

Code and Policy Town Hall

Development Services Department

Nov. 17, 2025



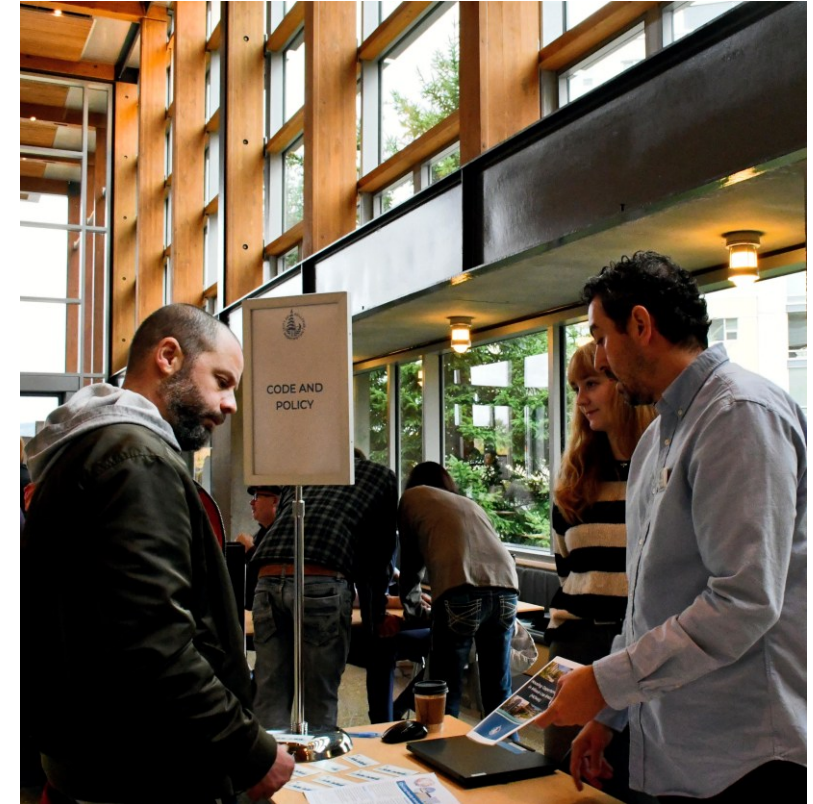
Agenda

- What to Expect Tonight
- About the Team
- Code 101
- Our Work Plan
- How to Get Involved



Goals for Tonight

- Provide a better understanding of Bellevue's Land Use Code and how it is updated
- Provide an overview of projects underway and launching soon
- Help you understand how to get involved
- Answer questions



Housekeeping

How to engage during presentation:

- **In Writing:** Use Teams Q&A function (Virtual participants) or write on a sticky note
- **Verbally:** Raise hand (in person or online) during Q&A breaks, or at any point for a quick clarification or assistance
- **Final Thoughts:** Submit a comment or question via comment card or email

Working Together

- We welcome all perspectives and opinions
- We assume positive intent
- We may disagree, but do it respectfully
 - No name calling, personal attacks, threats, hate speech, other aggressive behavior or violation of City Hall Code of Conduct
- We may prioritize calling on individuals who haven't yet spoken

Bellevue welcomes the world.

Our diversity is our strength.

