DATE: June 8, 2007

TO: Bel-Red Corridor Project Steering Committee

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SUBJECT: Concept Plan of Bel-Red Corridor--Agenda Item 4

Introduction
At the May 3 steering committee meeting, the committee agreed on a preliminary preferred alternative, and directed staff to begin work on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) based on this alternative. A map showing the vision embedded in the preliminary preferred alternative is attached (Attachment A).

At the June 13 meeting, staff and the project consultant team will present a “concept plan” which illustrates one way in which the preliminary preferred alternative could be developed over time. The concept plan illustrates the preliminary preferred alternative at a greater level of detail than the previous map graphic does. The draft concept plan map is attached for your review prior to the meeting (Attachment B). The memorandum will summarize the purpose of the map, and highlight some of the major issues for your review and consideration.

Purpose of Concept Plan Map
As the committee is aware, there are many issues that have been deliberated over the past couple of months in developing the preliminary preferred alternative. These include the overall land use pattern, types of development that could or should occur in development nodes, transportation improvements, enhancements along riparian corridors, and parks/open space features. In mapping these elements on the previous version of the map, the main intent was to capture the overall direction of the committee on these issues. The purpose of the concept plan map is to get to the next level of detail in terms of how the preliminary preferred alternative could actually be developed, and to highlight issues that will need to be looked at in greater detail as part of implementing the vision.

When preparing the map, staff and the consultant team worked to be as detailed as possible in, in order to essentially test what the ultimate development pattern could be. Therefore, the “blocks” shown in the development nodes are based on analysis of topography, parcel confirmation, how a more intensive street grid could actually work, etc. The transportation rights-of-way are drawn to scale, showing what would be needed to accommodate lane capacity, bike lanes, sidewalks, and landscaping. Doing work at this level of detail is helpful in terms of better understanding the issues involved with implementing the plan, and how development could take place in the future.

It is very important to emphasize that this map does not show, and is not intended to show, the only way the area could redevelop over time. This is true for both private development and public amenities. On the private side, the specific land uses developed (in, for example, the 130th Street...
development node) may be different over time than shown, because the vision accommodates a range of potential uses; the map illustrates one way that the area could develop based on the overall preliminary preferred vision. On the public amenities side, the map shows specific sizes and locations for parks and open space features, which is consistent with the more general maps that have been used to date. However, this is not intended to suggest that these specific parcels would be the exact location for parks facilities; rather, this is intended to illustrate the types of parks features that could be included in the vision, and generally where they could be located (to be, for example, integrated with riparian corridor improvements).

**Major Components of Concept Plan**

There are several specific issues that have been analyzed in more detail in developing the draft concept plan. These are highlighted below.

- **Land use pattern in development nodes.** As the committee is aware, one feature of all the action alternatives analyzed in the DEIS, and embedded in the preliminary preferred alternative, is that future development and redevelopment in the corridor would be focused in the mixed-use development nodes. The concept plan illustrates more detailed development patterns in the 122nd and 130th Street nodes in terms of land uses, local streets, and open space features. Understanding the details on how these areas could develop over time, and some of the issues that will need to be addressed (such as block size, location of transportation facilities, etc.) is very helpful in terms of highlighting issues that will need more attention as part of plan implementation. As noted, the concept plan shows one way these nodes could be redeveloped, but is not intended to suggest that this could be the only way.

- **NE 16th Street.** The preliminary preferred alternative includes an extension of NE 16th Street, to create a new east-west corridor through the center of the area. This extension is intended to increase capacity for automobiles, create a corridor for light rail transit, and increase mobility for bicyclists and pedestrians through the corridor (this is envisioned to be the major pedestrian/bicycle connection between the Bel-Red corridor and Downtown Bellevue). It is also envisioned as a fundamental organizing element for parks/open space and new development in the corridor through the “parks blocks” feature. The concept plan shows an ambitious right-of-way (over 200 feet in width) set aside for NE 16th Street to accommodate the transportation and parks/open space components that could be part of this corridor. Staff and consultants will show section drawings of NE 16th Street which will further illustrate how this street could be designed to incorporate a parks blocks concept.

- **Parks/open space features.** As noted, previous versions of the action alternatives and preliminary preferred alternative have shown parks components that were part of the committee’s vision in fairly general ways. The concept plan shows more specificity in terms of where future parks might locate, and how they would be integrated into development nodes, riparian corridor improvements, roadways, etc. Again, the plan is not intended to suggest that these specific parcels will necessarily become parks or that this is the only place where future parks could locate. It is intended to show that a critical mass of parks is an important part of the vision, and how parks and open space improvements can be integrated with land use change, streetscapes, and environmental enhancements.

- **Riparian corridor improvements:** The concept plan shows both the Critical Areas Ordinance “regulatory” stream setback of 50 feet and the wider “incentives” setback of 100 feet, consistent with the earlier version of the preliminary preferred alternative graphic. The concept plan further illustrates how these riparian corridor improvements could be integrated with redevelopment and parks/open space/trail improvements.
Committee Review
Staff is not asking the committee to take action on the draft concept plan at the June 13 meeting, and this plan will likely not be included as part of the committee’s recommendation to Council on the preferred alternative (unless the committee elects to do so). Again, the purpose of the concept plan is to look at the preliminary preferred alternative in more detail in order to better understand the issues and challenges that will be involved with implementing the plan. The concept plan shows one way the area could redevelop based on the preliminary preferred alternative, but there are others. Staff and the consultant team are interested in discussing the components of the concept plan with the committee and hearing the committee’s comments and concerns; these comments will help provide direction on how we direct our implementation efforts as we work towards amending the Comprehensive Plan, subarea plan, and Land Use Code, as well as infrastructure planning and financing.

At the meeting, the staff and consultant team presentation will get into more detail on how the concept plan was developed, components of the plan, and section drawings illustrating some of the concepts (in particular, streetscapes and the NE 16th Street parks blocks).

Please let us know if you have questions or comments prior to the meeting.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Preliminary Preferred Alternative—May 3
- Draft Concept Plan—June 13
This map represents the Preliminary Preferred Alternative approved by the Bel-Red Steering Committee on May 3, 2007. This future land use pattern will be used as the basis for the analysis in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

* Color-intensity denotes intensity of development.
This Concept Plan map represents an illustration of one of the ways in which the Steering Committee’s Preliminary Preferred Alternative could be developed over time. The purpose of the Concept Plan is to provide an added level of detail to highlight issues that will need to be examined in greater detail as part of implementing the Bel-Red vision. These issues include items such as: the land use pattern in development nodes, NE 16th Street, parks and open space features, and riparian corridor enhancements, among others. The transportation right-of-way is drawn to scale, showing what would be needed for to accommodate lane capacity, bike lanes, sidewalks, and landscaping.

Please note that this Concept Plan is not intended to show the only way the area could redevelop over time. This is true for both private development and public amenities. The Concept Plan map is intended to highlight key implementation issues, and will not become a future zoning or comprehensive land use plan map.