



Meydenbauer Bay

PARK AND LAND USE PLAN

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated May 2, 2008

General questions:

Q1. What is the City trying to accomplish?

A1. This planning effort includes developing a master plan for a new waterfront park on Meydenbauer Bay, creating connections to the waterfront park from the downtown, and establishing urban design and land uses that provide an interactive experience between the waterfront and upland areas. This will result in a significant city park and public waterfront destination, providing a unique and memorable recreation opportunity for the citizens of Bellevue.

Q2. Is this a new idea?

A2. The city has been working toward this vision for many years. Since the early 1990's the city has been acquiring property along Meydenbauer Bay, and now holds a quarter-mile length of shoreline. The vision of establishing a new waterfront park and connecting it to the downtown area is well documented in city policy and planning documents.

Q3. Is this project really a rezone proposal that is being presented as a park proposal?

A3. No, this project is about creating a significant city park and public waterfront destination, providing connections to that park from the downtown, and creating an interactive experience between the waterfront and upland areas.

Q4. How long will it take for the plan, once finalized, to be implemented?

A4. Implementation will not occur all at once. The timing of park development will be influenced by funding availability, the permitting process, and existing lease agreements on some of the city-owned parcels. It is estimated that park development could not begin for at least three years, and its completion might be phased over time.

If changes are made to the Land Use Code as a result of the planning recommendations, the timing of development consistent with those changes will depend on the private market since the city does not control private redevelopment decisions.

Questions about the park:

Q5. How much land does the City own on Meydenbauer Bay?

A5. The City holds approximately 10 acres and 1250 linear feet of shoreline along the Bay. This property will be used for park development and creation of a primary connection to downtown.

- Q6. What is on the City owned properties now?
- A6. Meydenbauer Beach Park is on the west end, and the Bayvue Village Apartments are on the east end. In between is the Bellevue Marina, including two buildings that housed the American Pacific Whaling Company, and several occupied residences.
- Q7. When will the park be developed?
- A7. The Master Planning process is expected to continue through 2008 and into early 2009. The timing of actual park development will depend on many issues, including the scope of the project and funding.
- Q8. Has the city already decided what the new park will look like?
- A8. Three preliminary concepts were produced in September 2007, but have not been developed further. None of these concepts is considered a "proposal", and no decisions about the park design have been made. In 2008, we will explore design options for the park, which will be guided by the Planning Principles that the City Council approved for this project. This process will result in the production of a park master plan.
- Q9. Have decisions already been made about transient moorage at the City's marina?
- A9. "Transient moorage" means short-term moorage that is available for general public use. Funding used to purchase two of the City piers requires that at least 14 slips be made available for transient moorage. No decisions have been made with respect to the maximum number or location of such slips.
- Q10. Will the marina be removed once the bonds that were used to purchase them are repaid?
- A10. How much moorage will be provided over the long term and what it will look like will be determined through this planning process. Except for the 14 transient moorage slips discussed in Q9 above, the marina is not required to remain for any particular length of time.
- Under the current payment schedule, bonds used to purchase the piers will be fully repaid in 2018. Marina revenue is currently being used to pay off the bonds, but the city could repay those bonds earlier if other funding sources became available.
- Q11. What will be done with the Bayvue Village Apartments?
- A11. It is likely there will be a prominent pedestrian access through this site to the waterfront. What else occurs on the property alongside or in combination with that access is being determined through this planning process.

Questions about neighboring parcels:

- Q12. What is planned for nearby properties?
- A12. The city desires to create connections from the downtown area to the proposed waterfront park, and to establish urban design and land uses that are pedestrian-friendly and complement the park so that an interactive experience between the waterfront and upland areas is achieved. The city is analyzing land use patterns and other development characteristics in the study area to determine how redevelopment when it occurs might be influenced to provide such attributes.
- Q13. Will this project result in changes to the downtown boundary?
- A13. The project will not change the location of the downtown boundary.

Q14. Why are the connections important?

A14. Area topography, building locations, limited sightlines, and other factors make it difficult to see and get to the waterfront from uphill parcels. Visual and physical connections will help link the waterfront to the larger community, making it more accessible for Bellevue residents to enjoy.

Q15. What changes are proposed in the study area?

A15. In January 2008, the steering committee reached consensus on a preliminary preferred land use plan for two general geographic areas, referred to as the “Upper Block” area and the “South of Main” area. This preliminary preferred plan will be integrated with the park master plan later in 2008. The integrated proposed plan will undergo environmental review and a public hearing prior to being forwarded to the City Council for final action.

