

Bridle Trails Subarea Plan

GOAL:

To protect and preserve the rural, equestrian, and residential character of Bridle Trails.

OVERVIEW

Bridle Trails is approximately three square miles in size bounded on the south by SR 520; on the west by the I-405 Freeway; on the north by the Bellevue City limits; and on the east by 148th Avenue N.E.

Bridle Trails is primarily residential in use and character. Other than the apartments and condominiums along 148th N.E., Bridle Trails housing is single-family on lots ranging from 10,000 square feet to several acres. In addition, there is some commercial use along the southern edge of Bridle Trails and some office use. Churches, a fire station, schools, a stable, a golf course, and public facilities round out the uses.

What distinguishes Bridle Trails is its wooded character: some two-thirds of the area is covered with second growth timber. The wooded character lends itself to the equestrian uses in Bridle Trails and the Subarea's interdependent relationship with Bridle Trails State Park.

The Bridle Trails State Park is adjacent to the northwest portion of Bridle Trails Subarea and is the hub of equestrian activity. Owned and maintained by the State of Washington, the Park consists of 481 acres containing over 53 miles of trails. Botanists, hikers, and other pedestrians use the trails compatibly with equestrians.

This lush wooded area with grazing horses creates a unique juxtaposition to the urban setting beyond the freeways.

There are slightly more than 4,300 residential units in Bridle Trails. Of those, 1,300 are single-family detached. The remainder consists of a mix of attached units: condominiums and apartments.

Including the Bellevue Golf Course, Bridle Trails Subarea contains around 160 acres of open space. A distinguishing feature of Bridle Trails is the number of lots zoned R-1 (one unit per acre). Compared to other residential areas in Bellevue, Bridle Trails by far contains the most large size lots.

Issues in Bridle Trails focus on preserving the rural equestrian character of the area,

improving mobility for pedestrians and equestrians, reducing non-local traffic from residential streets, protecting remaining residential land from changing use, and cooperating with surrounding jurisdictions on land use and transportation issues.

The Subarea Plan is the guide for Bridle Trails' future. It contains policy direction for land use, circulation, community design, and interjurisdictional relations.

General Land Use

POLICIES

POLICY S-BT-1. Protect Bridle Trails from encroachment by more intense uses to ensure that the Subarea remains an area of residential neighborhoods.

POLICY S-BT-2. Support the existing character of Bridle Trails State Park “natural area” as a regional park providing opportunities for equestrian, hiking, nature study, and other passive activities only.

POLICY S-BT-3. Preserve the wooded, natural, rural, and equestrian character of the Subarea and encourage horse-keeping in low-density residential areas.

POLICY S-BT-4. Encourage and support interjurisdictional agreements among Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond, and King County to, among other things, ensure that land uses are compatible with Bridle Trails residential neighborhoods.

Natural Determinants

POLICIES

POLICY S-BT-5. Protect and enhance the capability of Yarrow Creek, Valley Creek, and Goff Creek to support fish and other water-dependent wildlife.

Discussion: This policy recognizes the role of these creeks in fisheries support and wildlife preservation. It is important to preserve the natural environment and to retain our native habitat for the aesthetic value and character of the community.

POLICY S-BT-6. Apply citywide natural determinants regulations to the riparian corridors of Yarrow Creek, Valley Creek, and Goff Creek.

POLICY S-BT-7. Where natural vegetation is removed, replacement with similar plant materials should be required.

POLICY S-BT-8. In environmentally sensitive areas, the impervious surface coverage should be kept to a minimum.

POLICY S-BT-9. A maximum amount of vegetation should be maintained along streams to protect side slopes from erosion, to provide shade to encourage fish propagation, to protect wildlife habitat, and to reduce stream pollution.

POLICY S-BT-10. Facilities should be provided in accordance with the Bellevue Storm Drainage Plan to store storm water drainage, reduce peak stream flows, and reduce the erosion of stream beds.

POLICY S-BT-11. The retention and protection of open drainage courses and de facto storm water detention areas should be promoted through land acquisition, acquisition of easements, or the encouragement, through incentives, of their incorporation into the design of private development.

POLICY S-BT-12. Development should be prevented from intruding into the floodplain of Valley Creek, Goff Creek, or Yarrow Creek.

Parks and Open Space

POLICIES

POLICY S-BT-13. Encourage the City to purchase land for parks and open space if appropriate land becomes available.

