

## CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

### SUBJECT

At its July 23 meeting, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended the City Council approve the Bel-Red Subarea Plan, zoning, and related Land Use code amendments. October 6 will be the second in a series of Council Study Sessions planned to review the recommendations and the implementation of the plan.

This agenda memo focuses on identifying issues for further review, including those the Council identified on September 22. A separate agenda memo focuses on the proposed incentive system.

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### POLICY ISSUES

Should the City adopt a new Subarea Plan for the Bel-Red area and other corresponding Comprehensive Plan amendments? Should the City adopt new land use regulations, zoning, and related amendments to implement the Bel-Red Subarea Plan?

### DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

Action  
 Discussion  
 Information

The September 22 Study Session was the first in a series of Council engagements reviewing the proposed Bel-Red Subarea Plan and included a presentation of the Planning Commission's recommendation, discussion with the chair persons of the Arts Commission, Parks and Community Services Board, Planning Commission, and Transportation

Commission, and a staff presentation of key elements of the Bel-Red Vision and draft regulations. At that Study Session Council identified a number of issues to examine in greater depth. This agenda memo provides a recommended work plan for addressing those issues and identifies other technical revisions that staff recommends. At the October 6 Study Session, staff will ask Council to identify other issues and confirm the direction to address these outstanding items.

The materials for this agenda item are provided three-hole punched, so they may be added to the Bel-Red binder that was distributed for the September 22 meeting.

## **BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS**

With the initial review of the Bel-Red Subarea plan at the September 22 Study Session, Council identified a range of issues to explore further:

- The schedule for Council review of the Bel-Red component parts and ultimate timing of action
- Financial feasibility of the plan
- The incentive system, including how the proposed tier levels work and the use of LEED as an incentive
- Regional transfer of development rights (TDR), recognizing the potential “ecosystem service value” that may be provided
- The design of the NE 15th/16th Street corridor, including the description of how light rail is integrated into the design, the potential tunnel option for light rail, the use of bike lanes, and the proposed ped/bike path
- The “opportunities” illustrated in the September 22 presentation, which included a Metro base lid with residential uses and open space, a major recreation facility, and a campus
- Dependency of the plan on key transportation projects, such as the 124th interchange at 520
- Use of terms that refer to light rail and high capacity transit in consideration that the development of Sound Transit’s East Link remains uncertain
- The potential for low impact development techniques to be used in the Bel-Red area
- The proposed 20% requirement for residential uses at the 122nd node (OR-1 and OR-2 districts)
- The effect of the proposed up zoning on the tax assessments for properties that will remain in their current use for many years
- Policy S-BR-K-1 regarding the future intent for the medical office node area
- Nomenclature used for medical district
- How to provide for public amenities like parks over time; whether it is adequate to provide these as new private development occurs

## **Council Review Schedule**

Because the Bel-Red package involves several components, Council review is expected to include multiple Study Sessions over the fall and winter. The preliminary schedule of Council reviews that was provided on September 22 is attached for reference. The schedule is intended to guide the Council review process; however, the dates are flexible and the schedule will be updated as needed. Below, the topics identified by Council are organized by major discussion points and groupings of related issues.

### **October 6**

#### **Incentive System**

The proposed incentive system along with recommendations from ULI and Property Counselors and a response from staff is discussed in detail in a separate agenda memo for October 6.

### **October 13**

#### **Financial Strategy**

The financial strategy for Bel-Red will be presented to the Council in conjunction with a discussion of the City's overall capital infrastructure financing on October 13.

### **November Study Session (date tbd)**

#### **NE 15th/16th Corridor**

NE 15th/16th is proposed as a cornerstone project for the area with both placing making and transportation objectives. The Commission recognized this project as not just about transportation functionality; its design will also deeply influence the character of the Bel-Red area. Connecting from NE 12th Street on the west side initially to 124th and ultimately to 136th Place on the east, the multi-modal boulevard will link together new Bel-Red neighborhoods and provide significant transportation benefit to the city and the region. In addition to providing arterial street connectivity, the corridor accommodates the planned light rail infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and significant landscaping elements.

