understand the center designations relationships to PSRC, KC, and other terms in the Bellevue Comp Plan. I can see why it was so hard to find a term.

However. given the confusion this will cause, it is a priority to not use **Mixed Use Center**.

†See searches in the Comp Plan at the end of this document.

### LAND USE VERSUS TRANSPORTATION.

When residents see development is happening near them, they do not distinguish Land Use and Transportation. **Reginal Center, Countywide center** and **Urban Center** seems to be only for Transportation funding in the Bellevue Plan. The connection should be clear in Landuse.

### BELLEVUE TERMS VERSUS KING COUNTY TERMS.

The King County/PSRC Regional Center, Countywide Centers and Urban Centers is too confusing It is hard to understand that Mixed use centers have countywide centers in them.

It is also possible that the County could make a center that spans between neighborhoods. This requires too much explanation.

See [page 23 “at the heart of mixed use centers are countywide centers \(see map lu-3\)”](#) and [Map LU-3 See King County Countywide Planning Policies page 106 Appendix 6: King County Centers Designation Framework](#)

Why is [Totem Lake an Urban Growth Center](#) but Wilburton (West) and BelRed are Countrywide?

### SUGGESTION

- Replace the term Mixed use Center . Maybe “Growth Centers”
- Have 1-1 correspondence with King County and PSRC centers designations
- Show the King County and PSRC determined borders on the main land use map
- Show the Local center borders also, after designated in neighborhood planning.
- Add “Growth” when the terms are for the PSRC and KC areas
- Take into consideration the adding a term for nodes (districts) .
- Define “Urban Core”.  
?Downtown, East Main, Wilburton (West), BelRed ? Neighborhoods or Countywide Growth area?
- Use “**Growth Neighborhoods**” which may include “Growth Centers”, “Districts”, and Non-Growth Areas.
- Use “**Urban Districts**” which distinguish nodes from non-nodes. “Eastgate Urban” , “Wilburton Urban”
- Keep Downtown in a league of its own.

### Map LU-3. Regional Growth Center and Candidate Countywide Centers

Regional Growth Centers are designated by PSRC and Countywide Centers are designated by King County. Both are focus areas for future transportation investments.



## BACKGROUND

### 2044 DRAFT COMP PLAN DEFINITIONS

<p>Mixed Use Centers — Areas of the city that are both major commercial centers and centers for substantial future residential growth, focused around existing or planned high capacity transit. Mixed Use Centers may have the same or different boundaries than neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Mixed-use Development — A building or buildings constructed as a single project that contains more than one use, typically including housing plus retail and office uses</p>	<p>Countywide Centers — Geographic areas identified by King County as areas of focus for transportation funds. The requirements for these centers are outlined in the King County Countywide Planning Policies. The Countywide Centers in Bellevue are in BelRed, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria and Wilburton and East Main. The boundaries differ from Neighborhood Areas by the same name and can be found in Map LU-3.</p>
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### KING COUNTY

**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.

### PARTS AND PIECES OF BELLEVUE

There seems to be a desire to have terms for.....

This whole group and these divisions:	This whole group and these divisions:	This whole group and these divisions:
Downtown East Main	Downtown East Main Wilburton (West) BelRed	Downtown BelRed Wilburton (West) East Main Crossroads Factoria Eastgate
BelRed Wilburton (West) Crossroads Factoria Eastgate	Crossroads Factoria Eastgate	All others
All others	All others	

In Figure LU-2, it says we have neighborhoods with and without Mixed Use Centers. We are used to growth areas. It is important to indicate that the entire neighborhood is not a growth center and not all mixed-use.

Figure LU-2. Growth by Neighborhood (2019-2044)

Neighborhood	Jobs	Housing Units
Neighborhoods with Mixed Use Centers	66,300	32,600
BelRed	14,200	7,900
Crossroads	900	700
Downtown	37,600	14,500
Eastgate & Factoria	2,500	4,600
Wilburton	11,100	4,900
All other Neighborhoods	3,700	2,400
Total	70,000	35,000

City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan 2044 • Land Use • Page LU-4

Countywide center seem to driven by the County.  
 Regional center only appears in transportation policy summary  
 Verify tr-2 conforms. It uses urban center and countywide centers  
 Countywide centers are also confusing, see mixed use centers and countywide centers  
 I see that there are the terms that are separate sets.

WHOLE	Bellevue is made of neighborhoods	Each Bellevue Neighborhood is made of one or more of following	King County CENTERS Designation Framework	KC DP-4 Focus growth Urban Growth Area	Suggestion
<b>CONTAINS</b>	(fill in the blank) Neighborhood	Mixed use centers	Metro Growth Centers	Cities	Metro Growth Centers
	Only the term Downtown can stand alone	County wide centers	Urban Growth Centers*	Regional Centers	Urban Growth Centers, if we have them
		Neighborhood centers	Countywide Growth Centers	Countywide centers	Countywide Growth Centers
		Residential areas	Industrial Employment Centers	Locally designated local centers	Keep Neighborhood centers
		Commercial areas	Industrial Growth Centers		
		other	Countywide Industrial Centers		

**LANDUSE INTRO – MIXED USE AREA**

...”Business growth is focused in denser **mixed use areas** like downtown, Belred, And The Wilburton Commercial Area, with additional growth around transit in Crossroads, Eastgate and Factoria. Bellevue supports many types of healthy and vital neighborhoods that serve the needs of the diverse population”...

“Urban Centers” appears only 5 times in the Draft Bellevue Comp Plan and 3 times in t he [2021 King County Coutywide Planning Polices](#)

•

King County	Bellevue
<p><b>POLICY</b> EN-28 Plan for development patterns that minimize air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, including: Directing growth to <b>Urban Centers</b> and other mixed-use or high-density locations that support mass transit, encourage non-motorized modes of travel, and reduce trip lengths;</p> <p><b>TRANSPORTATION INTRO</b> The Regional Growth Strategy identifies a network of walkable, compact, and transit-oriented communities that are the focus of urban development, as well as industrial areas with major employment concentrations. In the Countywide Planning Policies, these communities include countywide designated <b>Urban Centers</b> and Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers, and locally designated local centers.</p> <p><b>FOOTNOTE</b> 20 PSRC’s 2015 guidance on Transit Supportive Densities and Land Uses cites an optimal level of 56-116 activity units per acre to support light rail, dependent on transit costs per mile. The guidance indicates an optimal threshold of at least 17 activity units per acre to support bus rapid transit. Note: the existing threshold in the CPPs is roughly equivalent to 85 AUs existing activity for King County <b>Urban Centers</b>. IN Appendix 6: King County Centers Designation Framework</p>	<p><b>HISTORY</b> 1990s ... To reduce urban sprawl, Countywide Planning Policies concentrate growth in <b>Urban Centers</b>, with Downtown Bellevue becoming the leading <b>urban center</b> for King County outside of Seattle.</p> <p><b>POLICIES:</b> TR-2. Direct transportation investments and services to support the designated <b>Urban Center</b> and the Countywide Centers identified in the Countywide Planning Policies.</p> <p><b>DEFINITIONS:</b> Downtown — Bellevue’s primary center of retail, commercial and service activities as well as for high-density, residential development. Downtown Bellevue is designated a Regional Growth Center in VISION 2050 and an <b>Urban Center</b> in the Countywide Planning Policies. <b>Urban Center</b> — Areas designated by the Countywide Planning Policies located on existing or planned transit corridors where there will be higher levels of residential density and employment intensity that support regional land use and transportation goals</p>

\* Urban Centers appears only 3 times in [2021 King County Countywide Planning Policies](#) (KCCPP)

20 PSRC’s 2015 guidance on Transit Supportive Densities and Land Uses cites an optimal level of 56-116 activity units per acre to support light rail, dependent on transit costs per mile. The guidance indicates an optimal threshold of at least 17 activity units per acre to support bus rapid transit. Note: the existing threshold in the CPPs is roughly equivalent to 85 AUs existing activity for King County Urban Centers

EN-28 Plan for development patterns that minimize air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, including: Directing growth to Urban Centers and other mixed-use or high-density locations that support mass transit, encourage non-motorized modes of travel, and reduce trip lengths;

The Regional Growth Strategy identifies a network of walkable, compact, and transit-oriented communities that are the focus of urban development, as well as industrial areas with major employment concentrations. In the Countywide Planning Policies, these communities include countywide designated Urban Centers and Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers, and locally designated local centers

\*\* [KCCPP p29](#)



## Consider. The terms are used in the Comp Plan


- › a **mixed-use**, people-friendly, urban place in the Downtown. ■ The Sensitive Areas Ordinance
- › compact, **mixed-use** development near transit stations. Bellevue supports transit use by prioritizing capital investments
- › **Mixed-use** Development — A building or buildings constructed as a single project that
- › **mixed-use** area in a location that is otherwise primarily residential. Neighborhood Centers are
- › **Mixed Use** Centers (Downtown, BelRed, Wilburton/East Main, Crossroads, Factoria and Eastgate). These
- › **mixed use** areas. ■ Allows for a wider range of housing types across the
- › and **mixed use** areas in places that are otherwise primarily residential, such as Northtowne Shopping
- › with **Mixed Use** Centers 66,300 32,600 BelRed 14,200 7,900 Crossroads 900 700 Downtown 37,600 14,500
- › become **mixed use** with some higher density residential alongside the commercial uses. Future development in
- › **Mixed Use** Centers Mixed Use Centers are centers of economic and social activity, anchored
- › **Mixed Use** Centers are centers of economic and social activity, anchored by major transportation
- › Crossroads **Mixed Use** Center is home to substantial residential development and is expected to continue
- › **mixed use** development as it is at the crossroads of major transportation routes into
- › of **Mixed Use** Centers are Countywide Centers (see Map LU-3), areas designated by
- › the **Mixed Use** Centers also apply to Countywide Centers as they overlap. Land Use Compatibility
- › **MIXED USE** Downtown The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of
- › Highrise **Mixed Use** The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing,
- › Midrise **Mixed Use** The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing,
- › Lowrise **Mixed Use** The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing,
- › Office **Mixed Use** The purpose is to provide a mix of office, housing, retail, service
- › Office **Mixed Use** The purpose is to provide a mix of housing, retail, service, office
- › Office **Mixed Use** The purpose is to provide a mix of office, housing, retail, service
- › Medical **Mixed Use** The purpose is to provide a mix of laboratories, office, housing, retail,

## And many more

County **Countywide** Planning Policies. Information in the Housing element is supplemented by the 2022  
and **Countywide** Planning Policies and take additional steps if needed. HO-22. Allow innovative  
site **countywide** or **statewide** essential public facilities. Pursue agreements among jurisdictions to mitigate against  
and more

are **Countywide Centers** (see Map LU-3), areas designated by King County in the  
to **Countywide Centers** as they overlap. Land Use Compatibility One of the roles of land  
Candidate **Countywide Centers** Regional Growth Centers are designated by PSRC and Countywide Centers are designated  
and **Countywide Centers** are designated by King County. Both are  
other **Countywide Centers** (see Map LU-3) and to other areas designated for compact,  
and **Countywide Centers** LU-19. Sustain Downtown's designation as a Regional Growth Center, with the  
Establish **Countywide Centers** (see Map LU-3) as focal points for local and county  
for **Countywide Centers** as part of the Neighborhood Area Planning process, including an assessment of  
as **Countywide Centers**. The Mobility Implementation Plan (MIP) describes a complete and connected transportation  
PSRC), **Countywide Centers** (as identified by King County) and Neighborhood Centers (as identified  
the **Countywide Centers** identified in the Countywide Planning Policies. TR-3. Incorporate transit-supportive and  
**Countywide Centers** — Geographic areas identified by King County as areas of focus for  
**Countywide Centers** in Bellevue are in BelRed, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria and Wilburton and East

in **Urban Centers**, with Downtown Bellevue becoming the leading urban center for King County outside  
leading **urban center** for King County outside of Seattle. ■ Bellevue expands significantly south of  
**Urban Center** and the Countywide Centers identified in the Countywide Planning Policies. TR-3.  
an **Urban Center** in the Countywide Planning Policies. Eastside — A geographic area that includes  
**Urban Center** — Areas designated by the Countywide Planning Policies located on existing or  
Draft Bellevue 2044 Comprehensive Plan

 to **Regional Centers** (as identified by PSRC), Countywide Centers (as identified by King

-pamela johnston

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** phyllisjwhite <phyllisjwhite@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 2:05 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** Johnson, Thara; King, Emil A.; Nesse, Katherine  
**Subject:** FW: 'Zoning Umbrella' staff proposal  
**Attachments:** Zoning Umbrella Letter to PC 6-21-24.docx

You don't often get email from phyllisjwhite@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Commissioners and Staff,

I concur with Heidi Dean's attached comments and oppose the proposed "Umbrella Proposal".

While I live in a neighborhood with a neighborhood association, our association is not active in notifying and encouraging resident input in city matters. As a result, Wilburton residents are left out of notifications and participation with the city, including this week's public hearing. I encourage the City to continue a robust public outreach process.

Sent from my Galaxy

----- Original message -----

**From:** Heidi Dean <technogeekswife@yahoo.com>  
**Date:** 6/21/24 1:25 PM (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** planningcommission@bellevuewa.gov  
**Cc:** Thara Johnson <tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov>, "Emil A. King" <eaking@bellevuewa.gov>, Katherine Nesse <knesse@bellevuewa.gov>  
**Subject:** 'Zoning Umbrella' staff proposal

Hello Commissioners & staff:

Attached are my comments opposing the utilization of a 'Zoning Umbrella' mechanism to bypass the annual Comp Plan Amendment process and go straight to a rezone.

Thank you for reading to the end. I appreciate how much work you're putting in right now. It will be over soon!

~ Heidi Dean

Newport Hills

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Newport Hills had two annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPA) filed on our shopping center between 2016 & 2018. NE Bellevue had three CPAs filed on the Bellevue Technology Center between approximately 2012 & 2018. Northtowne experienced a CPA on The Park Apartments in 2018. Each of those CPAs failed at threshold review because the applicants couldn't prove the "significantly changed conditions" criteria.

Why is that?

How could big money land use attorneys not prove that point if it's so obvious as to ask for a CPA?

The answer is simple- in each case the affected neighborhoods had three things going for them:

- Residents who were knowledgeable about the CPA process, as well as land use code & zoning, the GMA, and the Comprehensive Plan
- An organized neighborhood association for communication with and education & mobilization of impacted residents
- Adequate time during the CPA process for the second bullet point

In 2016 I felt hopeless and helpless when Intracorp filed the first CPA on the Newport Hills Shopping Center. I didn't know what to do- I was just a housewife and a mom who knew nothing about land use and neither did my fellow Newport Hills neighbors. So... we got educated. We got organized. We fought back using the CoB's own policies and codes, as well as the GMA. In 2018, against an even more formidable developer (Toll Brothers), with an even tougher attorney, we were able to make our case. How is that possible?

Answer: the CPA process allowed us the time to do that.

Did you know that about 70% of Bellevue's neighborhoods lack associations, meaning they lack the ability to quickly communicate an issue to their residents and mobilize? Imagine being one of those neighborhoods and facing a CPA that will make catastrophic changes to the character and functionality of your neighborhood- that's pretty daunting! Now imagine it's the same proposed change but filed as a rezone that requires less notification, less time in the decision making process, less stringent decision making criteria, and forces you to hire an attorney to fight the CoB & the applicant in front of the Hearing Examiner. That's the situation you're being asked to place ALL Bellevue neighborhoods in with the staff's "zoning umbrella" proposal. Some neighborhoods will fare better than others, but all will be at a huge disadvantage compared to wealthy property owners and developers with time, resources, and legal knowledge to make their case. Remember that EQUITY is one of the keystones of this Comp Plan update & the word appears many times throughout the document.

