



**Date:** October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
**To:** Parks & Community Services Board  
**From:** Bradley Calvert, Community Development Program Manager  
Planning and Community Development  
**Subject:** Wilburton-Grand Connection Briefing  
*(Board action requested – feedback)*

### **ACTION REQUESTED**

The Parks & Community Services Board will be briefed on the Wilburton-Grand Connection planning initiative, including work to date on the Grand Connection visioning and the anticipated work for the Wilburton Commercial Area.

The Parks & Community Services Board will be asked to provide their feedback and input regarding the project.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Wilburton-Grand Connection planning initiative was launched on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015 as a Council priority. The project includes two primary elements, a re-visioning of the Wilburton Commercial Area and the visioning of the Grand Connection

#### *Grand Connection*

The Grand Connection is envisioned as a non-motorized corridor that will begin at Meydenbauer Bay, connecting with Old Bellevue, the Downtown Park, Downtown Bellevue, and crossing I-405 into the Wilburton Commercial Area, and interfacing with the Eastside Rail Corridor. Planning and Community Development contracted with Balmori Associates, a landscape and urban design firm, to develop a high level vision for the proposed route. This vision is to include an overarching identity for the route, cohesive design strategies; including but not limited to paving, vegetation, and weather protection; improvement of existing public spaces, and to provide alternatives to cross Interstate 405 into the Wilburton Commercial Area. The work was separated into two phases; Phase One from Meydenbauer Bay to the Transit Center, and Phase Two from the Transit Center to Eastside Rail Corridor, including the I-405 crossing.

Additionally the team of lead and sub-consultants have conducted public and stakeholder engagement to help prioritize and inform the design. To date, the design team has completed approximately 90% of Phase One. In April the City partnered with Bellevue Arts Museum to host a three day design charrette where over 70 architects, planners, engineers, and artists infused concepts and strategies into the project. Visioning for the Grand Connection is expected to conclude in the second quarter of 2017.

### *Wilburton Commercial Area*

Historically referred to as “Auto Row” the Wilburton Commercial rests at the confluence of a number of planned transportation and infrastructure improvements. By 2023 the Wilburton East Link light rail station will provide service at the northern side of the study area. Additionally the East Main, Downtown, and Spring District stations will ensure that the entire study area will be within a transit walkshed. In addition to transit service the Eastside Rail Corridor will provide a non-motorized north-south spine through the entire study area. The Grand Connection is anticipated to interface with the Eastside Rail Corridor and provide an east-west connection to Downtown.

Combined with the planned transportation improvements, the Wilburton Commercial Area is positioned between Bellevue’s two high growth urban areas of Downtown and BelRed. This unique context encourages the Wilburton Commercial Area to become the next urban neighborhood of Bellevue. As such the city will launch a land use, urban design, transportation, and environmental analysis of the study area to create a new vision that capitalizes on the Wilburton Commercial Area’s unique context. This process will include analysis and recommendations to zoning, urban design, transportation, and parks and open space. As part of the public engagement, the City will form a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to recommend a preferred alternative. The analysis and CAC are expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018.

If you have any questions following this evening’s presentation and discussion please do not hesitate to contact me at 425.452.6930 or [bcalvert@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:bcalvert@bellevuewa.gov).