

## STAFF REPORT

DATE: 11/24/2025

TO: Bel Aire City Council

FROM: Paula Downs

RE: Bel Aire 2035 Comprehensive Plan

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### STAFF COMMUNICATION

FOR MEETING OF	12/02/2025
CITY COUNCIL	
INFORMATION ONLY	

### **SUMMARY: Bel Aire 2035 Comprehensive Plan**

The city placed notification on the City of Bel Aire's website as required by city code. The affidavit of publication is provided. The comprehensive plan required notification of public hearing which was made on July 24, 2025.

Planning Commission approved the Comprehensive Plan Resolution at their August 14, 2025, meeting. The draft meeting minutes provide details of the discussion. Meeting minutes are included in the agenda packet.

City Council reviewed the Comprehensive Plan at their September 2, 2025, meeting. City Council discussed several items that needed to be modified before approval. The City Council sent the item back to the Planning Commission.

### **Background:**

In 2023, the City initiated a project to create a new comprehensive plan that describes a vision and framework for the community's development over the next 10 years. The document will serve as a roadmap for adopting new policies and initiatives that achieve its identified vision. The comprehensive plan will assist the City Council in making well-informed decisions regarding land use and capital improvements.

The plan will complement zoning regulations, development codes, capital improvement programs and other city processes.

### **1. August 14, 2025- Planning Commission Meeting**

The Planning Commission were provided a brief overview of the planning process and overall organization of the planning document. Commission was provided with the four planning stages and how the plan was organized. Commission was provided summary information on each section of the plan including the general information provided in each appendix section.

PEC provided additional highlights from the plan and stood for questions. The Planning Commission asked several clarifying questions and stated they felt the plan was put together well.

The Planning Commission moved to adopt the Resolution to Adopt the Bel Aire 20235 Comprehensive Plan as presented and recommend that the Governing Body approve the Plan by publication of an Ordinance per K.S.A. 12-747(b).

## **2. September 2, 2025- City Council Meeting**

PEC provided a brief presentation to the City Council outlining the plan and providing an overview of the format, plan phases, and several plan highlights. Mayor Benage expressed concerns about the data used for the plan. Councilmember Schmitz had concerns about the population estimates being low. Councilmember Dehn had concerns about the amount of public engagement for the plan; he wished it were more robust.

Based on concerns about the data used, it was moved to return the recommendation of the Planning Commission for Approval of the plan to the Planning Commission for further consideration, with a statement specifying the basis for failure to Approve or Disapprove, the statement is: This plan has multiple issues of outdated data and information.

(Mayor Benage) will provide an expanded report within a week, but some of the examples are: outdated population, outdated average income, outdated traffic counts, inaccurate references to medical facilities, and future use proposals that are not consistent with current zoning, especially with regards to land south of the railroad tracks and east of Webb Road. The motion to return was passed 5-1.

## **3. November 13, 2025- Planning Commission Meeting**

PEC and staff meet with Mayor Benage to discuss several concerns/questions he had about the Comprehensive Plan. Each concern was discussed and updates were made. There were several comments related to the utilization of “outdated” data. At the time the community overview information was created in late 2023, the current data information was from 2022. Data is typically made available in December of each year which reflects information from the previous year- for example: December 2024 would reflect data for 2023. At the time the Comprehensive Plan was presented in September, data for 2024 was not available.

The key updates made to the plan are as follows:

1. Page 15 includes flexibility language to the goal of creating a Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Board- now states: “
2. Property located south of the railroad tracks between Rock Road and Webb Road was revised on Map 3-2 | Future Land Use Map (page 27) from "Traditional Neighborhood" to “Industrial & Logistics Center”. Complimentary map revisions were made on pages 33 and 45.
3. The Key Findings on page A-3 were revised.
  - a. Previous: "Furthermore, this percentage can also indicate that the critical mass of residential uses has not been met to satisfy the private sector selection criteria for non-residential development within the City."
  - b. Revised: "It is recommended that the City explore marketing opportunities that exist based on the current demographics and needs of Bel Aire, in addition to working with the private sector to better understand key metrics to increase the amount of commercial amenities and services available."

4. Updated Map A-3 - Community Facilities & Services (page A-9) to remove the Kansas Heart Hospital and Heartland Cardiology. "Wesley Medical Center operates a 99-bed hospital offering emergency care, cardiac, orthopedic, and bariatric services at 2610 N. Woodlawn Blvd." was added to page A-8.
5. Updated Map A-6 - Traffic Volume (page A-15) to reflect latest 2025 data from KDOT.
6. The location of the future Skyview Park has been added to Map A-4 - Existing Park Needs (page A-11).
7. Replace 2022 American Community Survey data with 2023 American Community Survey data where applicable within Appendix A: Community Assessment.
8. Added footnote to page A-28 indicating that the adopted mill level at the time the analysis was 43.000, with the note that the mill levy adopted for 2026 is 41.000.

Mayor Benage provided additional comments that were discussed and agreed that changes would not be needed.

The Planning Commission approved the updated Comprehensive Plan Resolution with a 5-0 vote.

### **Current Discussion**

The Comprehensive Plan has been updated, and the Planning Commission approved the Resolution to adopt the plan.

Staff recommends approval of the Comprehensive Plan by Ordinance.