The "zoning umbrella" was presented to you on 2/14/2024 as a streamlining of process for applicants and as a decrease in workload for you as commissioners. While true, staff has repeatedly failed to

acknowledge how this proposed process change will significantly reduce residents' ability to have a say in what happens to their neighborhoods.

The proposed change would apply to all zoning designations and land use categories, but I believe the real target of this proposal is to achieve upzones of the Neighborhood Centers, particularly those where applicants couldn't pass threshold review in the past, as well as those where requests for massive upzones were submitted during the DEIS comment period (Northtowne, Newport Hills). At the request of a couple commercial property owners the land use category for ALL Neighborhood Centers in the city would have received a massive increase without proper process or notification. It was only because Commissioner Lu & I were at the 6/14/2023 meeting to catch it, and the Newport Hills Community Club spoke up against it, that it didn't happen. In fact, Commissioner Lu was the author of the letter submitted by the NHCC that opposed change to Neighborhood Centers' land use categories for the FEIS.

The "Planning Commission Cookbook Series" Vols 1 & 2 outline your role & responsibilities as Planning Commissioners. It stipulates that you

- Act as fact-finders and citizen advisors to the city council
- Review staff recommendation carefully
- Listen to and consider public testimony

I'm asking you to not only consider the staff's recommendation on the "zoning umbrella" proposal carefully, but also the input of residents, especially those who've been through the process of opposing a land use application. I believe that, while the "zoning umbrella" proposal might lighten your workload, it will diminish your overall role as Planning Commissioners as well as diminish the voice of Bellevue residents in important decisions re: their city & neighborhoods. I've been attending PC meetings regularly since 2016, so I know the hours you put in on issues. I ask you not to make a decision based upon what might be easier for you while having devastating consequences for residents who need a robust public process (CPA, \*then\* rezone if criteria met) in order to be fully heard. Staff will tell you that other cities do it. I say: "we're not other cities, we're Bellevue".

Final point: As-yet-to-be-defined new zoning designations should NEVER be lumped in with existing & defined zoning designations when critical decisions are being made. That's like asking the Planning Commission to sign a blank check for a very large amount of money. I believe most of you wouldn't do that in your personal life so why would you do it as a Planning Commissioner? Ex: MU-L/M= undefined and not yet passed into Bellevue's zoning code.

Please vote "no" on moving forward with the "zoning umbrella" proposal allowing applicants to skip over the CPA process and go right to applying for a rezone if they wish to change to a new zoning designation within their "umbrella".

Thank you,

Heidi L Dean

23 year resident of Newport Hills, 25+ in Bellevue

## Nesse, Katherine

---

**From:** Ronda Woodcox <ronda.woodcox@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 2:15 PM  
**To:** Robinson, Lynne; Malakoutian, Mo; Lee, Conrad; Stokes, John; Zahn, Janice; Nieuwenhuis, Jared; Hamilton, Dave; PlanningCommission; King, Emil A.; Johnson, Thara; Nesse, Katherine; Carlson, Diane (she/her); Gerla, Kathy  
**Subject:** My vote on "Umbrella Zoning" proposal  
**Attachments:** Zoning Umbrella Letter to PC 6-21-24.docx

Some people who received this message don't often get email from ronda.woodcox@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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To the members of the planning commission:

We the people of Newport Hills are TIRED! We're tired of big money in the hands of a small number of people continuously chipping away at our peaceful neighborhood. We're tired of the rules being constantly manipulated to bend in favor the interests of big monied developers. We're tired of the insane amount of vigilance required on our part to just barely keep up with the barrage of shenanigans coming at us from those looking to overrun our neighborhood in the name of profits.

The "zoning umbrella" proposal that would allow applicants to bypass the current Comprehensive Plan Amendment process is a horrible one, and seems in direct conflict to the June 6, 2024, draft of the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan 2044. Please allow me to point out a few items from that document.

- Neighborhood Centers Neighborhood Centers are commercial and mixed-use areas in places that are otherwise primarily residential, such as Northtowne Shopping Center and surrounding area, Lake Hills Village and surrounding area and **Newport Hills Shopping Center** and surrounding area.
- These centers **provide goods and services to local residents and serve as important focal points and gathering spaces for the community**. Neighborhood Centers can range from commercial centers anchored by a grocery store, library or other major community asset to small centers that are a collection of a few small businesses. The goal is that they meet some of the daily needs of those in close proximity to the center. Larger centers, such as those anchored by grocery stores, may serve the needs of a wider community. [1]
- BELLEVUE'S 16 NEIGHBORHOODS Bellevue has 16 neighborhood areas (Map NH-1), each containing a few to many smaller neighborhoods, that cover the full extent of the city. Some of the neighborhood areas, like Downtown, are very urban with exclusively multi-family housing units and a lot of commercial and office space. Other neighborhoods, **like Newport, are primarily residential with mostly one unit per lot and a small amount of commercial space that serves the needs of the local population**. There are many neighborhoods in between with a mix of housing types and commercial

areas. Each neighborhood area has a distinct identity that has evolved over time and continues to evolve as the people living and working in the area change and their needs shift. [2]

- **Inclusive Neighborhood Identity** Bellevue values the distinct physical amenities and artistic, cultural or natural qualities of the city's diverse neighborhoods, whether it is the vibrancy of Downtown, Crossroads, and BelRed neighborhoods, the shoreline communities of West Lake Sammamish and Lake Washington, the hilltop neighborhoods of Cougar Mountain, Somerset and Newport Hills, the historic neighborhoods of Wilburton, Northtowne, Lake Hills and Woodridge, or the wooded neighborhoods of Enatai and Bridle Trails. Bellevue has sixteen neighborhood areas, including the changing areas of Downtown, BelRed and Eastgate. Each area is home to many smaller neighborhoods. The diversity of Bellevue's neighborhoods is a city treasure—the unique look and feel of each neighborhood depends on its location, history and natural and built environment. At the same time, Bellevue prioritizes inclusivity and equity and seeks to ensure neighborhoods remain accessible to residents of diverse backgrounds, abilities and incomes. The city encourages and coordinates neighborhood participation in projects to enhance unique neighborhood identity. Neighborhood groups can partner with the city on features such as landscape plantings, signage, artwork, and special paving on streets or sidewalks. Neighborhood engagement with the city shapes city planning and decision making on neighborhood improvements and determines how to enhance distinct neighborhood identities across the city. [3]

These citations are just a few of many from CoB policy and governing documents. In these there is clear and unambiguous language on the importance of working with residents, the importance of listening to and taking into consideration, the desires of the local residents.

To my mind, it's glaringly obvious an "umbrella zoning" approach/policy is opposite of the stated objectives of CoB regarding it's focus on the needs and wants of its residents.

We Newport Hills residents know our ugly, yet beloved shopping center had a large target on it. We know the current owners very well. We have experienced the way they conduct business, and we have a good understanding of their ultimate motives with the Newport Hills Shopping Center: Sell it to the highest bidder! This very likely means a residential dwelling builder with a "dense housing" focused business model.

If the current owner had a sliver of hope at changing the zoning to accomplish the goal of selling to a high-density residential developer, they would JUMP at it. But the only way that's likely to happen is if they could by-pass the opposition and point of view of the local residents.

The people MUST have and maintain our voice in policy making, especially with zoning. If you allow big money and uncaring and unscrupulous developers to cut us out, I think you'll be making a choice to take Bellevue into a dystopian direction.

Please vote no on the proposal regarding "umbrella zoning" that allows the CPA process to be skipped.

Thank you,

Ronda Woodcox

Newport Hills Resident of 12 years

Home owner at 12554 SE 53<sup>rd</sup> Street



Citations

[1] Bellevue Comprehensive Plan 2044 document draft dated June 6, 2024. Page LU-4

[2] Bellevue Comprehensive Plan 2044 document draft dated June 6,2024. Page NH-4

[3] Bellevue Comprehensive Plan 2044 document draft dated June 6,2024. Page NH-3 and 4

\*Attached document is a letter format of this email

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Newport Hills had two annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPA) filed on our shopping center between 2016 & 2018. NE Bellevue had three CPAs filed on the Bellevue Technology Center between approximately 2012 & 2018. Northtowne experienced a CPA on The Park Apartments in 2018. Each of those CPAs failed at threshold review because the applicants couldn't prove the "significantly changed conditions" criteria.

Why is that?

How could big money land use attorneys not prove that point if it's so obvious as to ask for a CPA?

The answer is simple- in each case the affected neighborhoods had three things going for them:

- Residents who were knowledgeable about the CPA process, as well as land use code & zoning, the GMA, and the Comprehensive Plan
- An organized neighborhood association for communication with and education & mobilization of impacted residents
- Adequate time during the CPA process for the second bullet point

In 2016 I felt hopeless and helpless when Intracorp filed the first CPA on the Newport Hills Shopping Center. I didn't know what to do- I was just a housewife and a mom who knew nothing about land use and neither did my fellow Newport Hills neighbors. So... we got educated. We got organized. We fought back using the CoB's own policies and codes, as well as the GMA. In 2018, against an even more formidable developer (Toll Brothers), with an even tougher attorney, we were able to make our case. How is that possible?

Answer: the CPA process allowed us the time to do that.

Did you know that about 70% of Bellevue's neighborhoods lack associations, meaning they lack the ability to quickly communicate an issue to their residents and mobilize? Imagine being one of those neighborhoods and facing a CPA that will make catastrophic changes to the character and functionality of your neighborhood- that's pretty daunting! Now imagine it's the same proposed change but filed as a rezone that requires less notification, less time in the decision making process, less stringent decision making criteria, and forces you to hire an attorney to fight the CoB & the applicant in front of the Hearing Examiner. That's the situation you're being asked to place ALL Bellevue neighborhoods in with the staff's "zoning umbrella" proposal. Some neighborhoods will fare better than others, but all will be at a huge disadvantage compared to wealthy property owners and developers with time, resources, and legal knowledge to make their case. Remember that EQUITY is one of the keystones of this Comp Plan update & the word appears many times throughout the document.

The "zoning umbrella" was presented to you on 2/14/2024 as a streamlining of process for applicants and as a decrease in workload for you as commissioners. While true, staff has repeatedly failed to

acknowledge how this proposed process change will significantly reduce residents' ability to have a say in what happens to their neighborhoods.

The proposed change would apply to all zoning designations and land use categories, but I believe the real target of this proposal is to achieve upzones of the Neighborhood Centers, particularly those where applicants couldn't pass threshold review in the past, as well as those where requests for massive upzones were submitted during the DEIS comment period (Northtowne, Newport Hills). At the request of a couple commercial property owners the land use category for ALL Neighborhood Centers in the city would have received a massive increase without proper process or notification. It was only because Commissioner Lu & I were at the 6/14/2023 meeting to catch it, and the Newport Hills Community Club spoke up against it, that it didn't happen. In fact, Commissioner Lu was the author of the letter submitted by the NHCC that opposed change to Neighborhood Centers' land use categories for the FEIS.

The "Planning Commission Cookbook Series" Vols 1 & 2 outline your role & responsibilities as Planning Commissioners. It stipulates that you

- Act as fact-finders and citizen advisors to the city council
- Review staff recommendation carefully
- Listen to and consider public testimony

I'm asking you to not only consider the staff's recommendation on the "zoning umbrella" proposal carefully, but also the input of residents, especially those who've been through the process of opposing a land use application. I believe that, while the "zoning umbrella" proposal might lighten your workload, it will diminish your overall role as Planning Commissioners as well as diminish the voice of Bellevue residents in important decisions re: their city & neighborhoods. I've been attending PC meetings regularly since 2016, so I know the hours you put in on issues. I ask you not to make a decision based upon what might be easier for you while having devastating consequences for residents who need a robust public process (CPA, \*then\* rezone if criteria met) in order to be fully heard. Staff will tell you that other cities do it. I say: "we're not other cities, we're Bellevue".

Final point: As-yet-to-be-defined new zoning designations should NEVER be lumped in with existing & defined zoning designations when critical decisions are being made. That's like asking the Planning Commission to sign a blank check for a very large amount of money. I believe most of you wouldn't do that in your personal life so why would you do it as a Planning Commissioner? Ex: MU-L/M= undefined and not yet passed into Bellevue's zoning code.

Please vote "no" on moving forward with the "zoning umbrella" proposal allowing applicants to skip over the CPA process and go right to applying for a rezone if they wish to change to a new zoning designation within their "umbrella".

Thank you,

Heidi L Dean

23 year resident of Newport Hills, 25+ in Bellevue

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** Tim Hay <pigpoppy@rocketmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 11:07 PM  
**To:** Bhargava, Vishal; Goeppeler, Craighton; Ferris, Carolyn; Cuellar-Calad, Luisa; Khanloo, Negin; Jiu@bellevuewa.gov; Villaveces, Andres; Malakoutian, Mo; Johnson, Thara; King, Emil A.; Nesse, Katherine; Council  
**Subject:** UMBRELLA addition to comprehensive plan

You don't often get email from pigpoppy@rocketmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Members of Bellevue City Planning Commission:

It has just come to my attention that our Planning Staff has proposed a 'last-minute' addition to the Comprehensive Plan. For practical purposes I shall call it THE UMBRELLA ADDITION. It is being propounded by a group calling itself 'Heartland', and for introductory purposes (only), it involves the Newport Hills shopping center.

But, in fact, the advocates have written it to apply to **the entirety of Bellevue!** This last-minute aspect will have the effect of eventually infuriating large swaths of residents who will find that the City is allowing big and tall commercial and apartment buildings close to their homes. With predictable lawsuits brought by white-shoe attorneys, who will wave letters and emails such as this one, sent to the City as warnings to the City that going further with this 'phantom 'upzone' will perhaps open the City up to charges that the City has proceeded in violation of the City's own Vision Statement, it's Mission Statement and the Statement of it's Core Values.

Most importantly, beyond the specter of multiple lawsuits, will be the guaranteed change in our residents' attitude toward ANY dealing with the City. Up until now, our City has enjoyed a ranking as a 'clean', well-managed city, with no favored groups, and no charges of "The Fix Is In". It wouldn't be wise to play with such a rare reputation solely to satisfy a few on our Planning Staff and a couple of property owners. Moreover, 'rolling over' for such a group might have a small, but perceptible effect on Bellevue's desirability as a good location for tech companies, - - and the eventual effect on our tax base.

I'm sorry to have to spread before you all of these negative effects. But please, do vote to eliminate this 'Umbrella' zoning proposal. THANK YOU !!

Tim  
Hay [pigpoppy@rocketmail.com](mailto:pigpoppy@rocketmail.com)

Bellevue homeowner in Tall Firs (Wilburton) since 1964 - - - 60 years



## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** E MAKI <amakien321@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 7:58 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Subject:** Bellevue's Tree Canopy Land Use Code Amendment

You don't often get email from amakien321@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Bellevue Staff and Planning Commission,

I am a resident of Wilburton, Bellevue.

I am writing to express my strong support for preserving the tree canopy and urban forestry in our community, particularly in the residential areas around Goff Creek and the Kelsey Creek basin.

Wilburton had the sharpest canopy decline, equivalent to a loss of 18 acres, according to the Determination of Non-Significance for the City of Bellevue's Tree Canopy Land Use Code Amendment proposal.

Tree canopies support the wildlife habitat, including the bald Eagle, great blue heron, red-tailed hawk, coho salmon and other species of local importance. Do we want to lose them?

Please consider to preserve the remaining trees and nature in our area.