POLICY S-BT-14. Reinforce the importance of citizen involvement in the park planning process.

Circulation

GOAL:

Recognize the unique suburban residential character of Bridle Trails in the planning, design, and implementation of capital improvement projects.

POLICIES

POLICY S-BT-15. Implement the 1988 Transportation/Circulation Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

POLICY S-BT-16. Construct and operate city-owned streets, sidewalks, paths, trails, and other transportation facilities to preserve and maintain public safety.

POLICY S-BT-17. All collector and minor arterials in the Bridle Trails Subarea shall remain two-lane, except a planned connection between N.E. 29th Place and N.E. 24th Street.

Discussion: The Bridle Trails Subarea Plan recognizes the Bellevue Redmond/Overlake Transportation Study II Project 46.2 which calls for a phased addition of a new road between N.E. 29th Place and N.E. 24th. [Amended Ord. 5398]

POLICY S-BT-18. Discourage any east-west connecting streets through the Subarea; this would include but not be limited to N.E. 40th, N.E. 56th, and N.E. 60th, to protect the existing rural residential quality of Bridle Trails.

POLICY S-BT-19. Acquire equestrian/pedestrian easements through the development review process on new development and redevelopment.

POLICY S-BT-20. Work with utility companies to gain public nonmotorized trail easements along power line corridors to complete the equestrian trail facilities plan.

Discussion: Bridle Trails is known for its equestrian facilities, particularly the Bridle Trails State Park which is located nearby. To help maintain or expand equestrian amenities in Bridle Trails, the Bridle Trails community could organize an equestrian organization to work with the City on trail issues.

POLICY S-BT-21. Try operational solutions to safety and speed problems before developing major capital solutions.

Discussion: Before the City determines that the installation of two-way turn lanes, turn pockets, or traffic signals on Bridle Trails arterials are necessary, try reducing speeds and installing four-way stops as potential solutions.

POLICY S-BT-22. Improvements to the regional transportation system should not adversely affect surrounding neighborhoods.

POLICY S-BT-23. Discourage the use of Bridle Trails arterials by regional through/commuter traffic and discourage non-local traffic use of residential streets.

Discussion: Encourage regional through/commuter traffic to use major transportation systems and to avoid Bridle Trails arterials and residential streets.

POLICY S-BT-24. Discourage the use of permanent barriers that obstruct the flow of traffic and emergency vehicles.

POLICY S-BT-25. Encourage the City to make nonmotorized interim improvements where major capital projects are not imminent.

POLICY S-BT-26. Ensure that public nonmotorized easements remain open for public access.

POLICY S-BT-27. Develop a safe, balanced circulation system that accommodates both motorized and nonmotorized users in the planning, design, and implementation of transportation projects.

Discussion: Wide streets create a barrier to pedestrian movement. The needs of pedestrians should be balanced with the needs of the automobile.

POLICY S-BT-28. Develop meandering sidewalks and/or trails where needed to preserve existing significant trees.

POLICY S-BT-29. Develop and implement a systems plan to provide safe nonmotorized circulation within superblocks.

POLICY S-BT-30. Develop and implement safe midblock crossings where appropriate on superblocks.

POLICY S-BT-31. Give appropriate consideration to the special needs of handicapped, disabled, and elderly persons in planning systems and designing facilities for transportation and nonmotorized circulation.

POLICY S-BT-32. The City should encourage the use of transit, ride-sharing, and other means of sharing trips that have beneficial effects on reducing the demand for improvements to existing roadway facilities.

Utilities

POLICIES

POLICY S-BT-33. Provide sewer extension to non-sewered areas only when required for health reasons, as part of a subdivision, or when requested and paid for by the homeowner.

POLICY S-BT-34. Provide Bellevue-owned utility service to surrounding jurisdictions in accordance with the Annexation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Community Design

POLICIES

Rural Character

POLICY S-BT-35. Maintain and improve the rural, tree-lined character of the through streets, including arterials and collector arterials, by discouraging the cutting of significant trees.

POLICY S-BT-36. Encourage all new, non-traffic signs erected in the Subarea, such as pedestrian and equestrian crossing sign and signs marking the entries to residential communities, to be constructed of wood and finished with stains or sealers that maintain the natural color and appearance of the wood.

Discussion: Although the City has no regulatory mechanism to enforce this, the intent is important. Community clubs should promote this concept.

