



## Save Coal Creek Talking Points

The public hearing on the Park Pointe PUD is open to **everyone** – Bellevue residents and others from throughout the region – who wish to have their voice heard by the Bellevue Hearing Examiner who will decide on the permit.

**Our collective voices need to be heard!**

- In writing to [hearingexaminer@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:hearingexaminer@bellevuewa.gov) before 3:00pm, Thursday, March 2. Include your name, address and Project Name: Park Pointe PUD

Plan to attend the public hearing at 6:00 PM on Thursday, March 2:

- In person at Bellevue City Hall, Council Chambers 1E-126. Let's be visible and all wear white
- Join by Zoom Passcode: 448106. From phone, call 253-215-8782, Webinar ID: 812 6190 7590, Passcode: 448106
- If you want to speak sign-up to provide oral testimony by 3:00 pm March 2 here

### Here are some talking points to consider:

Stories that connect to the heart are especially powerful!

#### **Wrong Location - the PUD is isolated, not near city services**

As our cities grow, our planners advocate for development in locations served by bus transit, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, nearby grocery stores and other features that reduce dependence on vehicle use. The Park Point PUD does not have these services nearby.

In addition, the Park Pointe project currently is not served by any public sewer main lines because it is located in an isolated, less-developed area. Because the closest sewer main line is so far away and because it's uphill from the project site, the developer has to install an on-site sanitary sewer lift station and force main. This infrastructure poses significant operation and maintenance concerns and the management and maintenance of this sewage system would be an outsized burden for Bellevue ratepayers to take on for just one subdivision.



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#### **Incompatible with adjacent land uses**

The PUD is not compatible with the existing land use and property that abuts and is directly across the street from the planned development. The subject property connects to both of Bellevue and King County's largest parks. Additional parkland HERE would help create a lasting legacy for our children and grandchildren. The Project is not compatible with the existing and intended character, appearance, and physical characteristics of the immediate vicinity. You can read what the City of Bellevue has in mind from the [Parks Department's website for Coal Creek](#) that describes the intended character of the area.

The city's Land Use Policy LU-2 states: "Retain the city's park-like character through the preservation and enhancement of parks, open space, and tree canopy throughout the city." This PUD would degrade the current experience of open space and parkland in the adjacent city park, the Coal Creek Natural Area, and would also negatively impact the county park across the street.

#### **Impact to Coal Creek**

Coal Creek is a critical salmon creek and the County and the City have spent millions of dollars of investment towards preservation and restoration of salmon habitat in that creek. The project would introduce pollution, stormwater, water quantity, noise, light, and other adverse impacts to Coal Creek. There would also be risks of raw sewage entering coal creek if the on-site system were to fail. Coal Creek is a salmon creek and needs fully protective buffers. The PUD plan would allow some stream and wetland buffers to be reduced.

#### **Full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required**

A full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is needed to consider the regional significance of the property. By recommending a Mitigated Determination of Non-significance instead of a full EIS, Bellevue has avoided a thorough scrutiny of environmental impacts. During the scoping process for an EIS, the city would be required to invite other local governments including the Tribes, natural resource agencies, interested local organizations such as Trout Unlimited and Eastside Audubon as well as many more neighbors living in the vicinity, to a presentation of the proposal. The regional significance of this specific parcel would quickly come to light.

The proposed PUD would require a huge new area of pavement as well as roof tops that would absorb and retain solar heat and increase off-site water flow. Tree canopy would be reduced - the PUD plan allows for removal of 65 mature trees. These would be negative impacts, exactly the opposite of Bellevue's climate change goals.



### **Impact to the wildlife corridor**

Milt Swanson kept his frontage along Lakemont Boulevard SE open. This property creates a safe crossing for wildlife and humans due to the long open sight-lines and absence of metal guardrails. Interchange between the two parks is important for the animal's genetic diversity and overall population survival. Animals need to cross in this location between the two parks, particularly in late summer, for water. This is necessary now, and as summers continue to get hotter and drier, the need for these thirsty Deer, Bears, Racoons, Bobcats, Coyotes etc to cross the street for survival increases. The [City of Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan Parks Recreation and Open Space](#) lays out a good vision supporting the preservation of this land and wildlife corridor. With this statement as a stated focus area on page (291) "**Open Space, Greenways, Wildlife Corridors, and Trails: Acquiring and protecting open space to establish a network of greenways throughout the community**".