Sincerely,

Maki Shibasaki Engen

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** lee white <leewhite3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 9:08 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Subject:** Luca  
**Attachments:** 6.26.24 Planning Commission and Staff LUCA 1.0.docx

You don't often get email from leewhite3@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Please see attached.

Lee White  
Devon Group, LLC  
425-260-1123

Dear Bellevue Staff and Planning Commission,

My name is Lee White, and I am a resident of Wilburton, Bellevue.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input for Bellevue's proposed Tree Canopy Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) for new development on private land in single family residential.

As highlighted in Bellevue's Environmental Stewardship Plan (ESP), our city's tree canopy is a vital environmental asset, and central to the vision of a "City in a Park".

I am writing to express my strong support for preserving the tree canopy and urban forestry in our community, particularly in the residential areas around Goff Creek and the Kelsey Creek basin.

As noted in the following, of four neighborhoods, Wilburton had the sharpest canopy decline, equivalent to a loss of 18 acres. According to the Determination of Non-Significance for the City of Bellevue's Tree Canopy Land Use Code Amendment proposal (File No. 22-128467-AD):

#### "URBAN TREE CANOPY CHANGE BY NEIGHBORHOODS

- Subdividing the results by neighborhood revealed significant canopy loss concentrated in four areas with Wilburton experiencing the sharpest decline, with a 2% decrease in canopy cover over a decade, equating to a loss of 18 acres with no increase in canopy cover.



- Between 2019 and 2021, both Eastgate and Northeast Bellevue lost about 20 acres of canopy.
- During this period, Lake Hills also saw a decline of about 35 acres.
- Eastgate, Northeast Bellevue, and Lake Hills, all three saw an overall net increase from 2011 to 2021.

Given their recent reductions in canopy, it would be prudent to monitor canopy in these neighborhoods.

As noted under the City of Bellevue "Zoning Requirements":

- Trees contribute to Bellevue's visual character and its ecosystem.



- Trees oxygenate the air, provide food and habitat for small animals and microorganisms, and reduce the impacts of storm water runoff.
- Trees enhance the visual appearance of the community, promote better transition between land uses and help protect property values.
- Although trees can be removed and replaced with new plantings, it takes years and decades for young trees to reach maturity and match the benefits of existing trees.

**Recommendation, amend to include:**

- Tree canopy pollution and purifies the air, promoting health and well-being.
- Tree canopy reduces utility bills in the form of treating storm water runoff as well as a shade and cooling temperatures reducing the effects of heat and air pollution.
- Tree canopies are crucial for supporting wildlife.
- Chapter 76.15 RCW: URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT defines tree canopy as the layer of leaves, branches, and stems of trees that cover the ground when viewed from above and can be measured as a percentage of a land area shaded by trees. Preserving tree canopy cover defined as the span of the cover resulting from the top branches of the tree.

**BTV (Bellevue TV on youtube), Talking About Trees**, highlights the importance of preserving Bellevue's tree canopy on public and private properties: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MO8fhKLN0W4&t=16s>

- Rick Bailey, Forest Management Program Supervisor: "When we're talking about the *tree* canopy from a citywide perspective, it's really important to emphasize tree preservation on privately-owned property."
- August Franzen, Environmental Stewardship Americorps Member, discusses the unique value trees bring to Bellevue, making it a special place :  
***" These trees are part of Bellevue. They are what make Bellevue special..."***

...The first thing I want to show you is this young Grand Fir here. It's small trees like this one that will grow up over *the next 60, 80, 200 years* that will make Bellevue's forest healthy and thriving for generations to come. The next thing I want to show you is this ***Western Red Cedar here, these trees are the most important for rain and storm water in our city, more than any other species. They catch the raindrops that fall on them slowing them as they fall to the ground and that slowing is key to reducing erosion, reducing the risk of floods, and reducing your utility bill in the form of treating stormwater, before it ever reaches the planet.*** Our next stop is actually outside of the park because we have many amazing trees in our neighborhoods. ***In our neighborhoods there's an even greater variety of than there are in our parks. Our residents have planted trees from all across the world, like this Atlas Cedar behind me that is from Northern Africa. Trees like these still provide all the same benefits as the ones in our parks, catching stormwater, a place to play.***

Preserving tree canopy cover defines the span of the cover resulting from the top branches of the tree.

As noted, it takes years, 60, 80, 200 years, decades, centuries, for trees to reach the mature size of significant, landmark and heritage trees, with tree canopy covers and closures needed to reap the environmental and health-related benefits. The importance and the value of the cover created below the crown, should also be noted under Bellevue's tree "Zoning Requirements", eliminating air pollution by recycling and oxygenating the air, providing food and habitat for animals and microorganisms, recycling water and reducing the impacts of storm water runoff, etc. and those not noted, providing shade and cooling surrounding temperatures especially important in urban areas, reduce our carbon footprints, saving on electric bills, and providing a habitat for animals and wildlife. Young tree canopy cannot match the canopy cover and offer the benefits of these existing, mature trees. Waiting for generations for trees to mature does not offer current and future residents the benefits of older canopy tree cover if many of these trees are removed and collectively replaced in our neighborhood private properties.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Chapter 76.15 RCW: URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT definition of tree canopy as follows:

- "Tree canopy" means the **layer of leaves, branches, and stems of trees that cover the ground when viewed from above** and that can be measured as a percentage of a land area shaded by trees.
- Urban and community forestland ... includes public and private lands, lands along transportation and utility corridors, and forested watershed lands within populated areas. (4) The relationship between urban and forest management is significant. Urban forests serve as critical habitats for wildlife in urban areas, providing ecosystem services. The forest mitigate the impacts of urbanization on wildlife. (5)

About 90% of the critical areas and their surrounding urban wildlife in Wilburton are in single-family residential properties. Tree canopies support the wildlife habitat, including the bald Eagle, great blue heron, red-tailed hawk, coho salmon and other species of local importance.

1. Include a definition of "Heritage Trees", notable trees that are special due to their height, species, age, canopy spread, and has a caliper measurement of over 32 inches.
2. Create an Urban Forest Management Plan for residential private property, especially in residential urban wildlife, watershed areas, and areas with protected species.
3. Preserve and maintain landmark and heritage trees over development in residential private property urban wildlife areas and requires a permitting process with arborists. This approach will reduce future expenses associated with environmental restoration and infrastructure maintenance.
4. Retain 40% tree canopy cover in each neighborhood, while maintaining the current subarea exceptions. A city's total canopy cover does not consider effects on individual neighborhoods with different characteristics.

**Learn from Past History:**

Those who favored housing options claimed that "Seattle doesn't have anything like a tree crisis, and concern over trees is not excuse..." <https://www.sightline.org/2018/09/06/seattle-trees-development-not-a-tree-apocalypse/>. Between 2016 and 2021, Seattle lost over 255 acres of tree canopy in *five* years. (1)

Seattle's Urban Forestry Commission noted that when the loss of tree canopy happens very quickly, as an event, this has both immediate and long-lasting environmental effects and the quality of life impacts cannot be reversed. Seattle's canopy losses were greatest in parks natural areas (-111acres) and neighborhood residential (-87 acres), and canopy was lost at a greater rate on parcels where development occurred. As a result, Seattle is experiencing more instances of extreme heat, insect and pest outbreaks, droughts and flooding events. This is causing stress for secondary forestry. It was also noted that conifer trees grow slowly and would take time to show as new canopy. (2)

**The need to retain 40% tree canopy cover in each neighborhood:**

The City of Bellevue's Statistically Valid Survey shows the following results show (3):

	Housing costs and attainable home ownership at all income levels was ranked highest for respondents between 30 and 56.
	Both renters and homeowners ranked preserving and enhancing Bellevue's tree canopy as a high priority.

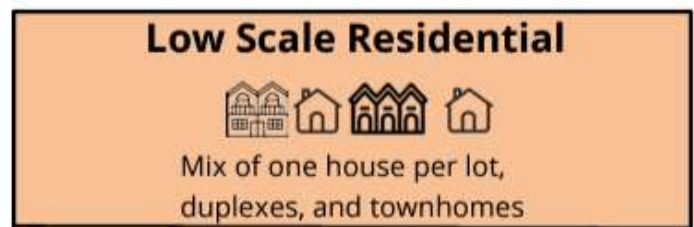
1	Homeownership Opportunities for Different Incomes	<p>Under 30 years old ranked the ability to walk to a meeting place and access to frequent bus service as top priorities.</p> <p>Homeowners prioritized preserving the size and scale of existing suburban neighborhoods.</p> <p>Renters placed a high priority on housing for all income levels.</p> <p>Under 30 years old ranked the ability to walk to a meeting place and access to frequent bus service as top priorities.</p>
2	Preserve and Enhance the Tree Canopy	
3	Ability to Walk to a Meeting Place	
4	More Locally Accessible Businesses	
5	Unique Things to Do	
6	Ability to Drive Places and Easily Find Parking	
7	Preserving the Size & Scale of Existing Suburban Neighborhoods	
8	Housing for All Income Levels	
9	Frequent Bus Service	
10	Housing for Families with Children	

“Housing for Families with Children” ranked #10 in the Statistically Valid Survey. This raises the question: Is Bellevue prioritizing housing development for those without children? Is this Bellevue’s future population?

Additionally, the survey indicated a preference for one house per lot:

### Popularity of Neighborhood Types

Analysis of the survey exercise revealed four neighborhood designs that have high levels of resident preferences.



What stands out in the following low-scale residential photos is that there are no trees on the properties with tree canopies taller than the housing units.



Examples of different types of middle housing. (MAKERS / Washington State Department of Commerce)

Scattered open spaces are insufficient, as the photo above shows hardly any trees on private properties--a feature that renters, homeowners, and people of all ages have ranked as a top preference.

The city of Bellevue can meet its requirements for housing units without having to develop and cut down its most invaluable resource--trees.

Thank you for all of your efforts to support Bellevue's livability and quality of life for its current and future residents.

Sincerely,

Lee White

1. <https://www.seattle.gov/trees/management/canopy-cover#:~:text=The%20City%20of%20Seattle's%20most,down%20from%2028.6%25%20in%202016.>
2. [Next Steps and Additional Analysis of the 2021 Tree Canopy Cover Assessment - Greenspace \(seattle.gov\)](#)
3. [4330066311668c790ba348599e1a54a8\\_Comp\\_Plan\\_Survey\\_Executive\\_Summary.pdf](#)
4. [RCW 76.15.010: Definitions. \(wa.gov\)](#)
5. [https://www.fs.usda.gov/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2023/nrs\\_2023\\_cocroft\\_001.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2023/nrs_2023_cocroft_001.pdf)

## Examples of other cities and their Urban Forestry Programs:

Urban forestry programs of other Washington state cities [MRSC - Urban Forestry](#):

- [Olympia Municipal Code Ch. 16.56](#) — Protects "landmark trees" based on factors such as historical associations, rare or unusual species, or exceptional aesthetic quality.
- [Seattle Tree Protection Code](#) — Limits the number and size of trees and other vegetation that may be removed from properties.
- [Walla Walla Municipal Code Ch. 12.50](#) — Protects "heritage trees" based on factors such as historical associations, rare or unusual species, exceptional aesthetic quality, or large size.
- City of Sammamish – A permit is required to remove a healthy significant tree.

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** MWannamaker WANNAMAKER <mwannamaker@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 4:16 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Subject:** Letter to the Planning Commission  
**Attachments:** CompPlan\_24.06.25\_lttr.docx

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

Sorry if this is a duplicate. I haven't emailed the Planning Commission, recently, & wasn't sure if my old email address to [PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:PlanningCommission@bellevuewa.gov) still worked (it isn't on the webpage).

Please find my letter to the Planning Commission attached.

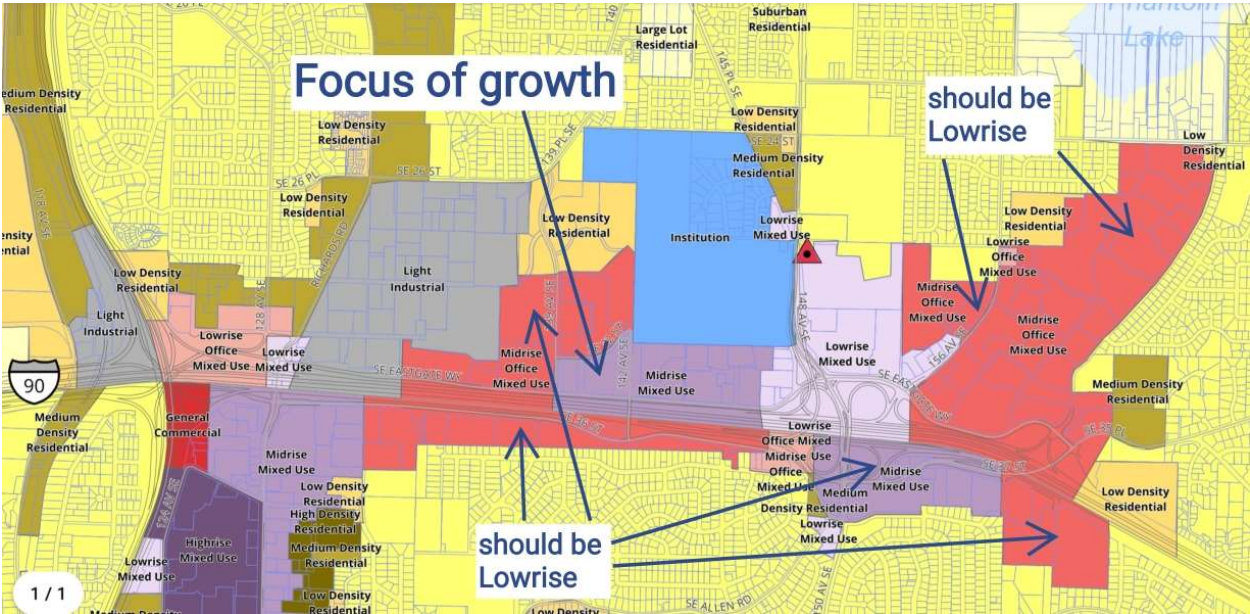
Sincerely,  
Michelle Wannamaker

Chair Bhargava & Commissioners,

The draft Comp. Plan Eastgate Element, which is in Vol 2, includes the work done in the Eastgate/I-90 Land Use & Transp. Project (Eastgate/I-90). I was at all of the meetings in which the land use code was developed, so I can tell you with absolute certainty that the focus of growth in the Eastgate neighborhood was supposed to be what was originally called the EG-TOD. It is the area S. of Bellevue College and next to the transit center, as evidenced in:

“POLICY S-EG-1. Focus Eastgate growth into a mixed use center adjacent to the Eastgate Transit Center with greater height and intensity than the surrounding area.”

So in the Future Land Use map, the business areas of Eastgate should be corrected as shown below in navy blue with a white background:



Also, staff show Policy S-EG-37 as totally removed. Here is what it originally looked like:

POLICY S-EG-37. Designate the 4-acre Saint Andrews Church property and the northern 9.5 acres of the Latter Day Saints Temple property as Single-family Highdensity (SF-H).

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

Those properties are located just to the east of Bellevue College. I think the information in the Policy and especially the Discussion are worth retaining in the Comp. Plan. Why not just correct the land use designation, rather than throw the whole Policy out?