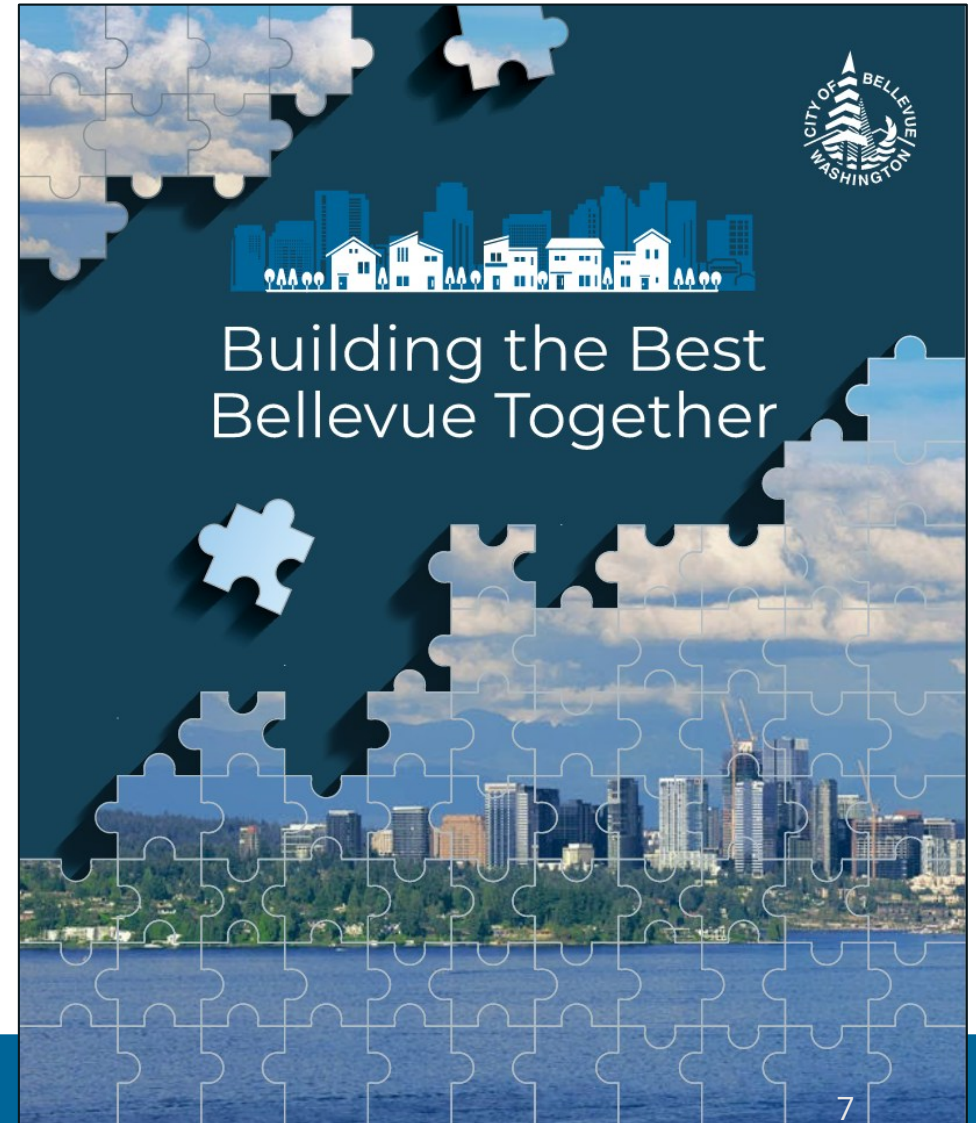


About the Team

Development Services Overview

Building The Best Bellevue Together

Development Services protects the quality, safety and integrity of the built and natural environment. We partner to enhance an equitable, inclusive and livable city for everyone



Development Services Overview

What We Do:

Provide one-stop access to general information, permits, and resources for development projects in Bellevue

Who We Are:

A multi-department team including:

- Code Compliance Officers
- Inspectors
- Permit Technicians
- Engineers
- Planners
- Support Staff
- Financial Analysts
- Plans Examiners

Development Services Organization

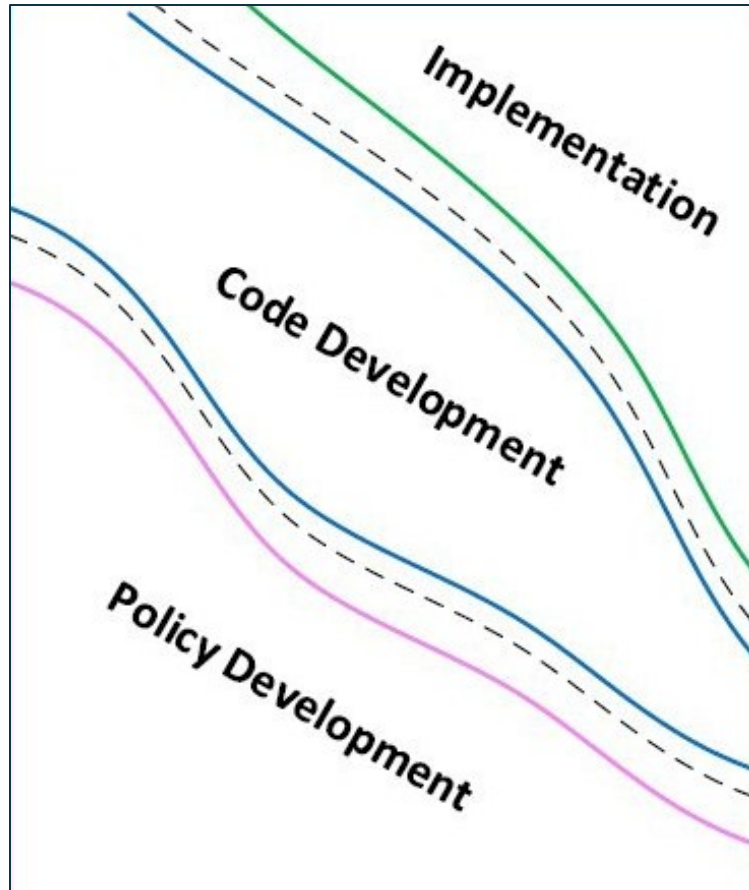
Development Services Department is organized in four core divisions:

1. Building
2. Land Use
3. Code and Policy
4. Business Services



The Code and Policy Division: develops land use regulations that advance Bellevue's vision and priorities, shaping future growth in housing, land use, sustainability, and more.

