

## Work Program for the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update

Bellevue's current Comprehensive Plan is serving the City well. It establishes a clear, vibrant Vision for the year 2025 and supports the City's general land use pattern of focusing growth in Downtown and other commercial areas, while protecting residential neighborhoods. However, much has changed since the last major update was adopted in 2004. The City witnessed a boom of Downtown development and annexation of the Eastgate area. Several significant plans were completed, including those for Bel-Red, Wilburton, Crossroads and Eastgate/I-90. Additionally, the nature of the community continues to change, becoming more diverse and older. And while the City has made significant strides in meeting the goals of the current plan, some issues continue to present challenges, such as meeting objectives for housing affordability and addressing the needs of households of all economic segments.

The Comprehensive Plan update is anticipated to include:

1. Amendments required because of changes to the state Growth Management Act, other state laws, and regional planning documents
2. Amendments that bring the plan up to date and extend the planning horizon year to 2035
3. Amendments to keep the plan relevant to the community, City Council and staff, and that reflect City actions since the last update and Council direction from current and recent projects
4. Those amendments sought by individual citizens, subject to the direction of the City Council

The table below provides an outline of the primary categories of review for the update and the types of amendments that may be anticipated. A range of early public engagement activities and initial staff analysis of the existing plan identified a number of key areas of review:

### **Economic development**

Bellevue has historically been seen as a good place for business and the Comprehensive Plan strongly supports business and economic development. The update is an opportunity to incorporate the Council's current economic strategies and ensure that other elements of the plan are aligned with the City's economic priorities. It will be important for the update to capture the economic growth that has occurred since 2004 and to link the City's economic development strategies with land use, housing, environment, transportation and other policies. In addition to the City's overall economic health, early outreach identified the need to support start-ups and small, local businesses and the economic viability of local commercial and neighborhood centers. The update will also address the recently updated Regional Economic Strategy.

### **Environmental stewardship**

While the City has a strong set of environmental policies that reinforce the City's Vision as a "City in a Park" with urban development set amidst high quality natural areas, a number of changes have occurred since 2004. The City started the Environment Stewardship Initiative and the state established a long-range goal for reducing greenhouse emissions to respond to the threat of climate change. In early outreach, citizens indicated how preserving, and enhancing natural areas is becoming more critical as the City and region continue to grow. They identified future opportunities, such as access to a BNSF bike trail and to lakes Washington and Sammamish as ways to further the City's vision as one with great natural areas. In the update it may be important to look at how environmental issues are addressed, not just within the Environmental section of the

plan, but throughout the Comprehensive Plan to recognize the interaction land use, transportation, utilities, and economic development all have with the environment.

## **Community health**

Public health has become a national concern, especially the health of the county's youth. While health involves many factors, increasing research over the last decade has pointed to the role land use, access to recreation (especially walking), and access to healthy foods play in obesity and health. While Bellevue generally provides good access to food choices and recreation, the Seattle-King County Department of Health advocates that cities review how local policies can and should affect community health.

## **Culture and diversity**

Bellevue has become one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the state with nearly 1/3 of residents foreign born. Diversity is even greater for families with children. Meanwhile, the City is also growing older with a wave of population just entering retirement. The Comprehensive Plan update is an opportunity to assess how the City responds to the changes in the community, whether to facilitate 'aging in place' or to emphasize the value of a diverse and vibrant culture. The update process also needs to take diversity into account and seek ways to provide access to all segments of community.

## **Neighborhood centers and community gathering**

Bellevue survey data has consistently shown that people love their neighborhoods. Many in our early outreach continued this trend and emphasized a need to preserve the qualities of their neighborhoods. People expressed concern about the health of some neighborhood centers and talked about the need to build a stronger sense of community. People asked for more gathering places ("third places") and a way to stimulate neighborhood businesses services, not just those Downtown. The update is an opportunity to review economic, land use and transportation policies that support both preservation of neighborhoods and ways to strengthen neighborhood centers and opportunities for community gathering. This may build off the work completed for Crossroads, Wilburton, Factoria and Eastgate that supports working towards mixed use development that creates greater opportunities for housing and local services within the City's commercial centers.

## **Mobility**

Early outreach comments made it clear that the community envisions a City where it is easy to get around. People talked of making Bellevue a better place for walking and bicycling through such techniques as increased weather protection for sidewalks and separated bike routes, and they identified a desire for improved transit as ways to access stores and services without having to always use a car. Transportation was also identified as an important component to support businesses and economic development. The update is an opportunity to assess the state-of-the-art for measuring transportation level of service and to look at mobility comprehensively. The City completed a Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan update in 2009 and an update of the Transit Master Plan is underway. Light Rail Best Practices resulted in a number of Comprehensive Plan amendments in 2008 that helped establish the vision for integrating light rail. The update will organize and consolidate these different efforts to ensure that we have a consistent, clear picture of future mobility for Bellevue. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan has several overlapping and out-of-date transportation project lists. Ideally, these lists create a long-range vision for the City's transportation network that lead to development of the City's 12-year TFP (Transportation Facility

Plan). The Comprehensive Plan update can consolidate and update the transportation project lists to improve support for future TFP updates.