The following pages with corrections are from the Eastgate Subarea in Vol. 2 of the draft Comp Plan:

## Eastgate Subarea Plan

### GOAL:

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

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

### OVERVIEW

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

Convenient access makes the Eastgate Subarea a desirable place to live and work. Jobs, stores, schools, churches, parks, and trails all are within easy walking distance of each other. As one of Bellevue's older areas, the Subarea contains established residential neighborhoods, many with attractive views. Combined, these amenities have greatly enhanced the quality of life for the Subarea's residents and business owners alike. *This was before the Eastgate/I-90 project was approved in 2017 or 2018.*

The Eastgate Subarea encompasses approximately 1,500 acres. ~~Its boundaries are 137th Avenue S.E. to the west, S.E. 23rd Street to the north, 168th Avenue S.E. to the east, and S.E. 41st Street to the south.~~ With the Eastgate annexation in 2012, all of the subarea is within City limits.

The I-90 business corridor covers 10 percent of the subarea and is home to major corporations, high technology industries, and community shopping areas. When combined with the adjacent Factoria commercial core, the area is the third largest employment area in the city. The corridor, which has developed primarily since 1980, owes its success to the area's accessibility to I-90 and its proximity to major urban centers. The Eastgate Plaza Shopping Center, which serves the large residential neighborhoods in and near the Subarea, also is located in this corridor. The area north of the I-90 corridor features large and small parks; a deep, wooded ravine; about 160 acres of publicly-owned land; and numerous public facilities such as churches, government agencies, and Bellevue College. Parks, schools, and churches also are found within the Subarea on both sides of I-90.



Changes I propose for this page:

In a neighborhood built w/ single-car driveways & single-car carports/ garages, this isn't realistic.

**POLICY-S-EG-7.** Explore sub-regional stormwater detention as a future step to provide a more effective approach to stormwater control and mitigation and to achieve broader environmental benefits through coordinated treatment and detention across multiple properties.

## Residential Development

### POLICIES

~~**POLICY S-EG-8.** Maintain single-family housing as the predominant residential land use in the Subarea in land area and appearance.~~

~~**POLICY S-EG-9.** Limit multifamily zoning to locations accessible directly from arterials, as depicted on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-EG-1).~~

~~**POLICY S-EG-10.** Multifamily housing may be appropriate to separate office and retail land uses from single-family neighborhoods or as a part of mixed-use developments where there is close proximity to transit or neighborhood-serving commercial uses, with a special emphasis on meeting the housing needs of Bellevue College.~~

**POLICY S-EG-11.** Encourage more opportunities for affordable housing in the Subarea by maintaining and rehabilitating existing housing stock, including discouraging development of modest ramblers into McMansions.

## Transportation and Circulation

### POLICIES

**POLICY S-EG-12.** Discourage ~~multifamily zoning and~~ commercial traffic from passing through local streets in single-family neighborhoods.

**POLICY S-EG-13.** Consider allowing a reduction in parking requirements where it is possible to do so because of proximity to transit.

**POLICY S-EG-14.** Improve safety, convenience, and access by ensuring that internal circulation systems are integrated with the street system to improve multi-modal mobility within and between developments.

**POLICY S-EG-15.** Collaborate with the Washington State Department of Transportation to relieve congestion created by vehicles entering and exiting Interstate 90.

**POLICY-S-EG-16.** Develop the Mountains to Sound Greenway trail through the subarea to provide pleasant, safe, non-motorized facilities that provide local and regional connections.



Eastgate’s residential neighborhood is very traditional and while the new business growth may be urban, these policies apply to the WHOLE neighborhood. Therefore, I think it would be best to just cut out the word “urban.”

*Discussion: the Mountains to Sound Greenway trail connects the Puget Sound with central Washington along 100 miles of I-90. Within Bellevue, there is a 3 mile gap through the Eastgate area from Factoria to Bellevue city limits. Closing this gap will provide a transportation and recreation resource that will benefit Eastgate residents, visitors, and businesses.*

**POLICY S-EG-17.** Improve connectivity within the subarea for pedestrians and bicycles where opportunities exist by integrating land uses, improving roadway safety for all modes of travel, and linking commercial, office, parks, and public spaces with trails and pathways.

**POLICY S-EG-18.** Encourage improvement of transit facilities and service to and from key points in the Eastgate Subarea.

*Discussion: 142nd Place SE should be established as a frequent transit network corridor that reinforces the Transit Oriented Development Area, enhances bus service connections to Bellevue College, and is designed to serve as a gateway feature for the area. In addition, it may be possible to serve more parts of the Subarea, and to serve the Subarea more efficiently, by working with partner agencies and organizations.*

## Community Design

### POLICIES

**POLICY S-EG-19.** Reinforce the area’s location on the Mountains to Sound Greenway, accentuate Eastgate as a major entry into Bellevue, and emphasize the emerging urban character of the Eastgate I-90 corridor through the application of land use regulations, public amenity incentives, and design guidelines.

**POLICY S-EG-20.** Provide graceful edges and transitions between more intense development and existing residential land uses by maximizing the use of existing vegetation and topography to buffer and maintain compatibility between different land uses through land use regulations.

**POLICY S-EG-21.** Consider design review for commercial, office, and mixed use development that promotes pedestrian-friendly design, ensures quality and a sense of permanence, promotes environmental sustainability and creates a distinct identity.

**POLICY S-EG-22.** Preserve the view amenities of adjacent single-family neighborhoods as development and redevelopment occurs.

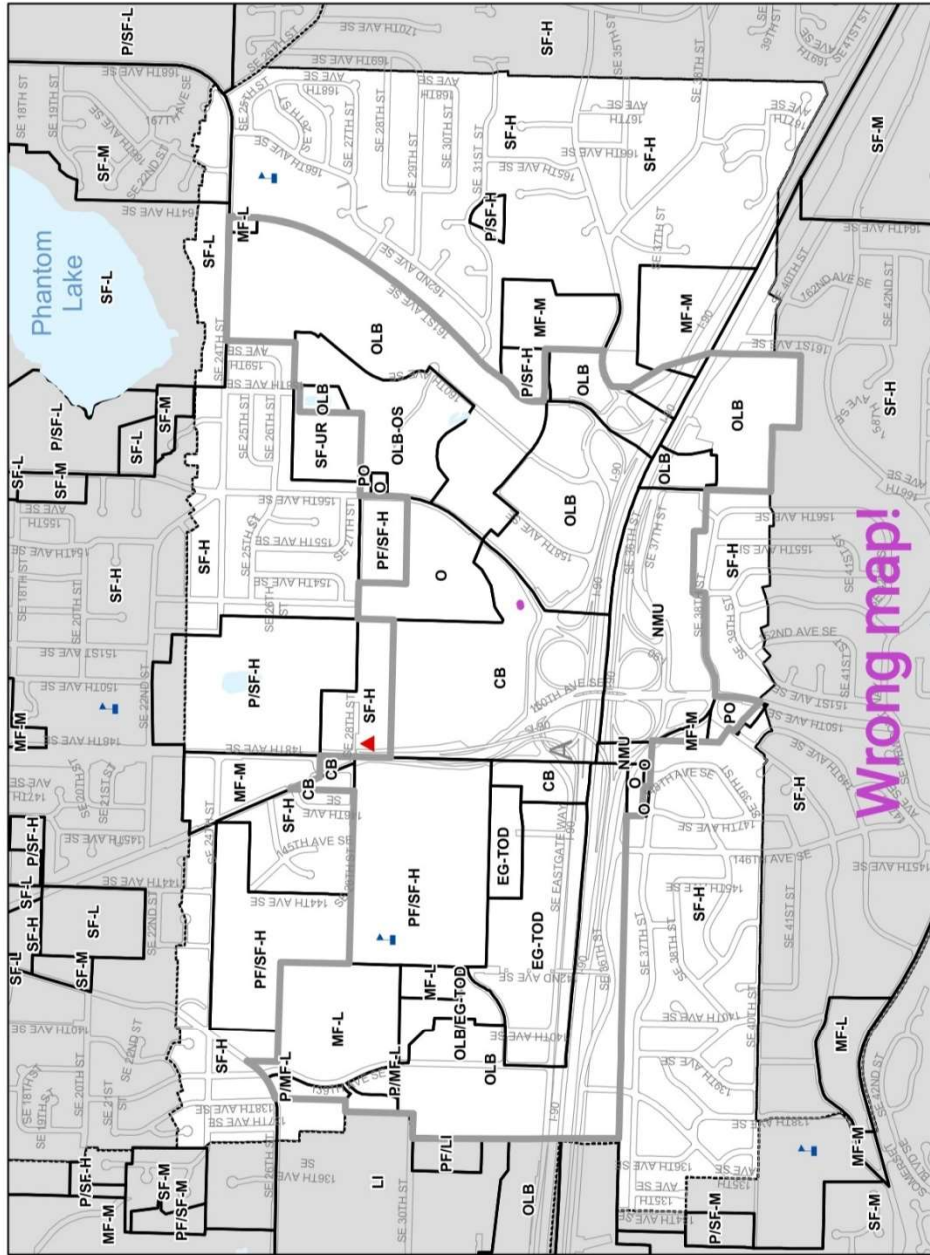
**POLICY S-EG-23.** Discourage new development from blocking existing views from public spaces.



The map in the draft Vol. 2 of the Comp Plan, Eastgate Subarea is wrong. It is the map that existed PRIOR to the completion & adoption of the Eastgate/I-90 project in 2017 or 2018.

No, this map was replaced with the one in the EXISTING (2015) Neighborhood Element when the Eastgate/I-90 project was completed.

No, that map doesn't have neighborhoods or subareas identified.



Eastgate Land Use Plan



- |                       |                              |  |                               |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| SF Single Family      | PO Professional Office       | GC General Commercial                                    | ▲ Fire Stations               |
| MF Multi Family       | O Office                     | LI Light Industrial                                      | ■ Public Schools              |
| -L Low Density        | OLB Office, Limited Business | PF Public Facility                                       | ▬ Planning Districts          |
| -M Medium Density     | OLB-OS Office, Open Space    | P Park   | ▬ Bellevue City Limits (2015) |
| -H High Density       | NB Neighborhood Business     | NMU Neighborhood Mixed Use                               | ■ Lakes                       |
| -UR Urban Residential | CB Community Business        | EG-TOD Eastgate-Transit Oriented Development             | ▬ Outside of Bellevue         |
|                       |                              | OLB/EG-TOD OLB and Eastgate-Transit Oriented Development |                               |

**Figure S-EG-1. Proposed to be removed and instead reference the Future Land Use Map in Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan.**

Eastgate Subarea Plan

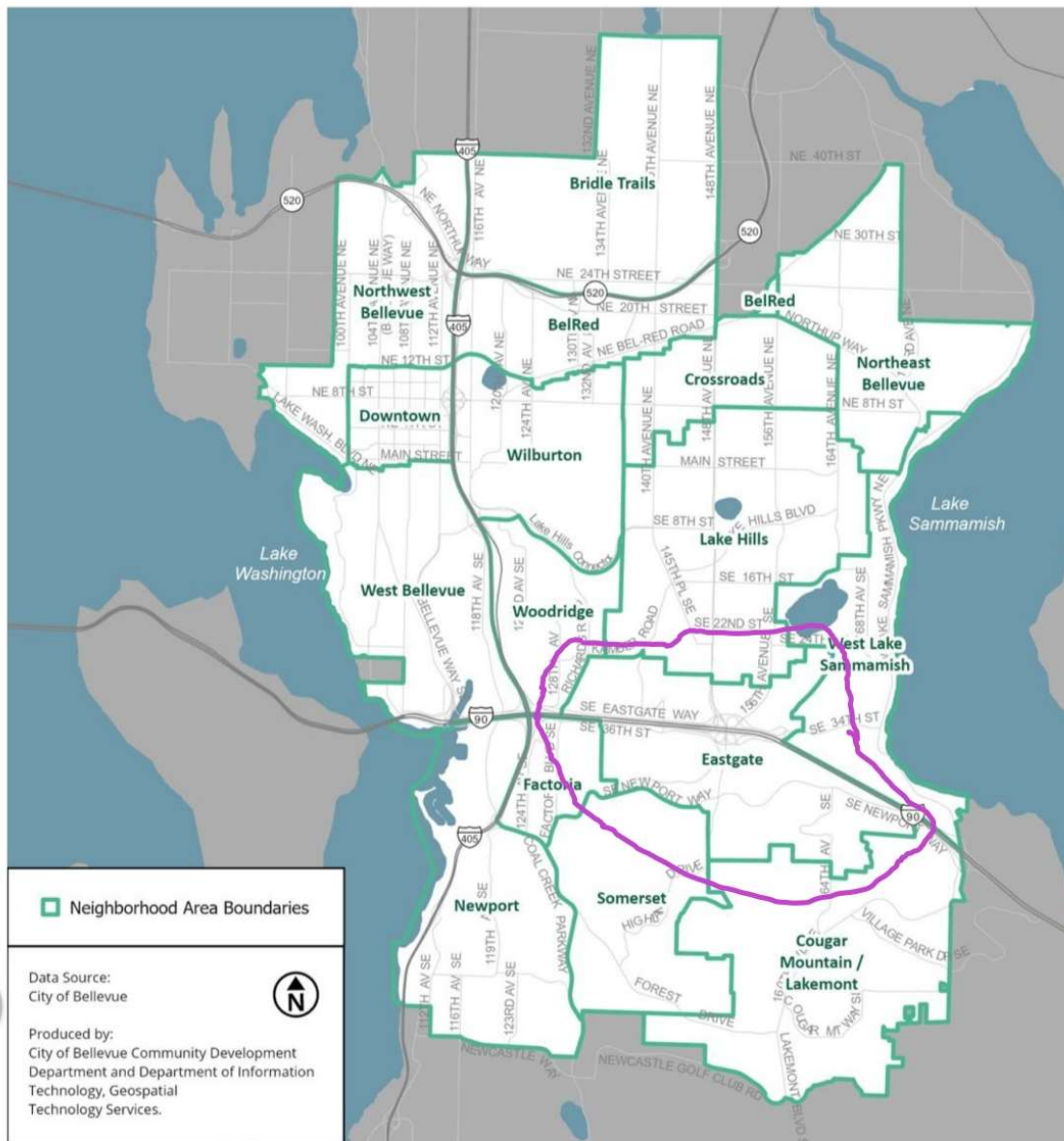
Page 131

The above map of Eastgate was replaced with the map in the EXISTING Neighborhoods Element (which is also the same as what is in the **draft** Comp. Plan’s Neighborhoods Element) when the Eastgate/I-90 project was adopted. Here is the CORRECT map of Eastgate (I have circled Eastgate in Magenta):

DRAFT - June 6, 2024

### Map NH-1. Neighborhood Area Boundaries

Neighborhood Areas are used for planning and project administration. The Subarea Plan boundaries are updated to align with these boundaries as the plans are updated.



June 26, 2024

Finally, I'd like to voice my strong objection to the proposed Umbrella zoning designations with similar development styles concept of re-zoning a property as opposed to the CPA process. Yes, it would mean less work for you & for the developer, but it would leave out the opportunity for the City & the applicant to hear from other voices. Other voices who may have some critical information or know of some negative impacts that haven't been disclosed. Some of us keep up with the Weekly Permit Bulletins, others check out the City's website, but many, many other residents only hear about the requested re-zone when the required sign is posted on the property. And just because a person lives in Bellevue, doesn't mean they can afford the lawyer that would be required to object to an umbrella re-zone.

Currently, the city staff, our elected City Council, & the boards & commissions all have a say in the decision-making. I have been in attendance when the Planning Commission has denied a CPA. As you already know, you play a very important & powerful role in this decision-making. We, the residents, trust you to speak for us. So please don't cut yourselves out of the process, either. As you know so well, government isn't fast. But it isn't supposed to be, either.

Thank you for all the time, energy, & sacrifices you have made in order work on this draft Comprehensive Plan!