Coordination Across Departments and Teams



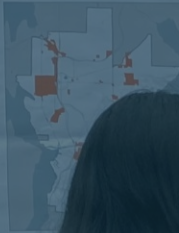
- Community Development leads policy development, with support from Code and Policy
- Code and Policy takes on lead when it's time to develop code, with support from Community Development
- Land Use reviews projects under new code, with support from Code and Policy

Code 101

Housing Opportunities in Mixed-use Areas

What is HOMA?

The Housing Opportunities in Mixed-Use Areas (HOMA) Land Use Code Amendment focuses on promoting housing development by updating the Land Use Code. HOMA will reduce code impediments to housing production and create an affordable housing program within most of the mixed-use areas of the city. To encourage housing, the amendments will propose updates to sections of the code identified by stakeholders to be inhibiting the development of housing. HOMA will also look to rezone parcels in certain mixed-use areas, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.



Impediments to Housing

Identified impediments to housing

Through stakeholder outreach, several impediments to housing production have been identified in the code. HOMA will look to update these standards to minimize their impact to housing while balancing the needs of the residents.

Density

- Replace dwelling units/acre limits with Floor Area Ratio (FAR) measurement.
- Increase the FAR.

Building Height

- Increase building height in areas that do not allow at least 5 stories.

Parking

- Reduce parking requirements for residential uses.

Lot Coverage

- Limits the size of buildings and hard surfaces.

- Explore building lot coverage limits to ensure not overly restrictive.

Lot Requirements

- Re-evaluate transition area requirements.
- Re-evaluate play area requirements.

Use Requirements

- Remove ground floor retail requirements outside of downtown.
- Remove office requirements.



Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing Options

HOMA will create an affordable housing program which require or incentivize affordable housing production in new development.

- Evaluate two affordable housing options

- Mandatory** option requires all projects over certain thresholds to provide affordable housing.
- Voluntary** incentive option gives a bonus for providing affordable housing.
- Fee-in-lieu** option will also be available.



What Are Development Regulations?



Land use and development **codes** are local laws that govern how land and buildings can be used, designed, and developed.

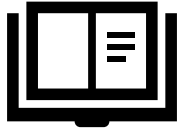


They **implement** a community's vision: e.g., the City of Bellevue's Land Use Code (Title 20) implements the city's Comprehensive Plan.



Under Washington law, local jurisdictions must adopt "development regulations" **consistent** with the Growth Management Act (GMA).

Policy → Code → Permit



Comprehensive Plan

- Describes vision and priorities and baseline expectations for future development
- High-level
- Flexible to ensure responsive zoning may be implemented



