

July 11, 2023

To: Members of Bellevue Planning Commission

Fr: Craig Spiezele

Re: Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Northwest Quadrant

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Good evening, my name is Craig Spiezele. I am writing on behalf of many of my neighbors in Lochleven. We are in opposition to the Planning staff's preferred alternative for the Northwest Quadrant including the classifications of R-Medium and R-High throughout Lochleven.

Over the past several months the Planning Department has advanced many initiatives to the Planning Commission for review and approval. The sheer volume of their proposals has been overwhelming and the capacity to digest and understand the impact of the EIS is a significant challenge. The aggressive timeline proposed to the Commission has prevented meaningful public engagement and limiting the Commission to make a thoughtful data-driven recommendation to City Council.

It is important to note the community is still trying to understand and digest the impact of HB1110, DADUs, ADUs and micro-apartments. With the increased height of these same properties up to six stories, the compounded impact will forever change the character of our neighborhoods.

While some of these changes might be reasonable for commercial districts, the expansive scope of the EIS including existing single family homes is fundamentally wrong. The "Preferable Alternative" would be a direct conflict to the principles and assurances made by past Commissions and Council over the past decade. The "wedding cake" model championed and embraced by the City made it possible for substantial investment in residential properties outside of the downtown core. If approved the City would be abandoning this agreement with the community.

In summary the Planning staff's preferred alternative should not be approved for the following reasons:

1. Directly conflicts with the Comp Plan for NW Bellevue, revised less than 2 years ago
2. Diminishes the mandated buffer and separation between downtown Bellevue and Lochleven.
3. Does not consider the loss of privacy to nearby properties.
4. Does not consider the shadow footprint on nearby properties and impact to the tree canopy.
5. Does not consider the impact to traffic, pedestrian safety, parking and curb management.
6. Does not consider the impact to city utilities and infrastructure, including police and fire.
7. Lacks an economic impact assessment to homeowners property values.

Our ask is to send back the EIS to the Planning Department. The Commission needs to assert their role to require a data driven analysis and establish a new realistic schedule to allow all stakeholders adequate time to study these proposals.

Over the past two years the City has made significant progress increasing housing alternatives and topographies. We are asking the Commission to draw a line in the sand. Increasing density at all costs should not be the answer. We need your help to preserve our great neighborhoods.

Thank you for all of your work in making Bellevue a great City and protecting our City for future generations.

Craig Spiezele  
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