Sincerely,

Michelle Wannamaker  
4045 149<sup>th</sup> Ave SE  
Bellevue, WA 98006

## Nesse, Katherine

---

**From:** phyllisjwhite <phyllisjwhite@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 3:14 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** King, Emil A.; Johnson, Thara; Nesse, Katherine; Shull, Janet; Council  
**Subject:** Fwd: Wilburton Housing Survey Results of  
**Attachments:** Wilburton Housing Poll for Council.pdf

You don't often get email from phyllisjwhite@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Please add this to your records for the Comp Plan public Comments

Dear Planning Commission and Staff,

Thank you for all of your hard work and efforts. We are grateful to have you in our community.

My name is Phyllis White and I am a resident of Wilburton.

Over a year ago, I emailed results of a neighborhood poll that we distributed to our Wilburton neighbors.

The results of our poll differed greatly from the city's poll. The area of the Wilburton neighborhood that we live in has many trees with the majority of trees, decades and over a century old. The trees provide habitats for an abundance of different species of birds and wildlife, especially in the areas surrounding Wilburton's subbasin streams in our neighborhood. In addition, there are aquatic animals, including beavers and fish. The Goff stream has been known to carry Cutthroat trout, Chinook, Coho, and Sockeye salmon, and the Kelsey Creek Watershed running through is also known to carry various types of salmon. The Kelsey Creek subbasin near our home is often murky, sometimes foamy, and we no longer see fish as we used to.

I am resubmitting our poll's findings to current and new Commission members. The results provide a greater understanding about how Wilburton residents love to live in the parts of Wilburton with urban forestry and wildlife. It is unlike other parts of the city that are built out. In addition, this area is one of the few urban forests found in cities similar to Bellevue.

Trees and wildlife have profound impacts on our community and residents' well-being. They are invaluable and irreplaceable. Once chopped down, we will not be able to enjoy them and the wildlife habitat again in our lifetime, and neither will future generations.

Bellevue should build out the growth corridors and have gentle growth on the outskirts as the Wilburton CAC recommended. Apartment sized DADUs and middle housing will require the loss of our trees and urban wildlife.

Please consider adding tree code LUCA requirements to protect urban wildlife and consider resident input.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Phyllis White  
Bellevue resident

Sent from my Galaxy

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

From: **phyllisjwhite** <[phyllisjwhite@comcast.net](mailto:phyllisjwhite@comcast.net)>

Date: Mon, Jan 30, 2023, 10:24 AM

Subject: Wilburton Housing Survey Results

To: [@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:@bellevuewa.gov)

Cc: [bmiyake@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:bmiyake@bellevuewa.gov) <[bmiyake@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:bmiyake@bellevuewa.gov)>, [tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov) <[tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov)>

VIA EMAIL on record

Wilburton Background Information (Bellevuewa.gov)

**Population: 4,566**

**Percentage of City: 3 percent**

**Under 18: 934 (20 percent of the area)**

**Housing Units: 1,948**

“Bellevue’s historic Wilburton neighborhood is an enclave of single-family and multifamily housing known for its rich history and its parks and wooded areas with close proximity to downtown Bellevue. Wilburton is also surrounded by major parks, including the acclaimed Bellevue Botanical Gardens and the 160-acre Kelsey Creek Park. Wilburton provides a strong community and a place to call home near the heart of Bellevue, but with the quiet of a residential neighborhood.

The Wilburton neighborhood area reflects Bellevue’s past and its future. With the historic Wilburton Trestle on the south, it promises to be a key landmark for the development of the north-south East rail walking and biking corridor. Wilburton’s business district will provide the destination for the Grand Connection linking to the pedestrian corridor across I-405, through downtown to Meydenbauer Bay. The Wilburton light rail station on NE 8th will provide easy access around the region.”

Dear Councilmembers,

Mayor Lynne Robinson  
Deputy Mayor Jared Nieuwenhuis  
Councilmember Jeremy Barksdale  
Councilmember Conrad Lee  
Councilmember Jennifer Robertson  
Councilmember John Stokes  
Councilmember Janice Zahn

Dear Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis, Liaison to the Planning Commission and Councilmember Jennifer Robertson, and Councilmembers Jeremy Barksdale, Conrad Lee, John Stokes, and Janice Zahn,

My name is Phyllis White, and I live at 1057 134th Ave NE, Bellevue. I am speaking today on behalf of the residents in our Wilburton subarea, the area in between Bel-Red Road and NE 8th Street, as well as other Bellevue residents.

Bellevue is a community of unique and diverse neighborhoods, each with its characters and differing qualities, including Wilburton and its differing subareas. The Wilburton subarea between Bel-Red and NE 8th Street has streams with fish, beavers, and wildlife in the foliage and trees. The wildlife includes beavers, blue herons, hawks, bald eagles, deer, opossums, coyotes, owls, bats, many different species of birds, and other types of animals. The trees provide shade, cooling, and fresh air that our neighborhood and animals enjoy. Many trees are very old, some over 100 years.

By 2030, the 900-acre Bel-Red corridor development is expected to generate 10,000 new jobs and 5,000 housing units. Currently, the number of housing units for construction is 2,514 and 6,433 office and business parking. The Bel-Red corridor already has some recent development of condominiums and apartments along the Wilburton side of Bel-Red Road. Sound Transit light-rail line is being built to run between 12- to 15-story office buildings and apartments.

The Spring District is next to the Bel-Red corridor and would include another 800 multifamily housing units. To the south is another development, the Wilburton West Edge.

As you can see, our Wilburton subarea is experiencing tremendous growth. While we are not opposed to growth and affordable housing, we hope the growth is buffered to protect our neighborhood's safety and preserves the environment that makes us unique and a quality we love.

Also, the specific guiding principles of the Wilburton Vision Implementation Plan include the following:

- Protecting residential neighborhoods from increased commercial development and traffic
- Enhancing existing retail areas
- Establishing clear boundaries between differing land uses

And

- Protecting open spaces.



These guiding principles are in line with the Wilburton CAC's recommendations for transitional buffering and protection of the single-family zones east of the Wilburton West Edge and South of Bel-Red.

In order to gauge how our neighborhood feels about the future growth affecting our neighborhood, a group of us created a survey and distributed it to single residential homes on 130th, 132nd, and 134th St. We went door to door and handed out a total of **79** surveys. We also emailed a few to Wilburton neighbors and residents. Within one week, we received **63** responses. The majority responded within three days.

Some of our survey results are listed below:

- Over 97% feel that increasing density with a variety of middle housing options would have a negative impact on the quality of life in our neighborhood.
- 92% feel preserving the environment outweighs the benefits of increasing housing density in light of the surrounding housing and business growth.
- When single-family housing was not an option, 73% favored one ADUs or DADUs, 13% favored 2 maximum housing units, 12% favored only single-family homes, 1% favored a maximum of 3-4 housing units, and (80%) also voted for owner occupancy when renting ADUs and DADUs. Safety was a major concern.
- 86% voted to have Council maintain authority for the decision-making for our city.
- About 75% feel Council Members need to vote in a manner reflective of the community when addressing affordable housing needs and public safety. Only 15% feel Council Members are listening to residents.
- Public comments included public safety issues and crime

We request you consider the following when addressing middle housing needs for our residential subarea:

- Neighborhoods have subareas that differ in character, density, landscape, and environment. A one-size-fits-all approach does not consider the residents' quality of life in the affected neighborhoods.
- Limit the typology of densities to ADUs and DADUs, as we are already affected by the substantial growth of the BelRed corridor and the light rail.
- Mitigate the impact of the surrounding growth and traffic. Limit the number of housing units to 1-2 maximum.

**Attached is the Wilburton Housing Poll Introduction (The survey was in a pdf form when it was distributed to residents.), and the Wilburton Housing Poll Results.**

We feel it is important to consider Wilburton residents and other residents who are impacted by the growth, those who invested years of their lives in their neighborhoods and the city. These changes will affect our quality of life and our environment. Those who do not live in our subarea do not know our history and the unique qualities in our neighborhood we so enjoy.

Unfortunately, we couldn't distribute the survey to other parts of Wilburton; however, we believe it's crucial to gather insights from residents who have invested in their community, bought homes, given

their energy and time, and made Wilburton their home. Wilburton is a friendly community with diverse cultures and age groups. We hope to preserve the character, quality, and environment we cherish as we face the growth surrounding our neighborhood. You will soon hear from some other Wilburton residents who share similar views.

Thank you for all of your efforts, your time and your attention. We appreciate all of your hard work and what you do for our city.

Best regards,

Phyllis White

VIA EMAIL on record

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Thank you for all of your efforts, your time and your attention. We appreciate all of your hard work and what you do for our city.

Best regards,

Phyllis White

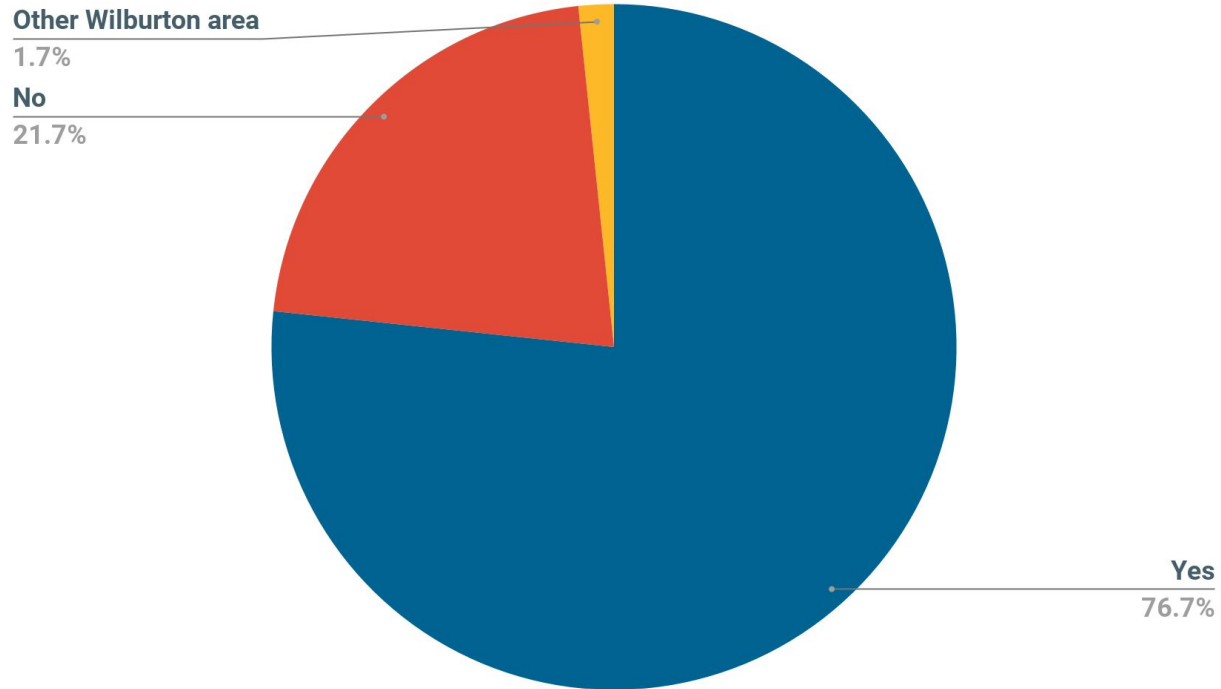




# Wilburton Housing Poll

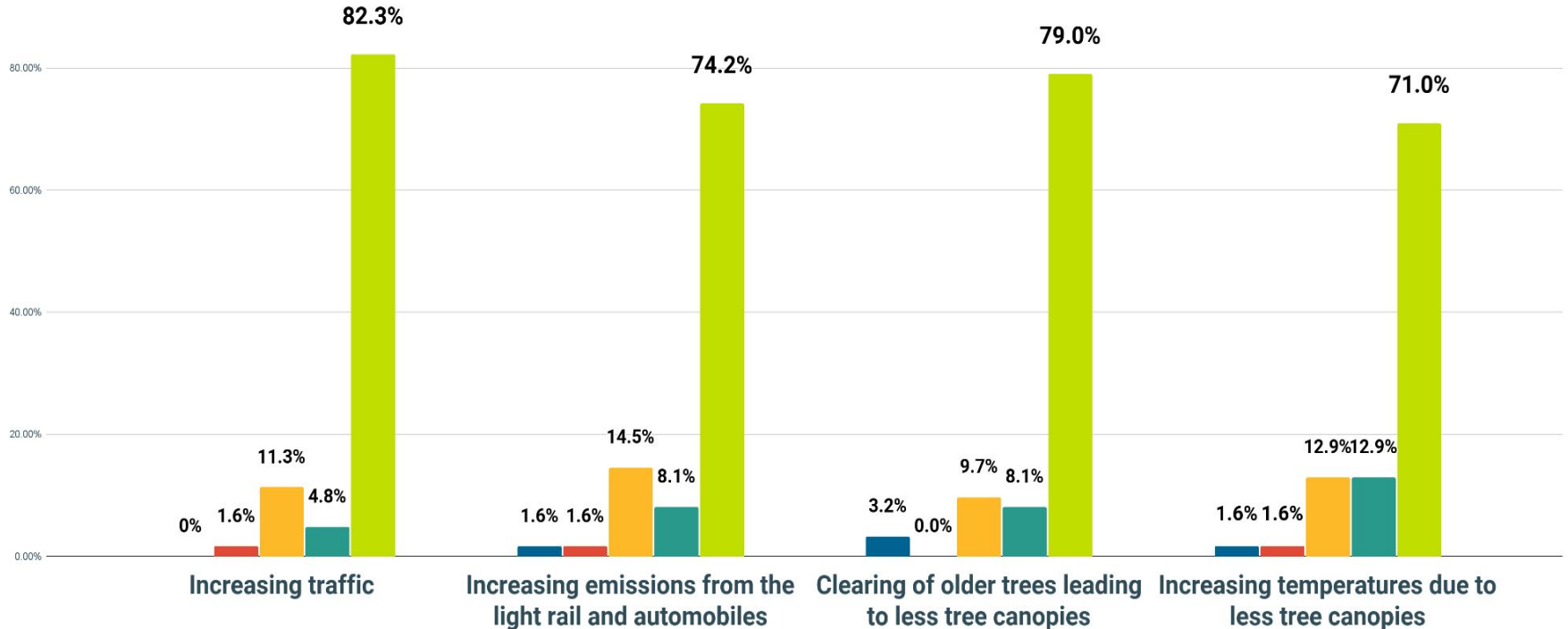
Survey on Increasing Housing Density  
and its Impacts

**Question:** Do you currently reside in the Wilburton Subarea in a single-family residential home between BelRed and NE 8th Street?