Land Use Code

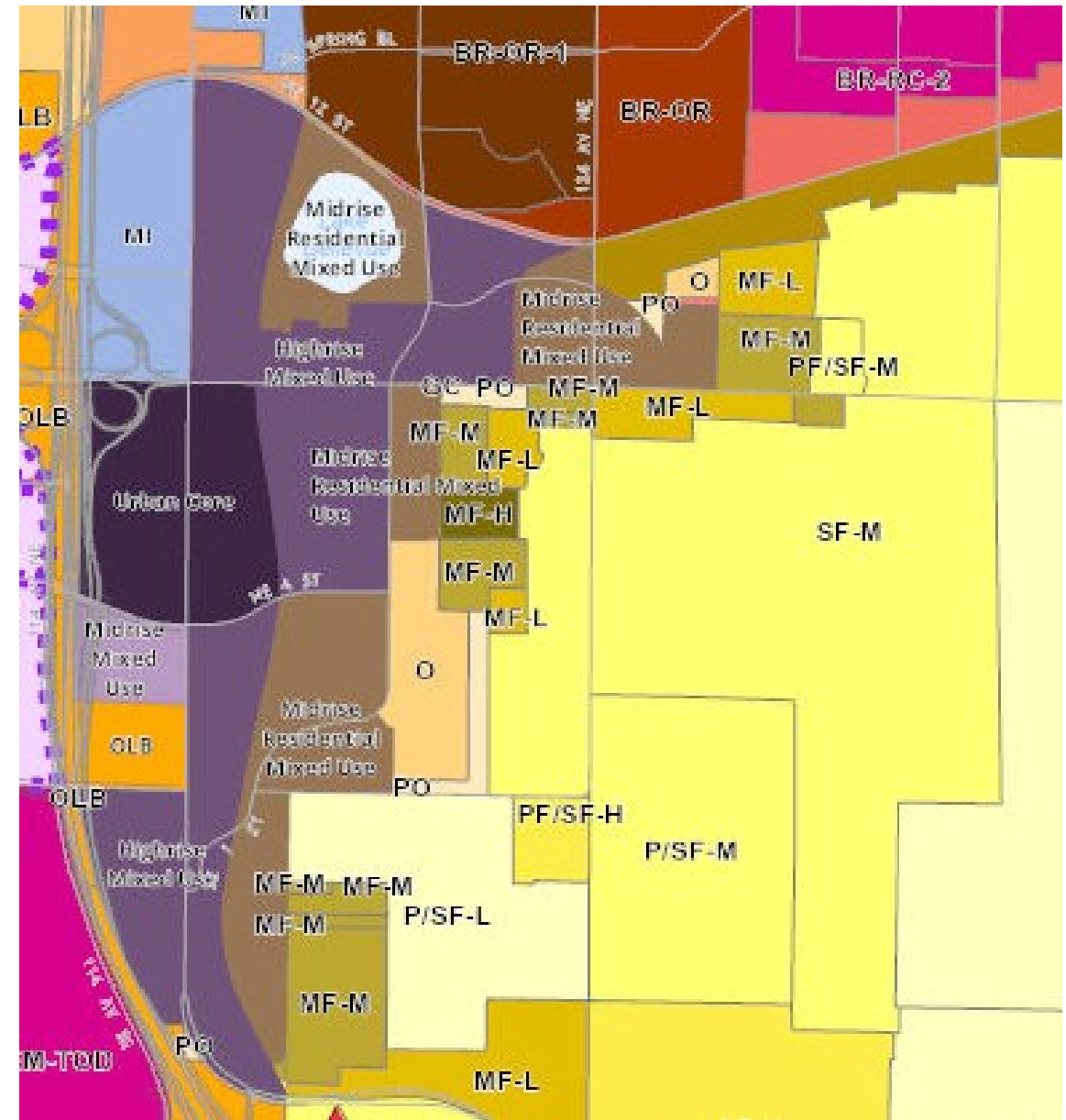
- Describes what is permitted
- Sets standards for development, e.g., dimensions, density/FAR, setbacks, etc.
- Tells developers what the city requires



Development Application

- Developer's actual design concept for city approval
- Details of what will be built and where

Wilburton S-WI-33: Allow for the tallest buildings along Interstate-405 and around the Grand Connection, transitioning down in height toward the east.



Code Implementation

LUC 20.20.010: Uses in land use districts dimensional requirements

Uses in Mixed-Use Land Use Districts – Dimensional Requirements

	UC		MU-H		MU-M	MUR-M
Development Type (1)(2)	Nonres.	Res.	Nonres.	Res.	All	All
Maximum Height (3)	450'	450'	250'	250'	100'	100'
Base FAR	6.0	8.0	4.0	6.0	2.5	2.5
Maximum FAR	10.0	Unlimited	8.0	Unlimited	6.0	6.0

The LUCA Life Cycle



Council Launch

- Often happens with a policy adoption
- Project scope confirmed
- Council priorities established
- Full outreach process begins



Draft Development

- Understand community priorities
- Broad engagement, room for big ideas
- Seek technical guidance
- Internal review across teams and departments



Planning Commission Review

- Staff proposed draft review
- Community provides input on draft to Commission
- Commission makes recommendation



City Council Action

- Recommended draft review
- Community provides input on draft to Council
- Council takes final action