Both the Transportation and Planning commissions struggled with the overall width of the corridor, and the Planning Commission directed changes that reduced that width significantly. However, the remaining components included in the project description were all recognized as critical "building blocks" required for the corridor to both function and feel as intended. The Planning Commission's recommended project description for the NE 15th/16th corridor states:

#### *NE 15th/16th Corridor*

- *4/5-lanes with light rail in the median (with an interim 2/3 lane configuration with additional outside lanes for on-street parking or bus use that could be converted to general vehicular use in the future to meet capacity needs)*
- *Sidewalks of an urban character on both sides*
- *Multi-purpose off-street pedestrian and bicycle path – continuous on the north side*
- *Connective "green" elements, including urban open spaces, significant tree canopy, natural drainage practices, and landscaped areas*

*Discussion: The NE 15th/16th project includes a cross-section that will accommodate at-grade light rail with stations at/near 122nd Avenue and 130th Avenue. A tunnel alignment at the 122nd Avenue station (tunnel between 120th Avenue and east of 124th Avenue) may be a viable option. A tunnel may be substituted for an at-grade alignment at 122nd Avenue if the City and Sound Transit jointly conclude that the tunnel best meets City and Sound Transit interests.*

A key part of the project recommendation is the flexibility provided by building a 4/5-lane travel corridor with two “convertible” lanes that could be used for interim on-street parking or bus use until general vehicular use is needed in the future.

Greater review of the NE 15th/16th project will occur at a study session to be scheduled in November or December.

### **November 3**

#### **Infrastructure Implementation Review**

The recommended Plan includes lists of public transportation, parks and open space projects that will be needed in the area through 2030 and beyond. While projects will be further defined as they “graduate” to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), projects listed in the Subarea Plan are intended to be specific enough to provide a clear understanding of the project’s function, scope, and location. This study session will provide an opportunity to review the overall planned infrastructure system in greater detail and to address questions about the major transportation projects, the coordination with state and regional transportation improvements, the terminology used for transit, and the integration of the parks system as development occurs.

### **November 10**

#### **Land Use Plan Review**

This study will focus on review of issues related to the overall land use plan and regulations, including more in-depth review of the three opportunity concepts for the Subarea that were presented on September 22, regional transfer of development rights, the minimum residential requirement for the 122nd office/residential node area, the description of the medical office area to ensure it appropriately captures the expanded nature of the medical district, and the implications of the up zone on property tax assessments. Additional topics related to the land use plan could be included in this study session as directed. Incentives to encourage the use of natural drainage practices may be discussed with these additional land use issues.

#### **Additional Plan and Code Revisions**

Additional plan and code revisions are likely to stem from the Council review of issues. Staff has also identified several technical revisions to the Planning Commission recommendation. Since the recommendation was completed on July 23, staff has been reviewing the draft plan and code in preparation to implement the provisions once they are adopted. During this review, staff has identified several technical revisions that we plan to recommend for consideration. These revisions are consistent with the Planning Commission’s recommendation, and the Planning Commission was briefed on these potential revisions at its meeting on September 24 and expressed no concern. The revisions will improve the

readability, clarity, and application of the draft provisions. A table of potential revisions is attached (Attachment 2). As the Council reviews the Bel-Red drafts, additional revisions will be incorporated in the proposed plan and code as appropriate.

## **DIRECTION REQUESTED**

Now that the Council has had the opportunity to review the entire package of the Planning Commission's recommendation of Plan and Code amendments, staff requests Council direction to identify issues you would like to explore further in addition to those identified on September 22. This will help staff to focus and prepare for the best use of upcoming Bel-Red study sessions.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The October 6, 2008, Study Session, will also include review of the proposed incentive system and the recommendations of the Urban Land Institute, which are addressed by a separate agenda memo.

The October 13, 2008, Study Session will focus on the City's long range capital planning, including funding for Bel-Red infrastructure.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Three-ring binders have been prepared as a tool to organize the materials for this and upcoming study sessions. Items provided to add to the binder for this Study Session include:

1. Council schedule for Bel-Red review
2. Staff recommended technical revisions

## Attachment 1

### Scheduled Bel-Red Study Sessions

**September 22 – Bel-Red Subarea Plan and Code:** Chairs (or their designees) of the boards and commissions that provided input on the Bel-Red Subarea Plan will join the chair of the Planning Commission in presenting the subarea plan and zoning package to the City Council.

**October 6 – Incentive System:** Presentation of the proposed incentive system, recommendations from the Urban Land Institute (ULI), and the recommendations from the City's consultant, Property Counselors, in response to the ULI feedback. This meeting will include review of additional staff-recommended modifications to the drafts and will be an opportunity to identify other issues for review.