POLICY S-BT-37. Encourage the retention of significant trees along arterial and collector arterial streets, except where trees or limbs of trees impose a hazard to public safety.

POLICY S-BT-38. Encourage the adoption of development standards which will maintain the existing character of the area. For instance, encourage developers of small land divisions (short plats) to:

1. Maintain as much vegetation and topsoil on each building site as possible;
2. Design access drives to retain vegetation;
3. Minimize the visibility of the subdivision as seen from arterials; and
4. Allow variation in street standards, curbs, and gutters so that they can be informal.

Discussion (Policies S-BT-37, 38): Only when the prohibition of clearing is established as part of the platting conditions can the City enforce such a policy.

Regulations do not exist which prohibit clearing in single-family districts otherwise. Community clubs should promote this concept.

POLICY S-BT-39. Encourage low density lots and short platted subdivisions to be configured to accept and accommodate a horse paddock(s).

Discussion: The intent of this policy is to maintain the equestrian character of Bridle Trails. A change in the Land Use Code is desired by the community.

Local Community clubs should pursue and promote this concept with developers and property owners. The City should also attempt to promote this policy.

Environment

POLICY S-BT-40. Natural vegetation should be protected and preserved to provide buffers between land uses.

POLICY S-BT-41. Where noise has been identified as a problem, noise mitigation measures should be included in any residential proposals.

Discussion: Encourage new development to mitigate external traffic noise impacts through the use of berms, setbacks, construction techniques, site design, or other methods. Commercial uses are not an appropriate noise mitigation method.

POLICY S-BT-42. Encourage retention of vegetation on the lower slopes of the bluff adjacent to SR 520 at approximately 136th Avenue N.E. to provide a visual separator between residential areas and the freeway.

Paths and Trails

POLICY S-BT-43. Maintain and enhance the existing character of the Subarea by retaining elements associated with equestrian use. Improve roadsides to create a unified visual appearance.

Streetscape

POLICY S-BT-44. Where differing uses abut, a buffer strip of approximately 75 feet on the intense side of the edge of the property line should be established. If natural vegetation provides a dense buffer, it should be left undisturbed. In lieu of an existing natural buffer, appropriate plantings should be encouraged to provide a dense buffer of appropriate height.

If the use on the intense side of the property line is an elementary school, mini-daycare center or daycare center, a buffer of less than 75 feet may be planted if: a) the planting is a minimum of 20 feet in depth and equivalent in intensity to plantings required in Transition Areas where the district providing the transition to a residential use is LI, GC, or CB, and b) no buildings, driveways or parking areas are constructed within 75 feet of the property line of the less intense use. Children’s play equipment may be located within the 75-foot buffer provided it does not intrude into the 20-foot planting area. [Amended Ord. 5027]

Discussion: The buffering is to apply to any change in use from single-family, including multifamily.

Design Features

POLICY S-BT-45. Encourage the City to construct an entrance sign into Bellevue at 148th Avenue N.E. and N.E. 60th Street (Bridle Crest Trail) in character with the business park and multifamily development to the south. Locate the gateway sign on the median strip.

POLICY S-BT-46. Encourage the preservation of a wooded character on N.E. 24th Street between approximately 124th Avenue N.E. and 136th Avenue N.E.

POLICY S-BT-47. Encourage an exterior residential appearance on any portion of a nonresidential or multifamily development.

Discussion: Residential appearance criteria includes consideration of rooflines, windows, and the amount of open space on the site. Special attention should be given to the screening of rooftop equipment due to topographic conditions and to the use of uniform, non-obtrusive roof color and material.

Planning District Guidelines

The Bridle Trails Subarea is divided into two planning districts: Planning District A and Planning District B. The boundaries are mapped on the Land Use Plan (*Figure S-BT.1*).

POLICIES

Planning District A

Planning District A includes that portion of the Subarea west of a north/south line halfway between 140th Avenue N.E. and 148th Avenue N.E. extending west to I-405 and south to SR 520.

General Land Use

POLICY S-BT-48. Encourage communication and cooperation with Kirkland on land use and circulation issues along the common boundaries between Bellevue and Kirkland.

Discussion: It is imperative that Bellevue and Kirkland exchange information concerning land use policies and any proposed changes which may affect Planning District A.

POLICY S-BT-49. Other than those areas defined below, suburban residential uses are appropriate.