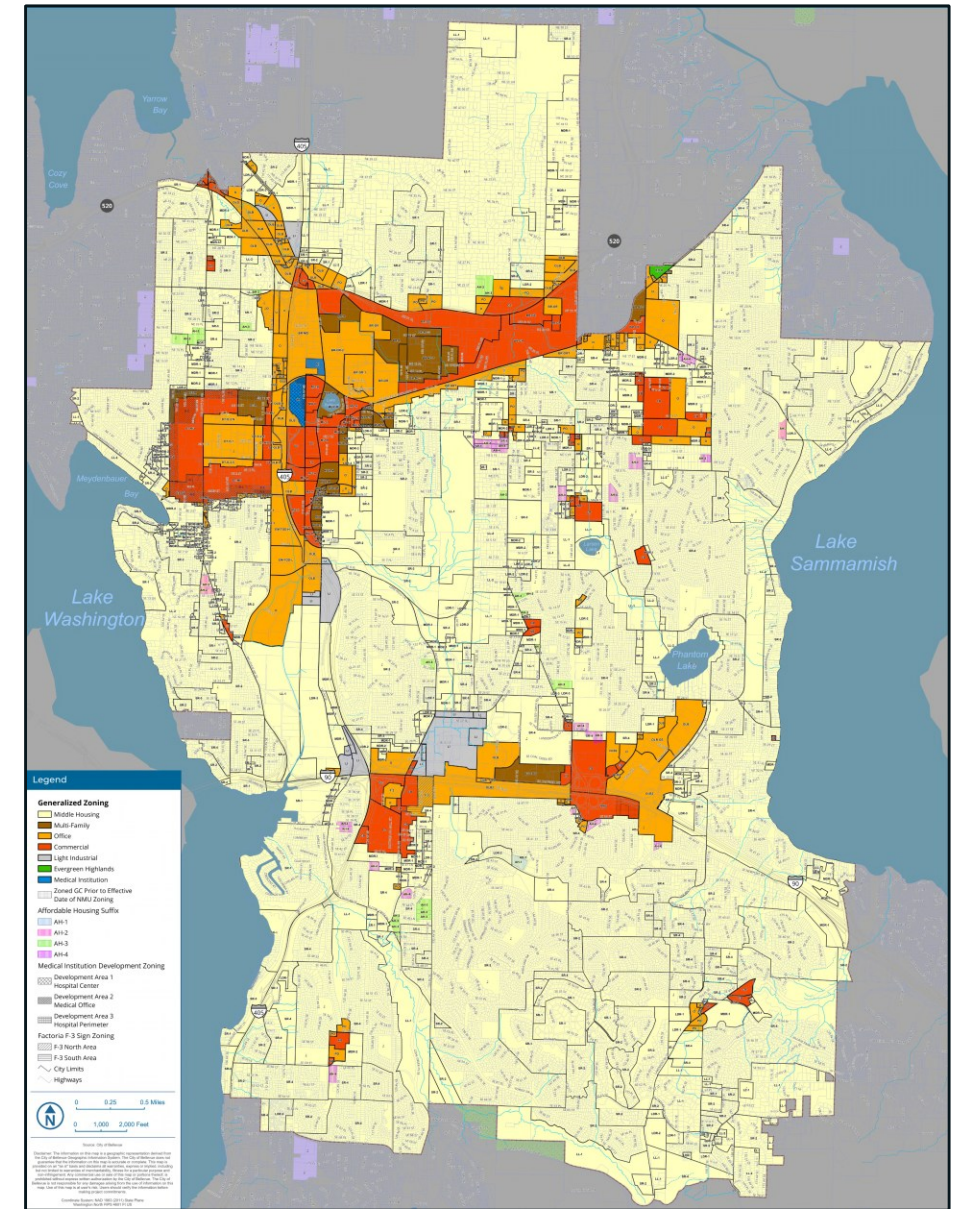
Implementation

- New code in place
- Get the word out on changes
- Take feedback over time - What's working, what's not working?



Land Use Code

- **Zoning / Land Use Districts:** City divided into zones (residential, commercial, industrial, mixed-use). Each zone allows certain uses and sets restrictions.
- **Dimensional & Design Standards:** Rules for height, setbacks, lot size, and landscaping.
- **Use Regulations:** Some uses allowed outright; others need special approval (conditional use, variance).
- **Procedures & Permits:** How applications are reviewed, public notice and appeal rights.
- **Special / Overlay Districts:** Additional regulations for sensitive areas (critical areas, shoreline overlay) and growth corridor (Downtown, BelRed, Wilburton).



Questions?



Our Work Plan

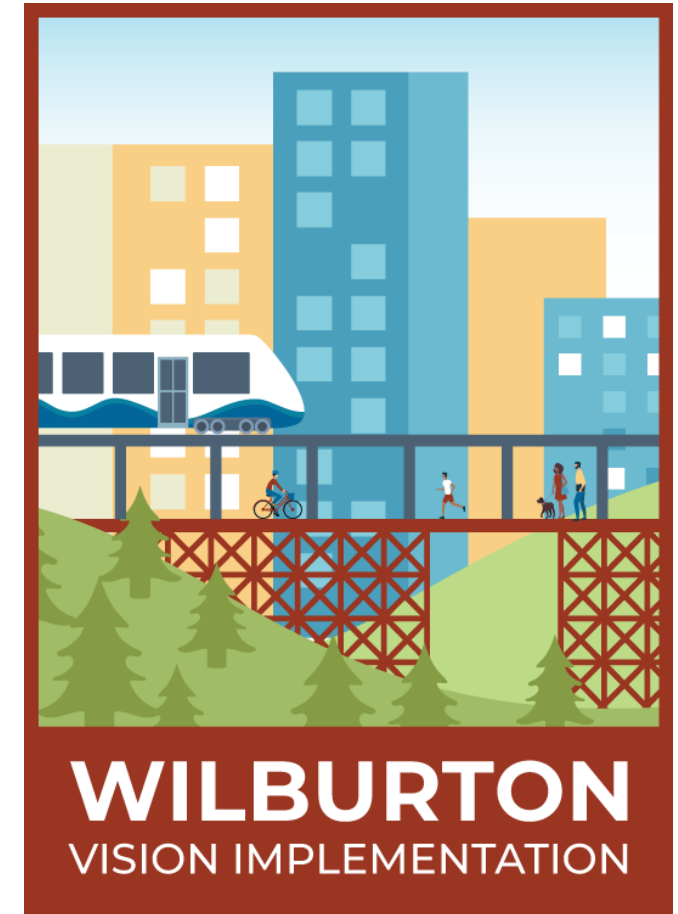
Land Use Planning Initiatives (LUPI) Work Plan