In the Upper Block (surrounded by NE 1st St, 100th Ave NE, Lake Washington Blvd NE, and 99th Ave NE) this plan envisions flexible building setbacks and increased allowable residential density and lot coverage, in order to encourage redevelopment of aging buildings and the provision of pedestrian amenities. The committee is not proposing changes to allowed building heights or types of uses.

South of Main (surrounded by Main St., 101st Ave SE, Meydenbauer Way SE, and 100th Ave SE/SE Bellevue PI), the plan envisions the coordinated redevelopment of the Chevron site, the part of the Bayvue Village Apts that lies east of 100th Ave SE, and the Meydenbauer Apartments site in order to provide public benefits such as public spaces, pedestrian connections through this block, view corridors, and shared underground parking. 100th Ave SE/SE Bellevue Place would be closed to vehicle traffic and transformed into a pedestrian corridor containing plazas, terraces, and overlooks.

To encourage redevelopment South of Main, residential density and lot coverage allowances would be increased on the Bayvue Village and Meydenbauer Apartments parcels, and pedestrian-oriented retail uses would be allowed on the Bayvue Village parcel. No changes to currently-allowed building heights are proposed.

Q16. Do these changes require a rezone?

A16. The changes described above would require amending the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Code, and Zoning Map. The process for these amendments includes a public hearing before the Planning Commission and requires approval by the City Council.

Q17. Is there more work to be done on the preliminary preferred land use plan?

A17. Yes. The steering committee identified a list of “deferred issues” that will continue to be evaluated as part of the park master planning process. That list includes: Final design of 100th Avenue SE/SE Bellevue Place and Meydenbauer Way SE; vehicle access to adjoining properties; determine parking approaches to allowed uses, and other issues. Also, the land use plan will be re-integrated with the park master plan to ensure that the entire plan works as a whole.

Q18. Is the city proposing to allow 11-story buildings and a hotel?

A18. See Q15 above to read about what changes are envisioned.

Q19. What is the current zoning in the study area and what does that zoning allow?

A19. The privately-owned parcels that are located in the primary study area fall within three land use districts: R-30 (multifamily residential, up to 30 dwelling units per acre), O (office), and DNTN-OB (Downtown – Old Bellevue). The property that the city owns falls within R-1.8 and R-3.5 (single-family residential), R-30, and O land use districts.

Both the R-30 and O districts allow development up to 40 feet in height, except within the 200 foot shoreline jurisdiction which limits height in these districts to 35 feet.

The DNTN-OB district allows a variety of land uses, including residential, retail, eating and drinking establishments, office uses, and hotels.

The DNTN-OB district allows different heights depending on specific parcel location. For example, the properties on the northeast and southeast corners of Main Street and 100th Ave NE allow a maximum building height of 55 feet. Other parcels on the north side of Main Street allow a maximum height of 90 feet plus up to an additional 10% if used to provide an interesting roof form. There is currently a 10-story building under construction on one of these parcels, unrelated to this project.

Questions about the moratorium:

NOTE: The land use moratorium originally imposed on January 22, 2007 expired on January 30, 2008, and is no longer in effect. Therefore, FAQs regarding the moratorium have been removed.

Questions about the process:

Q24. How long will this planning process take?

A24. Completion of the Park Master Plan, and adoption of any related changes to the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Code, Zoning Map, or other development regulations is anticipated to occur in early 2009.

Q25. How can I get involved?

A25. There will be several meetings and workshops throughout the planning process. These are open to the public, and your participation is encouraged. Check the city website (address below) periodically for announcements of upcoming events. Sign up to be notified of upcoming events, either via email or USPS. You can do that by contacting one of the project managers below, or signing up for the e-alerts on the project webpage.
http://www.bellevuewa.gov/meydenbauer_project_intro.htm.

Q26. Who are the Steering Committee members? How did they get appointed?

A26. The steering committee members were appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. A list of the membership can be found on the project website (address below). These committee members serve without pay and donate their time and expertise for the betterment of the community at large. Several committee members live or work in or near the primary study area, while others live in other parts of Bellevue. Collectively they represent a broad spectrum of experience and skills and a comprehensive cross-section of interests of the Bellevue community as a whole.

For more information:

- Visit the project website at http://www.bellevuewa.gov/meydenbauer_project_intro.htm
- Contact one of the project managers:
 - Robin Cole, Parks & Community Services, 425/452-6195, rcole@bellevuewa.gov
 - Mike Bergstrom, Planning & Community Development, 425/452-6866, mbergstrom@bellevuewa.gov