## Partnerships and collaboration

Bellevue has a long track record of collaborating with the community. To function at the high level the community expects requires collaboration and partnerships with the community, businesses, organizations, and other cities and agencies. Comments during early outreach emphasized the opportunity to better coordinate and partner with the Bellevue School District and Bellevue College, whether for access to recreation or to stimulate learning that supports our economy. The Comprehensive Plan has the ability to be a tool that identifies and coordinates partnerships to help align initiatives inside and outside City Hall. With a common Vision for the future, City departments can be better coordinated and work more effectively. This update can improve how the City's Vision and its policies relate to near-term actions, including creating a stronger nexus between the City's future Vision and the City's biennial budget.

Topic/Component	Description of Updates	References
<b>General updates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update out of date data, facts, figures and references</li> <li>Review for consistency with Countywide Planning Policies, regional plan and state law</li> <li>Review for internal and external consistency</li> </ul>	GMA Countywide Planning Policies Vision 2040
<b>Usability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review language for clarity, precision and usability</li> <li>Make the plan more accessible to the general reader</li> <li>Reduce redundancy and remove out-of-date policies</li> <li>Ensure that policies are at the "policy level"</li> </ul>	
<b>Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess community Vision and update as appropriate</li> </ul>	
<b>Introduction &amp; Citizen Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance readability, such as with an executive summary</li> <li>Review policies on citizen engagement, including the aspect of culture and diversity, and related to city master planning processes</li> </ul>	
<b>Land Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update population and employment forecasts and targets</li> <li>Update/add information regarding growth strategy that focuses on Downtown and other commercial centers</li> <li>Improve support for neighborhood and mixed used centers and recognize Downtown as a residential neighborhood</li> <li>Review land use designations, including commercial and multifamily</li> </ul>	GMA Countywide Planning Policies Vision 2040 Early outreach

<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate updated needs assessment with City's regional partner ARCH</li> <li>• Update policies on housing needs consistent with Countywide Planning Policies</li> <li>• Review how policies support changing demographics</li> </ul>	GMA Countywide Planning Policies Early outreach
<b>Capital Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update consistent with current system plans</li> <li>• Review need for additional civic facilities based on growth</li> <li>• Review guidance to CIP process</li> <li>• Review how to support and integrate partnership opportunities</li> </ul>	GMA
<b>Utilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates for consistency with system plans for City-managed utilities</li> <li>• Updates related to plans for non-city-managed utilities</li> </ul>	GMA
<b>Stormwater</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate NPDES-related stormwater policies that emphasize low impact development; integrate with land use, transportation and other policy areas</li> </ul>	NPDES
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider multimodal strategies to support land use, economic development, environmental and community objectives</li> <li>• Assess state of the art for measuring concurrency and mode split and consider additional policy direction</li> <li>• Update and consolidate transit sections consistent with Transit Master Plan update</li> <li>• Review/update consistent with current light rail direction, including policies related to access to station areas</li> <li>• Consolidate/update existing multiple long-range transportation plans consistent with the Transportation Facilities Program (TFP)</li> </ul>	GMA Countywide Planning Policies Vision 2040 Early outreach
<b>Station Areas Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate project, that may result in Comprehensive Plan amendments to be folded into overall update</li> </ul>	Station Area Planning Project

<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update economic data</li> <li>• Updates based on current economic strategy discussions and updated Regional Economic Strategy</li> <li>• Recognize significant/growing economic areas, including retail, high tech, medical, tourism/hotels, entertainment, auto sales, and small business development</li> <li>• Address ways to attract “knowledge workers”</li> <li>• Address connections to higher education</li> <li>• Improve “nimbleness” in responding to situational instances (linked with Land Use)</li> </ul>	Bellevue Economic Strategy Regional Economic Strategy Countywide Planning Policies Vision 2040 Early outreach
<b>Community Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review across Comprehensive Plan to address issues of healthy communities, such as walkability</li> </ul>	Countywide Planning Policies
<b>Human Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update recognizing changes in city demographics, including needs related to seniors, public health, and homelessness</li> </ul>	
<b>Diversity/Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update demographic data</li> <li>• Integrate Bellevue Diversity Initiative</li> <li>• Review issues related to culture, ethnicity and age across the Comprehensive Plan</li> </ul>	Early outreach
<b>Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate city’s Environmental Stewardship Initiative strategies</li> <li>• Address state/regional climate change goals</li> <li>• Review across Comprehensive Plan to incorporate greenhouse gas reduction and mitigation strategies</li> <li>• Review city objectives for ecosystem restoration and improving water quality</li> </ul>	Bellevue Environmental Steward Initiative Countywide Planning Policies Early Outreach State goals
<b>Parks, Open Space &amp; Recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update consistent with POS system plan</li> <li>• Review long range goals to preserve, expand park system, including the need for parks serving developing areas, such as Downtown and BelRed</li> <li>• Update Community Services policies</li> </ul>	GMA
<b>Urban Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider updates related to the Downtown Livability project and other planning studies</li> </ul>	Downtown Livability Project
<b>Annexation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now has limited importance; reduce and merge into Land Use Element</li> </ul>	

<b>Downtown Subarea</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate potential policies amendments, projects and updates to the land use designations that result from DT Livability and DT Transportation Plan projects</li> </ul>	Downtown Livability Project Downtown Transportation Plan
<b>Eastgate/I-90 Corridor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update portions of the Eastgate, Richards Valley, and Factoria subarea plans to include the Eastgate/I-90 project recommendations</li> </ul>	Eastgate/I-90 Project
<b>Subarea Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a schedule for updating individual subarea plan per a rotating schedule beginning in 2015</li> </ul>	
<b>Glossary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor updates</li> </ul>	
<b>Shoreline Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated under separate SMP process</li> </ul>	SMP Update project