- Established every two years
- Advances Bellevue City Council priorities; responds to city needs
- Consistent with state and regional planning framework



2025 Accomplishments

- Permit Streamlining LUCA (implements SB 5290)
- Objective Design LUCA (implements HB 1293)
- Existing Building Redevelopment LUCA
- Wilburton Vision Implementation LUCA
- Middle Housing LUCA



Work in Progress

Year-End Deadlines, Limited Influence Opportunity

Critical Area Ordinance Update

- Updated every 10 years

Co-Living Housing LUCA (HB 1998)

- Implementing strict compliance with state law



Work in Progress

Greater Opportunity to Influence Sign Code Update

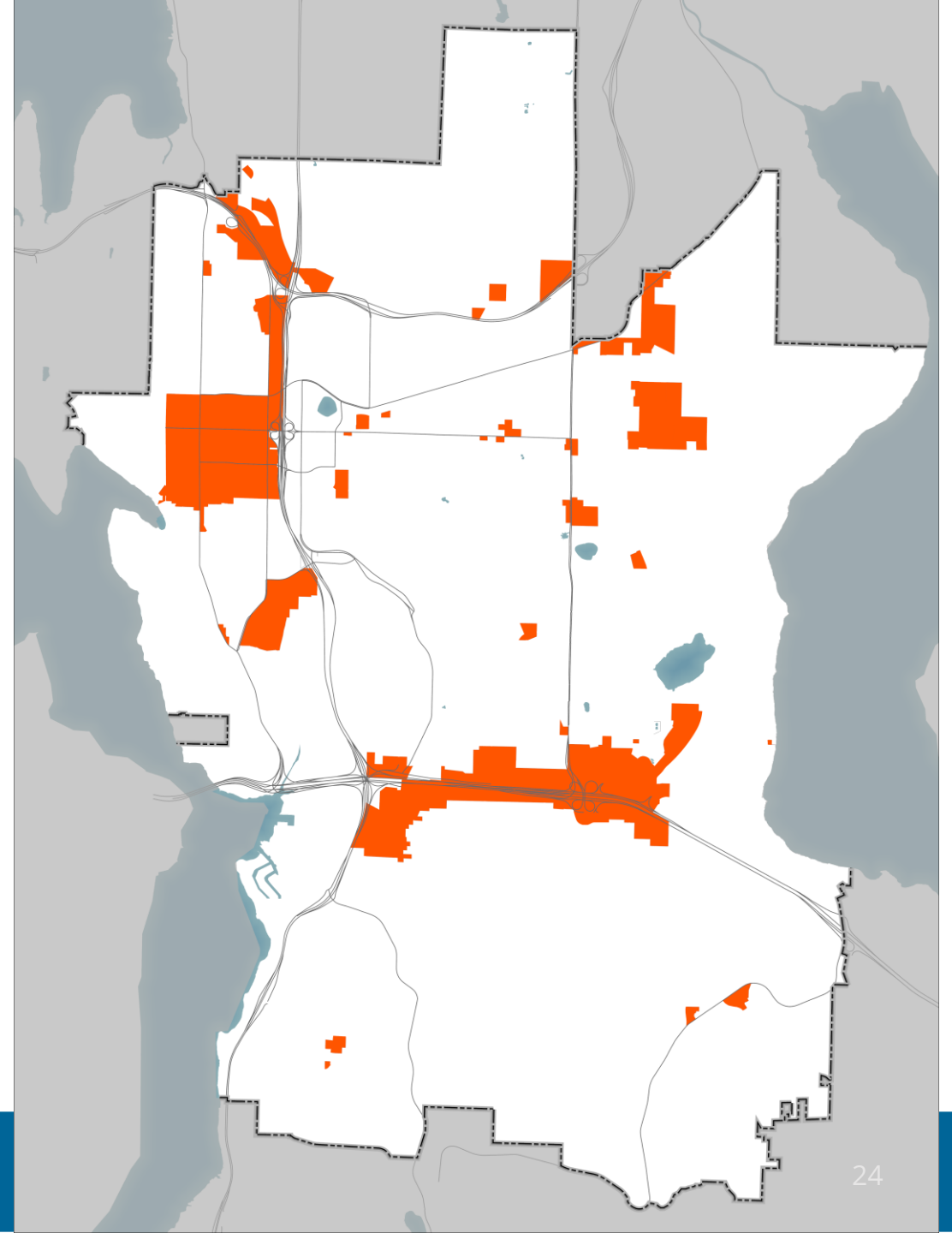
- Limits driven by legal requirements
- Draft in development
- Council check-in Nov. 25
- Council engagement early 2026