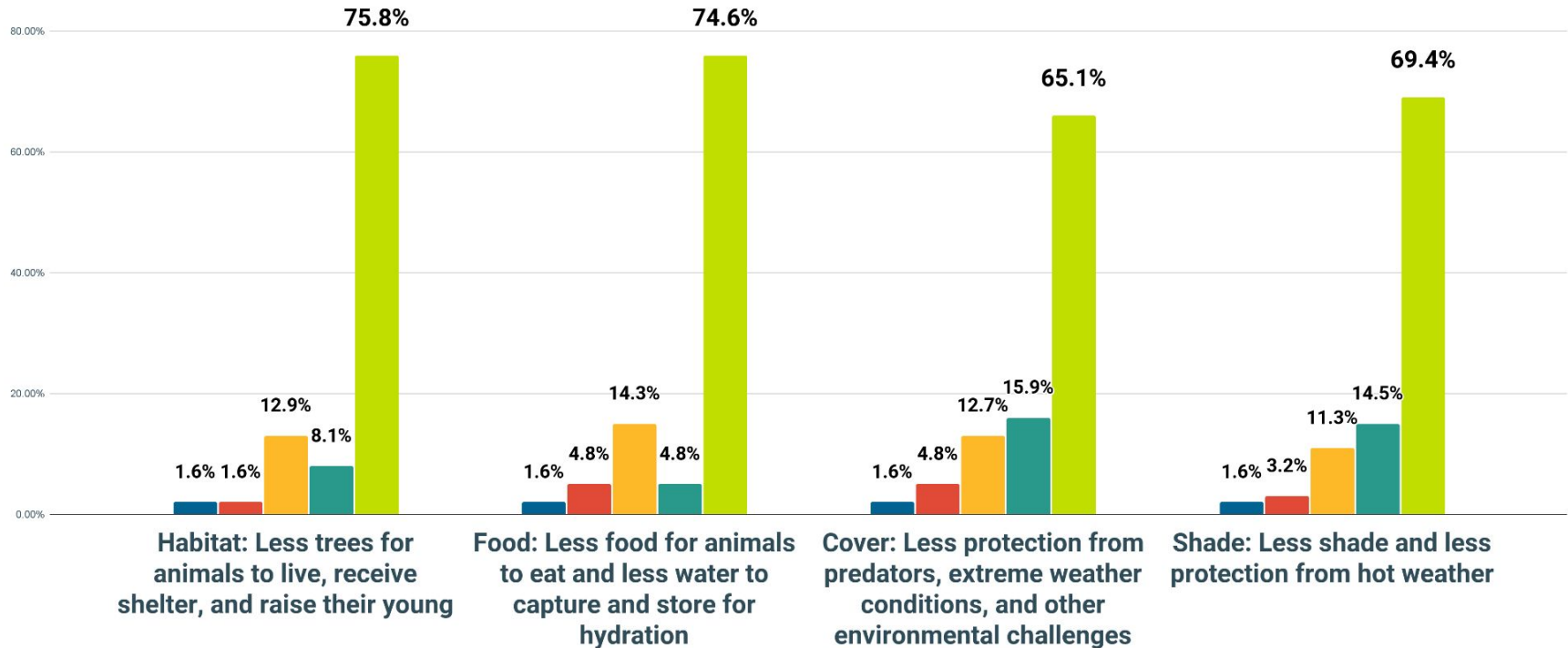
Please rate on a scale of one to five, where 5 means very concerned and 1 means not at all concerned, how concerned are you about **increasing housing density and the impact it will have on the following:**

■ 1 (Not at all concerned) ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 (Very concerned)



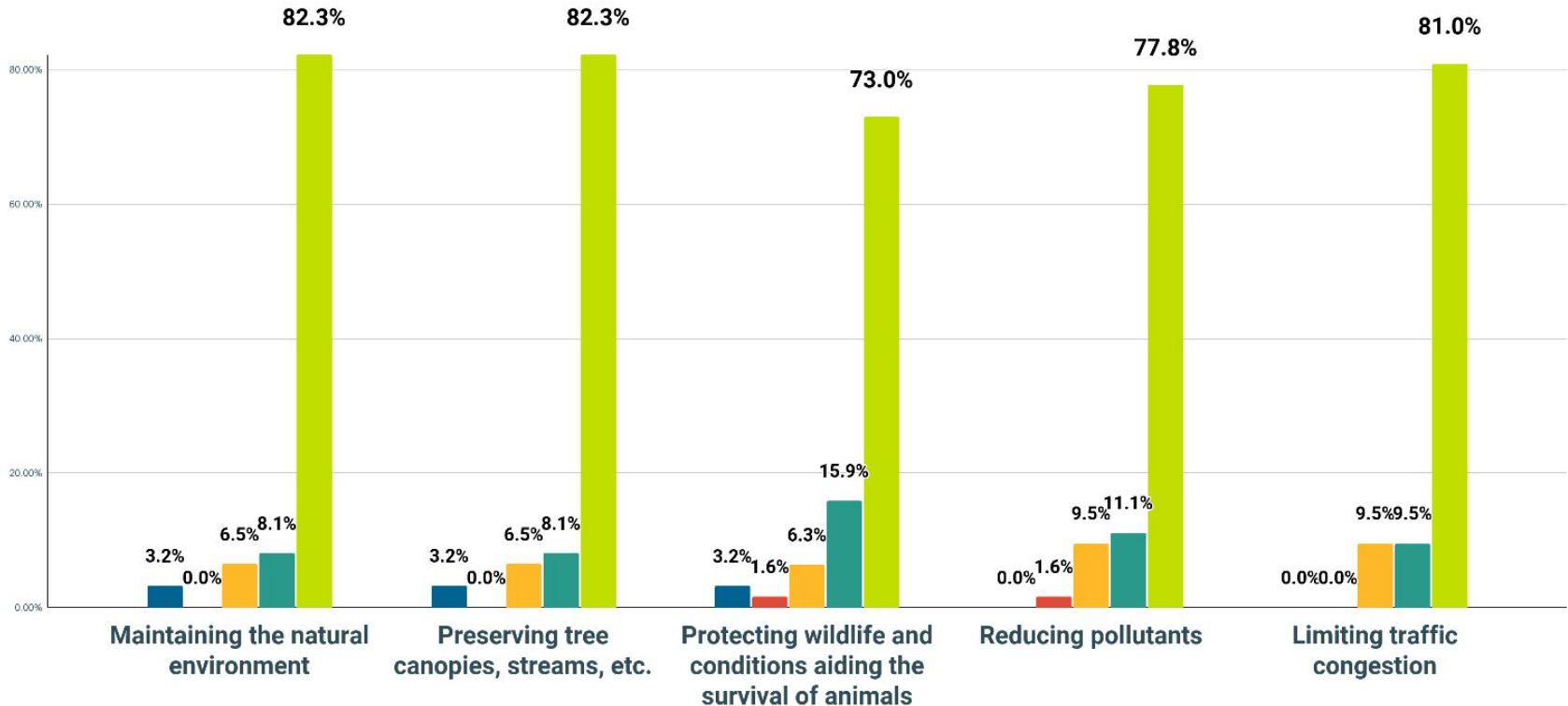
Please rate on a scale of one to five, where 5 means very concerned and 1 means not at all concerned, how concerned are you about **increasing housing density and the impact it will have on the following *wildlife survival challenges***:

■ 1 (Not at all concerned) ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 (Very concerned)

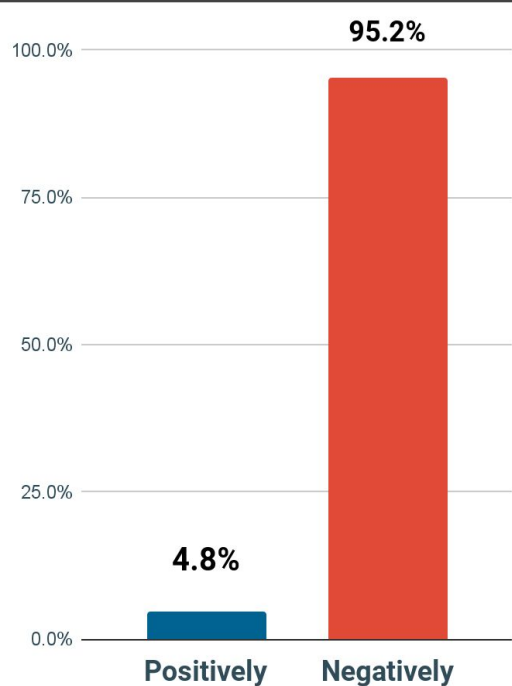


Please rate on a scale of one to five, where 5 means very concerned and 1 means not at all concerned, how concerned are you about **increasing housing density and the impact it will have on the following:**

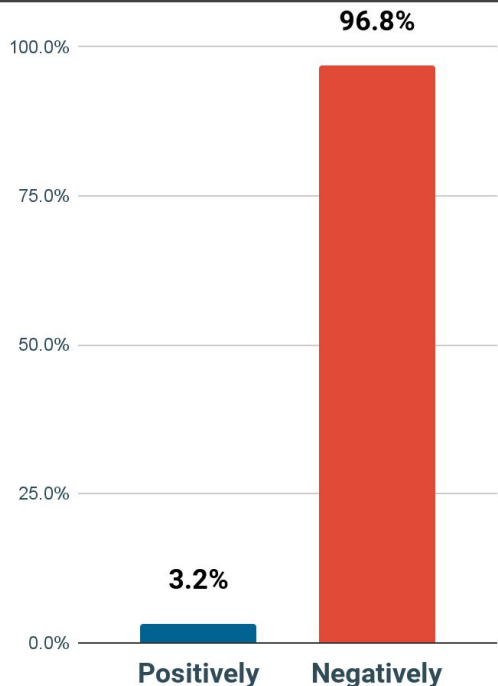
■ 1 (Not at all important) ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 (Very important)



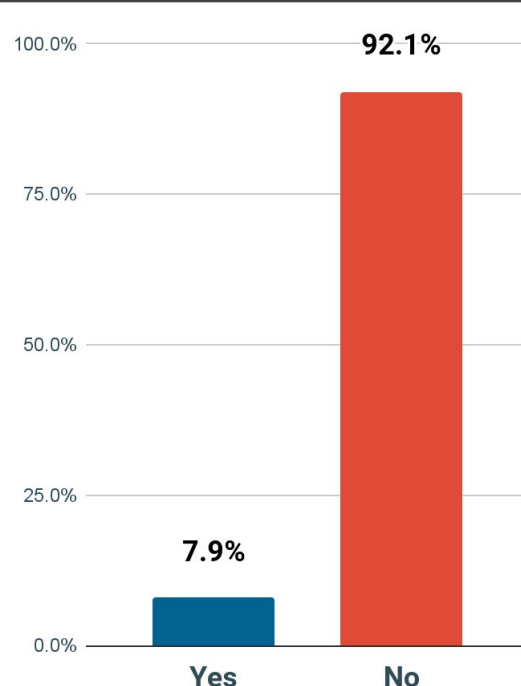
**Question:** Do you think increasing housing density and middle housing options would positively or negatively impact the *animal habitat, streams, and trees in our neighborhood?*



**Question:** Do you think increasing housing density and middle housing options would positively or negatively impact the *quality of life that you enjoy in your neighborhood?*

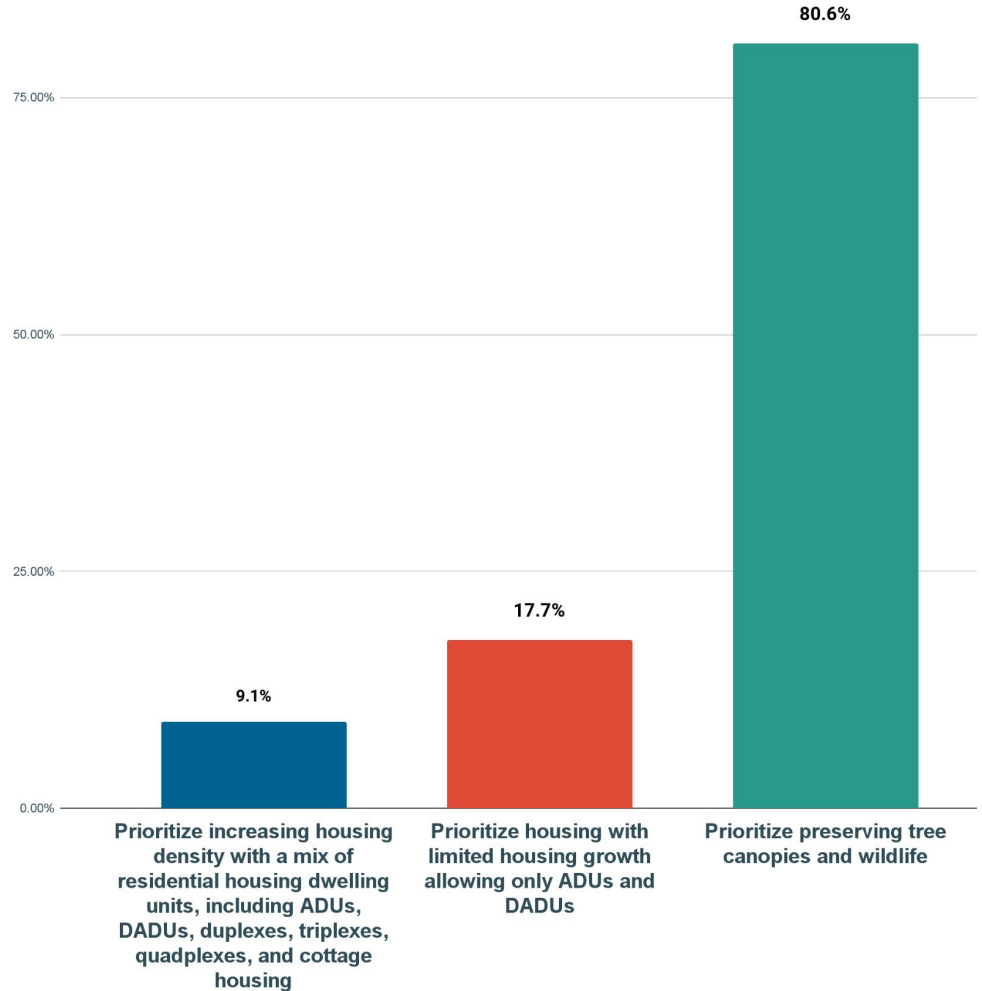


**Question:** Do you think the benefits of increasing housing density and middle housing options *outweigh the potential impacts on the environment?*

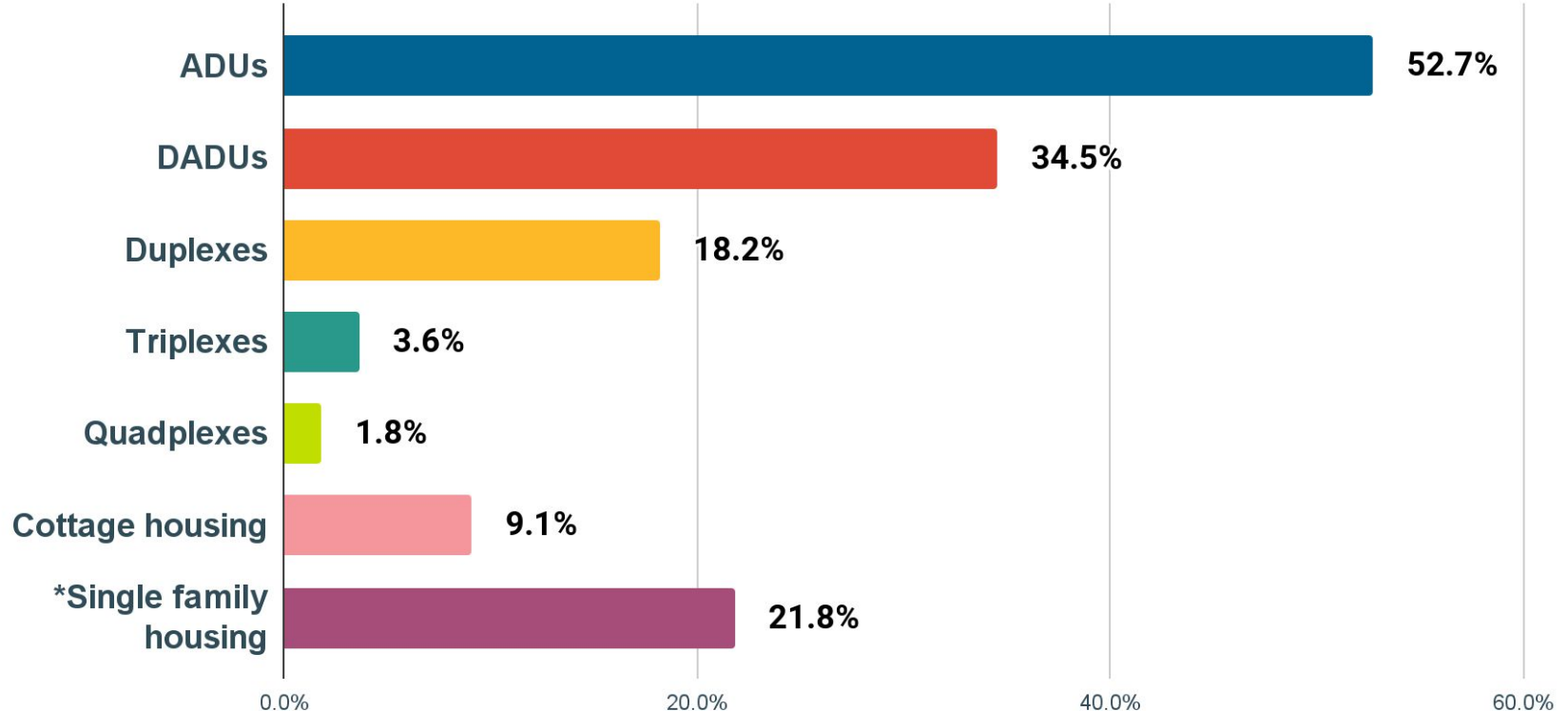


## Question:

If given the choice, would you prefer the Wilburton Subarea to **prioritize preserving the streams, tree canopies and the wildlife that depend on them or increasing housing density?**



**Question:** Which of the following middle housing options do you think would be most appropriate for the Wilburton Subarea? Please check all that apply.