POLICY S-BT-50. Single-family Low-density at a density of approximately one unit per acre is appropriate for most areas of Planning District A as illustrated on the Land Use Plan (*Figure S-BT.1*).

POLICY S-BT-51. Single-family Low-density is appropriate on the western edge of Planning District A beginning at the intersection of the Burlington Northern right-of-way and 116th Avenue N.E. north along I-405 to approximately N.E. 34th Street. Assure development as illustrated on the Land Use Plan (*Figure S-BT.1*).

POLICY S-BT-52. Open space is appropriate on the Pike's Peak park site and the Nature Park site.

POLICY S-BT-53. Evaluate, during the development review process, alternatives to NE 28th Street for vehicular access to the properties adjacent to the south. [*Amended Ord. 4932*]

POLICY S-BT-54. The approximately 40-acre parcel on the west side of 140th Avenue N.E. north of N.E. 55th Street should retain the existing Single-family Low-density residential designation.

Discussion: The development of a senior congregate care facility and nursing home may be appropriate. Such a proposal would require a conditional use permit to demonstrate compatibility with adjacent development and the character of the Subarea.

Under existing land use code regulations (as of October 19, 1988) a change in zoning from Single-family Low-density to Multifamily Low-density is required to permit a senior congregate care facility or to Multifamily Medium-density to permit a nursing home.

The City is considering a change to the Land Use Code to permit these uses in single-family zones. If this occurs, a change in zoning may not be necessary to permit a congregate care and a nursing home facility on this parcel.

However, if a rezone is desired to increase density, it should not exceed Multifamily Low-density, and it would only be allowed in order to accommodate a congregate care facility and/or a nursing facility.

Conditions of the rezone should include, but not be limited to: the location of vehicular access, a limit on density, siting which is compatible with the terrain and surrounding development, and the use of building materials.

In addition, it is imperative that community participation in the conditional use permitting process be assured.

POLICY S-BT-55. Low-intensity, low-rise offices are appropriate along Northup Way's north side from approximately 116th N.E. to the entrance of Pike's Peak.

POLICY S-BT-56. Residential development at a single family density not exceeding six dwelling units per acre is appropriate in the area east of and adjacent to the entrance to Pike's Peak. Development of attached units is encouraged through the Planned Unit Development process to minimize impacts to the vegetation and protected areas on the site. Building height, bulk and roofline design are issues to be considered if this site is developed with attached units to maintain compatibility with the nearby single family community. *[Amended Res. 5900]*

POLICY S-BT-57. *[Repealed Res. 5900]*

POLICY S-BT-58. Single-family High-density use is appropriate for the property east of Cherry Crest Lane and may be developed through the PUD process.

POLICY S-BT-59. Low-rise, low-intensity office uses are appropriate on the west side of 130th Avenue N.E. south of N.E. 24th (known as the Placek Addition on the map). Access is appropriate onto 130th only.

POLICY S-BT-60. Single-family Low-density is appropriate for the properties bounded on the west by existing office development east of 130th and the power lines at approximately 130th Avenue N.E. on the east. These properties are on the south side of N.E. 24th across from N.E. 134th.

POLICY S-BT-61. Between the power line and 136th Avenue N.E., low-rise, low-intensity office is appropriate. Access should be onto 136th Place to prevent additional curb cuts onto N.E. 24th.

POLICY S-BT-62. Low-intensity, low-rise office uses are appropriate east of 140th Avenue N.E. and north of N.E. 24th Street. There shall be limited access to these sites.

POLICY S-BT-63. Encourage the creation of a consolidated access at 134th and N.E. 24th which connects the properties along N.E. 24th between the power line to the east and the section line at approximately 132nd.

Discussion: The intent of this policy is to connect the three parcels with a private drive which will intersect with N.E. 24th Street at approximately N.E. 134th.

Planning District B

Planning District B is that portion of the Subarea east of a line halfway between and parallel to 140th Avenue N.E. and 148th Avenue N.E.

Residential Development

POLICY S-BT-64. Encourage development as illustrated on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-BT.1).

POLICY S-BT-65. Assure compatibility of land uses adjacent to residential and encourage cooperation among the jurisdictions which border Bridle Trails Subarea.

POLICY S-BT-66. Create nonmotorized access to Goldsmith Park from 140th Avenue N.E.

Discussion: This requires installing a path through District A residential neighborhoods.