Work in Progress

Greater Opportunity to Influence Housing Opportunities in Mixed Use Areas (HOMA) LUCA

- Planning Commission review in progress
- Public Hearing Dec. 10



Work in Progress

Greatest Opportunity to Influence BelRed Look Forward

- Updating existing code for alignment with refreshed vision and new opportunities
- Public draft in December – let us know what you think!
- Planning Commission engagement to follow



Launching in 2026: Q1

Parking Reform LUCA (SB 5184)

- State legislation driving updates to minimum parking requirements
- Includes circumstances where no parking may be required, or a cap is imposed on the requirement

Engagement Level: Robust

- Broad information
- Limits on impact to recommendations



Launching in 2026: Q1

Omnibus LUCA/BCCA

- Periodic clean-up update
- Also incorporates more substantial, but non-controversial improvements



Engagement Level: Light.

- Focus on informing, identifying red flags
- Focus on technical expertise, including internal

Launching in 2026: Q2

Institutional Land Use District LUCA & Rezone

- New “Institutional” designation in updated Comp Plan
- Implementing regulations to facilitate Bellevue College’s growth and compatibility with the community

Engagement Level: Deep but Focused

- Primary focus on campus stakeholders and neighbors

Launching in 2026: Q2

High Density Residential

- Implementing new High Density Residential designation applied to limited areas
- Implement updates to Planned Unit Development (PUD) process to better support housing development

Engagement Level: Deep but Focused

- Focus on impacted areas
- Focus on technical expertise

Launching in 2026: TBD

Downtown Livability 2.0

- Assess performance of 2017 Downtown code updates
- Explore opportunities for improvement

Engagement Level: Deep but Focused

- Focus on Downtown stakeholders
- Focus on technical expertise



How to Get Involved

Ways to Participate

Direct Engagement

- Attend info sessions and workshops to learn about code changes
- Participate in surveys and provide input early in the process
- Contact the assigned planner for questions and to share input
- We're here for you – can present at your event



Ways to Participate

Planning Commission Meetings

- Commission reviews and recommends changes to the Land Use Code to the city council
- Planning Commission meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month at 6:30 p.m.
 - Open to the public
 - Can attend in-person or remotely
 - Provide comment orally or in writing



Ways to Participate

City Council Meetings

- Final decisions are made by council
- Council meets the first four Tuesdays each month at 6:00 p.m.
 - Open to the public
 - Can attend in-person or remotely
 - Provide comment orally or in writing



But what do I say?

- Be as specific as you can
- When in doubt – keep it short and genuine
- Personal anecdotes and stories welcome
- Don't forget to share support