**October 13 – Capital Planning:** City Council review of the City's long-range capital planning and financing strategy, including infrastructure needs for Bel-Red.

**October 20 – BROTS:** Discussion by City Council of the BROTS interlocal agreement with Redmond.

#### **November 3 – Infrastructure Implementation Review**

This study session will provide an opportunity to review the overall planned infrastructure system in greater detail and to address questions about the major transportation projects, the coordination with state and regional transportation improvements, the terminology used for transit, and the integration of the parks system as development occurs.

**November 10 – Land Use Plan & Regulations Review:** This study will focus on review of issues related to the overall land use plan and regulations, including more in-depth review of the three opportunity concepts for the Subarea that were presented on September 22, regional transfer of development rights, the minimum residential requirement for the 122nd office/residential node area, the description of the medical office area to ensure it appropriately captures the expanded nature of the medical district, and the implications of the up zone on property tax assessments.

#### **November (date tbd) – NE 15th/16th Corridor**

Greater review of the NE 15th/16th project will be considered at a study session to be scheduled in November or December.

**November (date tbd) – Joint Bellevue-Redmond Council Meeting:** Discuss the update of the BROTS interlocal agreement with the Redmond City Council.

**December – CIP and Budget:** Potential Council action on a new biennial budget that includes CIP programming and identifies possible funding for Bel-Red infrastructure projects.

**January – Action on Subarea Plan and Land Use Code:** Action on the Bel-Red Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code amendments may be scheduled to occur at the time of action on the 2008 package of Comprehensive Plan amendments, anticipated to be in January 2009.

**Winter-Spring 2009 – Financial Implementation:** Potential implementation of financial tools to support both Bel-Red infrastructure and other city projects, such as potential impact fees and local improvement districts, will be considered over the winter and the spring. Some financial implementation steps may occur with the budget process. Others may take additional implementation steps depending on the tools used.

## Attachment 2 Potential Bel-Red Revisions

Section	Potential Revision
<b>Subarea Plan</b>	
Medical district policies	Incorporate Comprehensive Plan amendments adopted on August 4, 2008, that were part of the Medical Institution amendment package.
Office definition in Glossary	Incorporate changes to the definition of Office that were adopted as part of the SRO Factoria amendment in early 2008.
<b>Land Use Code</b>	
Medical district code provisions	Incorporate Land Use Code amendments adopted on August 4, 2008, that were part of the Medical Institution amendment package
20.25D.030.B Master Development Plans	Clarify the method to calculate FAR across a site containing multiple buildings over the course of a phased master plan. This may be in the form of a reference to subsection 20.25D.090C that specifies the calculation of FAR.
20.25D.030.C Design Review Required	Allow for deviation to the some of the dimensional standards to ensure that sufficient flexibility exists to accommodate the evolution in development programs we might expect to see while continuing to require development to be consistent with the purpose and intent of the development standards. For example, development over time may result in a street grid pattern that is modified from that shown on the maps included in the draft code. Minor deviations are already recognized, but may need to be adjusted.
20.25D.060.F.4.c Limitations on Expansion (of Existing Uses)	Add the Office Residential (OR) zone to where it was inadvertently left off the list of districts where existing use expansion is allowed.
20.25D.070 Use Charts	Eliminate "E"s in the use charts and substitute a note at the bottom of each chart that more clearly explains how existing uses are treated and refers to the .060 section. The "E"s were included in the use charts as a method to signal to the reader how existing conditions and uses are treated. However, in discussions with property owners and Land Use staff the "E"s seemed to create greater confusion and it was suggested that notes that refer to the existing conditions section would be more clear.
20.25D.080.C FAR Earned from Special Dedications and Transfers	Change this section to allow transfer of development potential for properties dedicated to the city regardless of incentive system participation. This would further the intent of encouraging private development projects to dedicate land to support the build out of the parks and open space system.
	Revise the code section on transfers for consistency with the proposed changes proposed to the FAR maximums for non-node areas.
20.25D.090 FAR Amenity Incentive System	Revise this section to incorporate incentive ratios as directed by Council following review of the ULI and Property Counselor's review and recommendations.

	Adjust the incentive for parks and open space to clarify that they would count for both land dedication and land improvement, but could not "double count" for dedication if density credits are allowed to be transferred.
20.25H.045 Critical Areas	Consider if the proposed revisions for calculating density/intensity for critical areas site should be revised to address uses other than office and residential.