### **Pedestrian safety: Not in compliance with city policies encouraging walking and biking**

The pedestrian crossing between Red Town Trailhead parking lot (County side of street) and Coal Creek Natural Area (westside trails) is at the lowest spot and adjacent to a sharp curve in Lakemont Boulevard SE, making it very hazardous. Purchase of the Isola property by the city for public use would provide a better location for pedestrian crossing.

Bellevue decision criteria for a Planned Unit Development (LUC 20.30D.150) include:

*J. Roads and streets, whether public or private, within and contiguous to the site comply with Transportation Department guidelines for construction of streets; and*

*K. Streets and sidewalks, existing and proposed, are suitable and adequate to carry anticipated traffic within the proposed project and in the vicinity of the proposed project*

Instead of complying with these PUD criteria, the Isola development as designed will risk the safety of future residents. The trails from the development connect with city park trails, but these would not be adequate for safety reasons to connect to other neighborhoods. Children living in homes in the proposed PUD would not be able to safely reach friends in the existing developed areas to the north, such as Forest Drive. They need a good sidewalk separated, but visible from Lakemont Boulevard SE. Lakemont is a high-speed, two-lane highway with considerable commuter traffic connecting to I-90 to the north and Newcastle to the west. It has no sidewalks or bike lanes. This is incompatible with Bellevue's initiative to support walking and biking as safe, healthy and attractive alternatives to driving. [Pedestrian-Bicycle Plan | City of Bellevue](#)



### **Public access to the two largest parks**

King County's largest park (Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park, more than 3,000 acres) and Bellevue's largest park (Coal Creek Natural Area, 440 acres) need better access. Red Town Trailhead parking can't be improved or expanded because of coal mining issues and regularly fills up! Coal Creek Natural Area has NO parking at its eastern end. If this property were acquired, an additional gravel (permeable) parking lot could be provided in a well planned location.

### **Recreational impacts**

How will this affect you? March 2nd is a City of Bellevue hearing, on a City of Bellevue development proposal. However, writers from nearby cities and neighborhoods that value the trail system of the 2 parks and local history, should identify themselves as recreational users and history appreciators from xx city. Writers should point out to the hearing examiner that the city process excludes consideration of regional value and regional significance. Please consider cc'ing emailed remarks to King County council.

### **This is a historical site**

There are remnants of the coal mining industry and village of 1,000 people that lived here in 1910. Please advocate for saving Milt Swanson's red horse barn, built in the 1930s using traditional board and batten construction methods. This structure speaks to the daily need for horses to do logging, hauling and farming. [Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan](#) includes goals of preserving open space and connecting trails, recognizing and preserving local history.

### **Wildlife habitat**

The pasture next to Milt Swanson's house is a rare habitat in Bellevue, supporting insect life, songbirds, birds of prey, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. 100+ creatures have been observed using the site. The open meadow / pasture offers habitat different from the two forested parks that has been used in the past by Pheasants, Quail, Barn Owls, Barn Swallows, songbirds, butterflies, etc.

### **Protect taxpayer investment in healthy Salmon bearing streams**

Bellevue has spent more than \$25 million since 2004 to control sediment and improve streamside habitat to help salmon live. Although not high in numbers, the coho and chinook salmon returning to Coal Creek over the last 10 years speak to the gradually improving conditions in this stream.



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The construction of 35 new homes to this location will involve 100s of 1000s of tons of soil excavation and replacement and installation of water and sewer lines which is very disruptive and could create runoff into Coal Creek. Toxins from construction and yard chemicals and runoff from newly created impervious surfaces could also harm Coal Creek, negating some of Bellevue's investments in cleaning up the creek. Let's protect Bellevue's investment in the health of Coal Creek by keeping Milt's farm intact!

**Traffic**

Avoid several years of traffic impedence during construction involving 100s of 1000s of tons of soil excavation and replacement and installation of water and sewer lines.