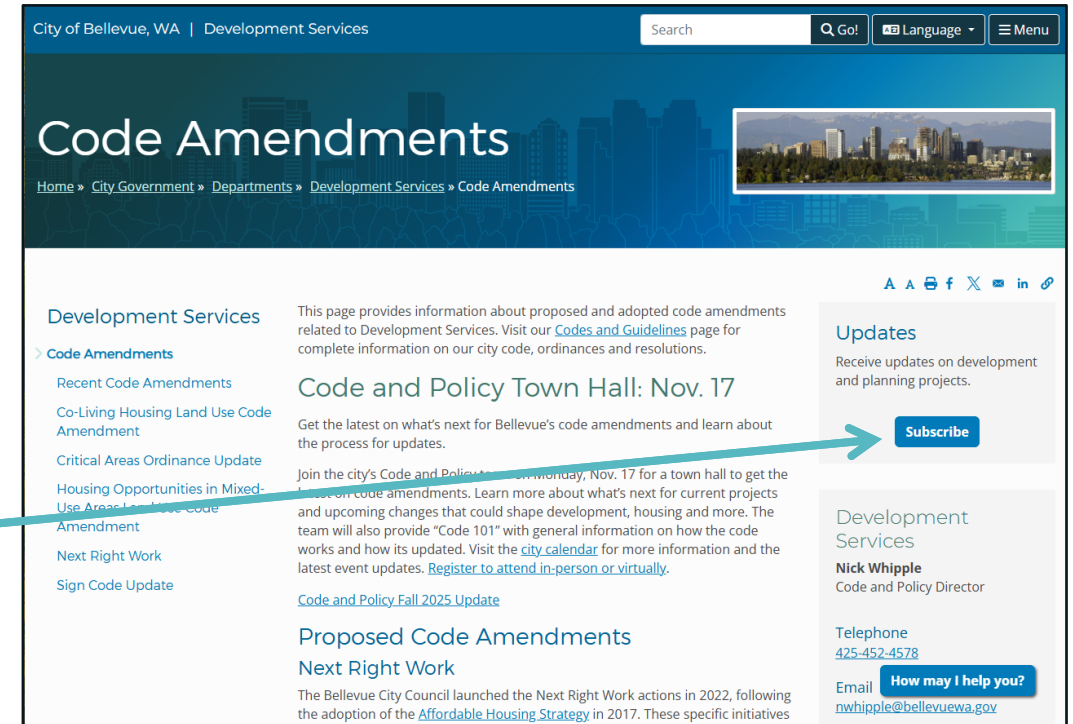
CITY OF BELLEVUE WASHINGTON

We want to hear from you!

	I Like It!	I Have Concerns!
Wetlands: Wetlands are classified and buffered for protection. Buffers and setbacks vary for developed and undeveloped sites. [Bellevue Land Use Code (LUC) 20.25H.095 through 20.25H.110]	What is there no water in a wetland? = science please! is every blocked by a wetland? But no one can create a wetland? "science" please! why do you not show grassy fields as the "wetlands" instead of pictures w/ in them? what is the specific science behind a 25' setback or a buffer?	Concerned about streams are becoming more polluted. More protection is needed for the restoration.
Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCA), Habitat: FWHCA are managed to protect priority habitats and species. Habitat associated with species of local importance are regulated under LUC 20.25H.150 through 170.	Lets keep our water clean. planting a row of trees along the stream bank.	Definitely add a robust CARA to your plan. only happens in some catchments.
Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCA), Streams: Streams are currently classifications using the state's water typing system and protected with buffers. Stream buffers are measured from the top-of-bank. Buffers and setbacks vary for developed and undeveloped sites. [Bellevue Land Use Code (LUC) 20.25H.075 through 090]	Setback or Buffer = But Restoration	Science please!
Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARA): The City does not currently have CARA regulations in the CAO. The City is considering adding a CARA section to the CAO.	Setback or Buffer = But Restoration	only happens in some catchments.
Geologically Hazardous Areas: Regulatory protections for Geologically Hazardous Areas include land use restrictions, buffers/setbacks, erosion control, and stormwater management. Site-specific studies may be required to understand the stability of an area. [Bellevue Land Use Code (LUC) 20.25H.120 through 145]		
Frequently Flooded Areas (FFAs): FFAs in Bellevue are protected by land use regulations that control activities, which have the potential to alter storage, conveyance, magnitude, and velocity of flood waters. [Bellevue Land Use Code (LUC) 20.25H.175 through 180]		Herring! Herring! Herring!
Permit Process: Is administration of the CAO regulations working well? [Bellevue Land Use Code (LUC) 20.25H and 20.30]	Performance based within stream code	

Stay Informed

- Visit the Code Amendments Webpage for updates, meeting links, and comment opportunities:
bellevuewa.gov/code-amendments
- **NEW:** Subscribe to Updates
- Assigned Code and Policy Planner is your go-to contact for questions and information



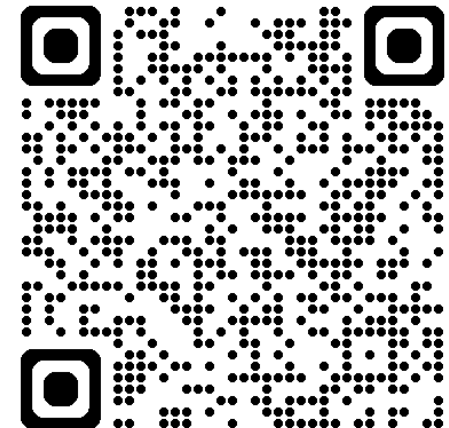
Q&A

Upcoming Opportunities to Engage

- Sign Code City Council Check-in: Nov. 25
- Co-Living Council Public Hearing: Dec. 2
- CAO Council Action: Dec. 9
- HOMA Planning Commission Public Hearing: Dec. 10
- Parking Reform Council Initiation: Jan. (tentative)
- BelRed Council Check-in: January (tentative)
- Omnibus Council Initiation: January (tentative)

Learn More

[BellevueWA.gov/
Code-Amendments](https://BellevueWA.gov/Code-Amendments)



Information



For alternative formats, interpreters, or reasonable modification requests, please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-4570 (voice) or email (DS_Experience@bellevuewa.gov). For complaints regarding modifications, contact the City of Bellevue ADA, Title VI, and Equal Opportunity Officer at ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov.