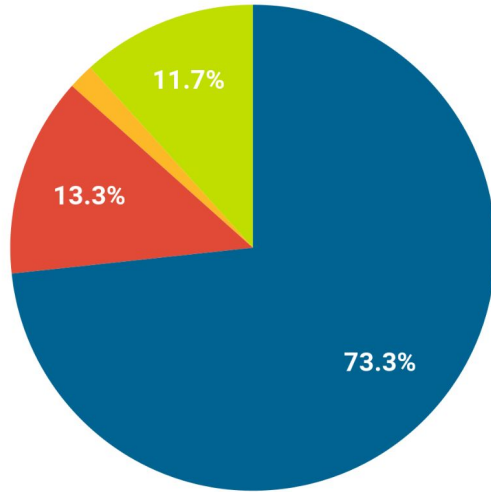
\*Write-in answer



**Question:** What should the maximum number of units be for ADUs and DADUs?

- A maximum of 1 housing unit
- A maximum of 2 housing units
- A maximum of 3-4 housing units
- \*No ADUS or DADUS

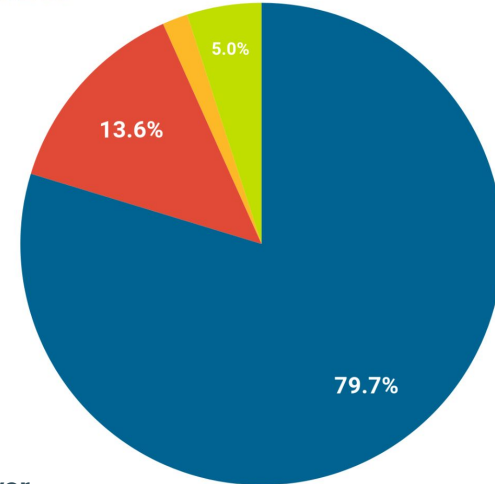
Note: "A maximum of 6 housing units" received 0 votes.



\*Write-in answer

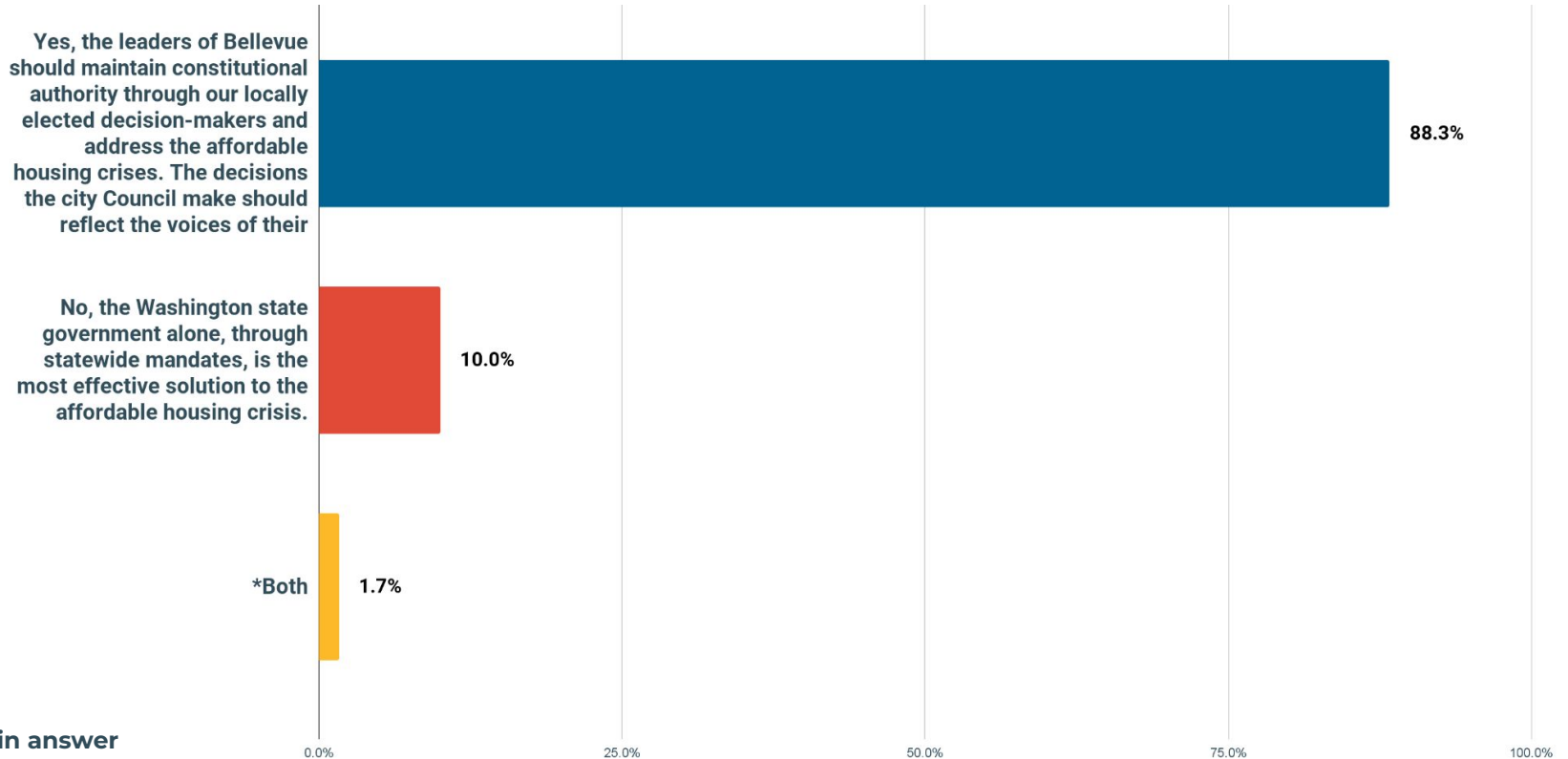
**Question:** Should the owner of the ADU or DADU occupy the main home?

- Yes
- No
- \*Optional
- \*No ADUs or DADUs



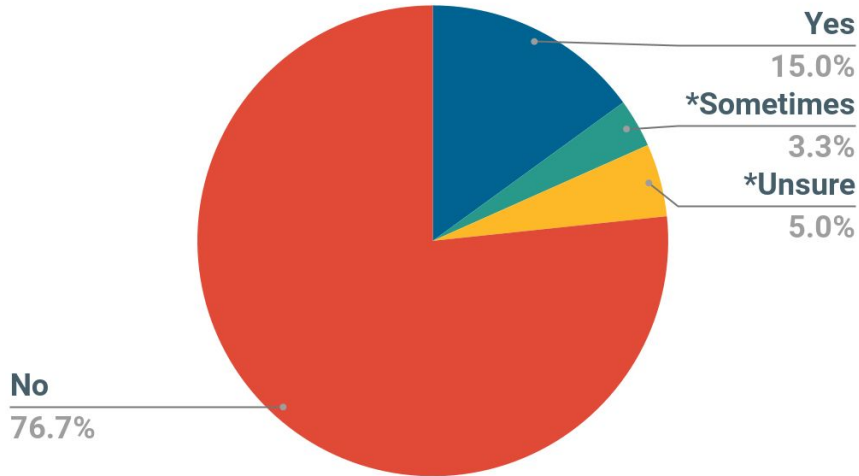
\*Write-in answer

**Question:** Do you believe the city of Bellevue should maintain constitutional authority through our locally elected decision-makers, our City Council?



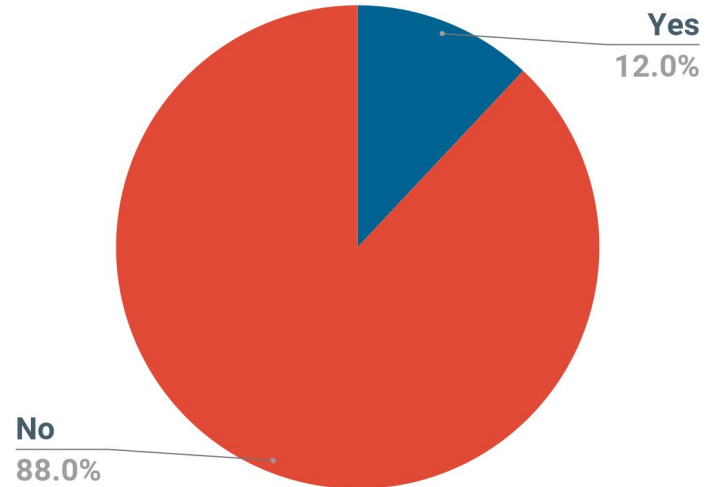
\*Write-in answer

**Question:** Do you feel our elected City Council Members are reflecting the voices of the community to address affordable housing needs?



\*Write-in answer

**Question:** Do you believe increasing new taxes and bigger statewide government mandates alone will improve the community and resolve the affordable housing crises?



# Additional comments from participants:

- “There will be enormous future development surrounding Wilburton on two sides, the BelRed development and the Wilburton Commercial development, which will bring at least 5,000 housing units in the BelRed alone. This is more than the total number of housing units in the Wilburton subarea.

The GUIDING PRINCIPLES Bellevue City Council included ensuring the sensitivity to potential adverse impacts of change on nearby residential neighborhoods and providing for a graceful transition between new development and established neighborhoods.

Moreover, the economic outlook is changing. Employers are downsizing, schools have decreased enrollment, and there is increasing remote employment.

Lastly, there is no data supporting that increasing the density of single-family lots will bring affordable housing.

Residents have worked so hard to create a residential area they enjoy”

- “Listen to the voice of community”

- “Very concern about Bellevue leaders only focus on one thing of affordable housing but ignore more issues it will bring along. Like natural habitat, tragic, safety, school teacher and student ratio”

- “This really negativity impact us, I strongly disagree with this. Our voice need and should be heard”

# Additional comments from participants:

- “The city will be over built and congested. What we have enjoyed as residence of this area will be lost and disappear forever. They have already cut down so many trees to build the light rail. No more. There are plenty of land outside of Bellevue that can be used to build affordable housing. Why do we need to subject our children and our family to all of this unnecessary negative changes. It does not make the area more desirable. We don't have the infrastructure to support the additional traffic and people.

The city council is making Bellevue one ugly city with skyscrapers and concrete jungle. The residence will be subsidizing this and we didn't ask for it. Please reconsider the expansion and rezoning. Thank you for your consideration”

- “Please keep what it is alike today -- there are a lot of traffic already in this area with more house and apartments developed on bel-red in the recent years. Every year, new buildings are coming out, more trees are removed and more animals [sic] loose their home.”

- “This is ludacris that it's even suggested to bring housing plans in next to real estate worth a million- the cost of wealth inequality and externalities would be footed by us residents.”

- “We need to protect the community and the [sic] natur, we need to keep the safety of the community as top priority”

- “Wilburton is a great place to live. Please keep it that way. No [sic] rezonong”

- “Concerns and questions about potential safety impact, crime rate increases esp. for families with young children”

# Additional comments from participants:

- “While there always has been a need to be a team player with King County, the Bellevue City Council used to prioritize Bellevue residents until the last few years. Bellevue seems to be funding the lion's share of KC projects on the eastside. Bellevue is set to house the most challenging group of KC (Seattle) homeless population, single men, most of whom are NOT Bellevue or even KC residents. Eighty percent of these men are addicted to hard drugs and/or are unmedicated mentally ill and NONE are required to maintain treatment. Light rail will not be fully functional for a few years. Bellevue has one of the highest sales, property and other taxes which fund KC. Yet, we are always pressed to do MORE when we have already committed to many projects which will cause predictable increases in crime and traffic before we know the full consequences of such projects. I believe that we should wait higher density projects in residential areas until the aforementioned consequences become known and addressed. Downtown Wilburton should have increased density, not the residential neighborhoods. Whatever is decided in Wilburton will become a template for all of Bellevue residents. Councilmembers are elected to advocate for and represent our well being and quality of life, which should be their main concern if they truly represent us as they promised when campaigning.”
- “Crime rate and homeless camps”
- “Bad people. Roaming folks need to be kept from kids in the neighborhood. Seriously.”
- “Again, there are many areas outside of the Wilburton area that currently supports a great number of wildlife species. Cottage housing and multiple housing units should be built where it is reasonable to assume the wildlife habitat will not be erased.”
- “Bel Red should be mixed use”

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** phyllisjwhite <phyllisjwhite@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 3:34 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** King, Emil A.; Johnson, Thara; Nesse, Katherine; Shull, Janet  
**Attachments:** 6.26.24 Planning Commission and Staff LUCA.docx

You don't often get email from phyllisjwhite@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Please add this to the Comp Plan records.

Dear Planning Commission and Planning Staff,

My name is Phyllis White and I am a resident of Wilburton.

I am writing to share my public comments for the Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you for your work to make Bellevue a great place to live.

Best wishes,

Phyllis White

Sent from my Galaxy

Dear Bellevue Staff and Planning Commission,

My name is Phyllis White, and I am a resident of Wilburton, Bellevue.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input for Bellevue's proposed Tree Canopy Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) for new development on private land in single family residential.

As highlighted in Bellevue's Environmental Stewardship Plan (ESP), our city's tree canopy is a vital environmental asset, and central to the vision of a "City in a Park".

I am writing to express my strong support for preserving the tree canopy and urban forestry in our community, particularly in the residential areas around Goff Creek and the Kelsey Creek basin.

As noted in the following, of four neighborhoods, Wilburton had the sharpest canopy decline, equivalent to a loss of 18 acres. According to the Determination of Non-Significance for the City of Bellevue's Tree Canopy Land Use Code Amendment proposal (File No. 22-128467-AD):

"URBAN TREE CANOPY CHANGE BY NEIGHBORHOODS

- Subdividing the results by neighborhood revealed significant canopy loss concentrated in four areas with Wilburton experiencing the sharpest decline, with a 2% decrease in canopy cover over a decade, equating to a loss of 18 acres with no increase in canopy cover.



- Between 2019 and 2021, both Eastgate and Northeast Bellevue lost about 20 acres of canopy.
- During this period, Lake Hills also saw a decline of about 35 acres.
- Eastgate, Northeast Bellevue, and Lake Hills, all three saw an overall net increase from 2011 to 2021.

Given their recent reductions in canopy, it would be prudent to monitor canopy in these neighborhoods.

As noted under the City of Bellevue "Zoning Requirements":

- Trees contribute to Bellevue's visual character and its ecosystem.



- Trees oxygenate the air, provide food and habitat for small animals and microorganisms, and reduce the impacts of storm water runoff.
- Trees enhance the visual appearance of the community, promote better transition between land uses and help protect property values.
- Although trees can be removed and replaced with new plantings, it takes years and decades for young trees to reach maturity and match the benefits of existing trees.

**Recommendation, amend to include:**

- Tree canopy pollution and purifies the air, promoting health and well-being.
- Tree canopy reduces utility bills in the form of treating storm water runoff as well as a shade and cooling temperatures reducing the effects of heat and air pollution.
- Tree canopies are crucial for supporting wildlife.
- Chapter 76.15 RCW: URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT defines tree canopy as the layer of leaves, branches, and stems of trees that cover the ground when viewed from above and can be measured as a percentage of a land area shaded by trees. Preserving tree canopy cover defined as the span of the cover resulting from the top branches of the tree.

**BTV (Bellevue TV on youtube), Talking About Trees**, highlights the importance of preserving Bellevue’s tree canopy on public and private properties: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MO8fhKLN0W4&t=16s>

- Rick Bailey, Forest Management Program Supervisor: “When we’re talking about the *tree* canopy from a citywide perspective, it’s really important to emphasize tree preservation on privately-owned property.”
- August Franzen, Environmental Stewardship Americorps Member, discusses the unique value trees bring to Bellevue, making it a special place :  
**“ *These trees are part of Bellevue. They are what make Bellevue special...*”**

...The first thing I want to show you is this young Grand Fir here. It's small trees like this one that will grow up over *the next 60, 80, 200 years* that will make Bellevue's forest healthy and thriving for generations to come. The next thing I want to show you is this ***Western Red Cedar here, these trees are the most important for rain and storm water in our city, more than any other species. They catch the raindrops that fall on them slowing them as they fall to the ground and that slowing is key to reducing erosion, reducing the risk of floods, and reducing your utility bill in the form of treating stormwater, before it ever reaches the planet.*** Our next stop is actually outside of the park because we have many amazing trees in our neighborhoods. ***In our neighborhoods there's an even greater variety of than there are in our parks. Our residents have planted trees from all across the world, like this Atlas Cedar behind me that is from Northern Africa. Trees like these still provide all the same benefits as the ones in our parks, catching stormwater, a place to play.***

Preserving tree canopy cover defines the span of the cover resulting from the top branches of the tree.

As noted, it takes years, 60, 80, 200 years, decades, centuries, for trees to reach the mature size of significant, landmark and heritage trees, with tree canopy covers and closures needed to reap the environmental and health-related benefits. The importance and the value of the cover created below the crown, should also be noted under Bellevue’s tree “Zoning Requirements”, eliminating air pollution by recycling and oxygenating the air, providing food and habitat for animals and microorganisms, recycling water and reducing the impacts of storm water runoff, etc. and those not noted, providing shade and cooling surrounding temperatures especially important in urban areas, reduce our carbon footprints, saving on electric bills, and providing a habitat for animals and wildlife. Young tree canopy cannot match the canopy cover and offer the benefits of these existing, mature trees. Waiting for generations for trees to mature does not offer current and future residents the benefits of older canopy tree cover if many of these trees are removed and collectively replaced in our neighborhood private properties.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Chapter 76.15 RCW: URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT definition of tree canopy as follows:

- "Tree canopy" means the **layer of leaves, branches, and stems of trees that cover the ground when viewed from above** and that can be measured as a percentage of a land area shaded by trees.
- Urban and community forestland ... includes public and private lands, lands along transportation and utility corridors, and forested watershed lands within populated areas. (4) The relationship between urban and forest management is significant. Urban forests serve as critical habitats for wildlife in urban areas, providing ecosystem services. The forest mitigate the impacts of urbanization on wildlife. (5)

About 90% of the critical areas and their surrounding urban wildlife in Wilburton are in single-family residential properties. Tree canopies support the wildlife habitat, including the bald Eagle, great blue heron, red-tailed hawk, coho salmon and other species of local importance.

1. Include a definition of "Heritage Trees", notable trees that are special due to their height, species, age, canopy spread, and has a caliper measurement of over 32 inches.
2. Create an Urban Forest Management Plan for residential private property, especially in residential urban wildlife, watershed areas, and areas with protected species.
3. Preserve and maintain landmark and heritage trees over development in residential private property urban wildlife areas and requires a permitting process with arborists. This approach will reduce future expenses associated with environmental restoration and infrastructure maintenance.
4. Retain 40% tree canopy cover in each neighborhood, while maintaining the current subarea exceptions. A city's total canopy cover does not consider effects on individual neighborhoods with different characteristics.

**Learn from Past History:**

Those who favored housing options claimed that "Seattle doesn't have anything like a tree crisis, and concern over trees is not excuse..." <https://www.sightline.org/2018/09/06/seattle-trees-development-not-a-tree-apocalypse/>. Between 2016 and 2021, Seattle lost over 255 acres of tree canopy in *five* years. (1)

Seattle's Urban Forestry Commission noted that when the loss of tree canopy happens very quickly, as an event, this has both immediate and long-lasting environmental effects and the quality of life impacts cannot be reversed. Seattle's canopy losses were greatest in parks natural areas (-111acres) and neighborhood residential (-87 acres), and canopy was lost at a greater rate on parcels where development occurred. As a result, Seattle is experiencing more instances of extreme heat, insect and pest outbreaks, droughts and flooding events. This is causing stress for secondary forestry. It was also noted that conifer trees grow slowly and would take time to show as new canopy. (2)

**The need to retain 40% tree canopy cover in each neighborhood:**

The City of Bellevue's Statistically Valid Survey shows the following results show (3):

	Housing costs and attainable home ownership at all income levels was ranked highest for respondents between 30 and 56.
	Both renters and homeowners ranked preserving and enhancing Bellevue's tree canopy as a high priority.

1	Homeownership Opportunities for Different Incomes	Under 30 years old ranked the ability to walk to a meeting place and access to frequent bus service as top priorities.
2	Preserve and Enhance the Tree Canopy	
3	Ability to Walk to a Meeting Place	
4	More Locally Accessible Businesses	Homeowners prioritized preserving the size and scale of existing suburban neighborhoods.
5	Unique Things to Do	Renters placed a high priority on housing for all income levels.
6	Ability to Drive Places and Easily Find Parking	Under 30 years old ranked the ability to walk to a meeting place and access to frequent bus service as top priorities.
7	Preserving the Size & Scale of Existing Suburban Neighborhoods	
8	Housing for All Income Levels	
9	Frequent Bus Service	
10	Housing for Families with Children	

“Housing for Families with Children” ranked #10 in the Statistically Valid Survey. This raises the question: Is Bellevue prioritizing housing development for those without children? Is this Bellevue’s future population?

Additionally, the survey indicated a preference for one house per lot:

### Popularity of Neighborhood Types


Analysis of the survey exercise revealed four neighborhood designs that have high levels of resident preferences.

**Single-Family Residential**



One house per lot

**Low Scale Residential**



Mix of one house per lot, duplexes, and townhomes

What stands out in the following low-scale residential photos is that there are no trees on the properties with tree canopies taller than the housing units.



Examples of different types of middle housing. (MAKERS / Washington State Department of Commerce)

Scattered open spaces are insufficient, as the photo above shows hardly any trees on private properties--a feature that renters, homeowners, and people of all ages have ranked as a top preference.

The city of Bellevue can meet its requirements for housing units without having to develop and cut down its most invaluable resource--trees.

Thank you for all of your efforts to support Bellevue's livability and quality of life for its current and future residents.

Sincerely,

Phyllis White

1. <https://www.seattle.gov/trees/management/canopy-cover#:~:text=The%20City%20of%20Seattle's%20most,down%20from%2028.6%25%20in%202016.>
2. [Next Steps and Additional Analysis of the 2021 Tree Canopy Cover Assessment - Greenspace \(seattle.gov\)](#)
3. [4330066311668c790ba348599e1a54a8\\_Comp\\_Plan\\_Survey\\_Executive\\_Summary.pdf](#)
4. [RCW 76.15.010: Definitions. \(wa.gov\)](#)
5. [https://www.fs.usda.gov/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2023/nrs\\_2023\\_cocroft\\_001.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2023/nrs_2023_cocroft_001.pdf)

## Examples of other cities and their Urban Forestry Programs:

Urban forestry programs of other Washington state cities [MRSC - Urban Forestry](#):

- [Olympia Municipal Code Ch. 16.56](#) — Protects "landmark trees" based on factors such as historical associations, rare or unusual species, or exceptional aesthetic quality.
- [Seattle Tree Protection Code](#) — Limits the number and size of trees and other vegetation that may be removed from properties.
- [Walla Walla Municipal Code Ch. 12.50](#) — Protects "heritage trees" based on factors such as historical associations, rare or unusual species, exceptional aesthetic quality, or large size.
- City of Sammamish – A permit is required to remove a healthy significant tree.

## Nesse, Katherine

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**From:** phyllisjwhite <phyllisjwhite@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 5:09 AM  
**To:** PlanningCommission  
**Cc:** King, Emil A.; Johnson, Thara; Nesse, Katherine; Heidi Dean; Council  
**Subject:** FW: 'Zoning Umbrella' staff proposal  
**Attachments:** Zoning Umbrella Letter to PC 6-21-24.docx

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Dear Commissioners and Staff,

I concur with Heidi Dean's attached comments in opppsing a "Zoning Umbrella".

While I live in a neighborhood with a neighborhood association, our association is not active in notifying and engaging residents in city matters. As a result, Wilburton residents are often left out of notifications and participation with the city, including this week's public hearing. I encourage the City to continue a robust public outreach process.

Best regards,

Phyllis White  
Wilburton resident

Sent from my Galaxy

----- Original message -----

**From:** Heidi Dean <technogeekswife@yahoo.com>  
**Date:** 6/21/24 1:25 PM (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** planningcommission@bellevuewa.gov  
**Cc:** Thara Johnson <tmjohnson@bellevuewa.gov>, "Emil A. King" <eaking@bellevuewa.gov>, Katherine Nesse <knesse@bellevuewa.gov>  
**Subject:** 'Zoning Umbrella' staff proposal

Hello Commissioners & staff:

Attached are my comments opposing the utilization of a 'Zoning Umbrella' mechanism to bypass the annual Comp Plan Amendment process and go straight to a rezone.

Thank you for reading to the end. I appreciate how much work you're putting in right now. It will be over soon!

~ Heidi Dean  
Newport Hills

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Newport Hills had two annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPA) filed on our shopping center between 2016 & 2018. NE Bellevue had three CPAs filed on the Bellevue Technology Center between approximately 2012 & 2018. Northtowne experienced a CPA on The Park Apartments in 2018. Each of those CPAs failed at threshold review because the applicants couldn't prove the "significantly changed conditions" criteria.

Why is that?

How could big money land use attorneys not prove that point if it's so obvious as to ask for a CPA?

The answer is simple- in each case the affected neighborhoods had three things going for them:

- Residents who were knowledgeable about the CPA process, as well as land use code & zoning, the GMA, and the Comprehensive Plan
- An organized neighborhood association for communication with and education & mobilization of impacted residents
- Adequate time during the CPA process for the second bullet point

In 2016 I felt hopeless and helpless when Intracorp filed the first CPA on the Newport Hills Shopping Center. I didn't know what to do- I was just a housewife and a mom who knew nothing about land use and neither did my fellow Newport Hills neighbors. So... we got educated. We got organized. We fought back using the CoB's own policies and codes, as well as the GMA. In 2018, against an even more formidable developer (Toll Brothers), with an even tougher attorney, we were able to make our case. How is that possible?

Answer: the CPA process allowed us the time to do that.

Did you know that about 70% of Bellevue's neighborhoods lack associations, meaning they lack the ability to quickly communicate an issue to their residents and mobilize? Imagine being one of those neighborhoods and facing a CPA that will make catastrophic changes to the character and functionality of your neighborhood- that's pretty daunting! Now imagine it's the same proposed change but filed as a rezone that requires less notification, less time in the decision making process, less stringent decision making criteria, and forces you to hire an attorney to fight the CoB & the applicant in front of the Hearing Examiner. That's the situation you're being asked to place ALL Bellevue neighborhoods in with the staff's "zoning umbrella" proposal. Some neighborhoods will fare better than others, but all will be at a huge disadvantage compared to wealthy property owners and developers with time, resources, and legal knowledge to make their case. Remember that EQUITY is one of the keystones of this Comp Plan update & the word appears many times throughout the document.

The "zoning umbrella" was presented to you on 2/14/2024 as a streamlining of process for applicants and as a decrease in workload for you as commissioners. While true, staff has repeatedly failed to



acknowledge how this proposed process change will significantly reduce residents' ability to have a say in what happens to their neighborhoods.

The proposed change would apply to all zoning designations and land use categories, but I believe the real target of this proposal is to achieve upzones of the Neighborhood Centers, particularly those where applicants couldn't pass threshold review in the past, as well as those where requests for massive upzones were submitted during the DEIS comment period (Northtowne, Newport Hills). At the request of a couple commercial property owners the land use category for ALL Neighborhood Centers in the city would have received a massive increase without proper process or notification. It was only because Commissioner Lu & I were at the 6/14/2023 meeting to catch it, and the Newport Hills Community Club spoke up against it, that it didn't happen. In fact, Commissioner Lu was the author of the letter submitted by the NHCC that opposed change to Neighborhood Centers' land use categories for the FEIS.

The "Planning Commission Cookbook Series" Vols 1 & 2 outline your role & responsibilities as Planning Commissioners. It stipulates that you

- Act as fact-finders and citizen advisors to the city council
- Review staff recommendation carefully
- Listen to and consider public testimony

I'm asking you to not only consider the staff's recommendation on the "zoning umbrella" proposal carefully, but also the input of residents, especially those who've been through the process of opposing a land use application. I believe that, while the "zoning umbrella" proposal might lighten your workload, it will diminish your overall role as Planning Commissioners as well as diminish the voice of Bellevue residents in important decisions re: their city & neighborhoods. I've been attending PC meetings regularly since 2016, so I know the hours you put in on issues. I ask you not to make a decision based upon what might be easier for you while having devastating consequences for residents who need a robust public process (CPA, \*then\* rezone if criteria met) in order to be fully heard. Staff will tell you that other cities do it. I say: "we're not other cities, we're Bellevue".

Final point: As-yet-to-be-defined new zoning designations should NEVER be lumped in with existing & defined zoning designations when critical decisions are being made. That's like asking the Planning Commission to sign a blank check for a very large amount of money. I believe most of you wouldn't do that in your personal life so why would you do it as a Planning Commissioner? Ex: MU-L/M= undefined and not yet passed into Bellevue's zoning code.

Please vote "no" on moving forward with the "zoning umbrella" proposal allowing applicants to skip over the CPA process and go right to applying for a rezone if they wish to change to a new zoning designation within their "umbrella".

Thank you,

Heidi L Dean

23 year resident of Newport Hills, 25+ in Bellevue