

Eastside Rail Corridor

Briefing to Parks & Community Services Board

January 13, 2015



Tonight's Presentation

Part 1:

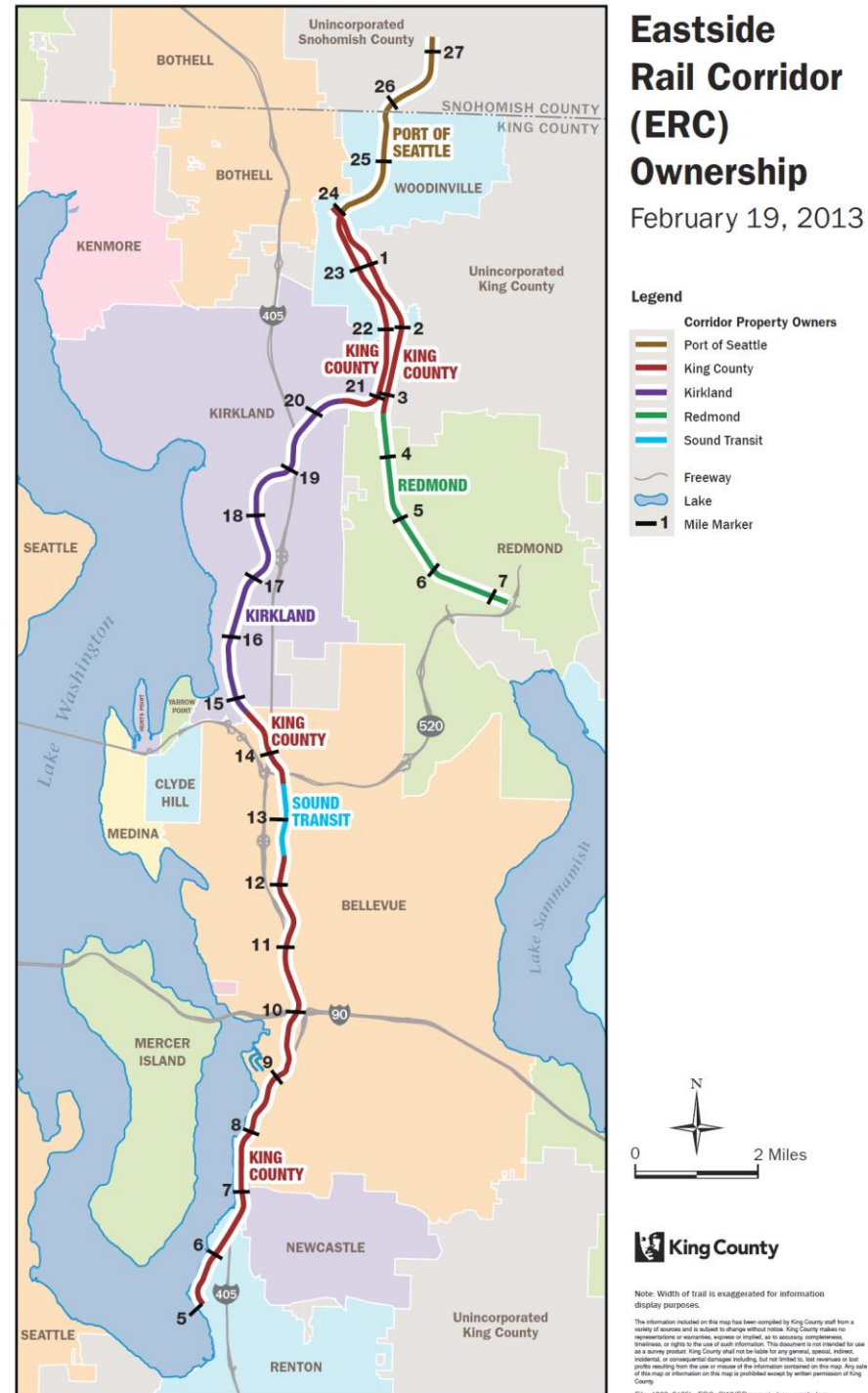
- Rail corridor overview
- Bellevue policy direction & plans
- Opportunities and challenges in the Bellevue segment

Part 2:

- King County trail master plan process
Erica Jacobs, King County Parks

Eastside Rail Corridor

- Corridor extends from City of Snohomish to Renton
- Two owners in Bellevue segment:
 - King County (mostly)
 - Sound Transit (SR 520 to NE 6th Street).
- ERC encumbered by easements for
 - Trail (King County)
 - Utility (PSE)
 - Utility (King County sewer)
 - High Capacity Transit (ST)
- Corridor is Rail-Banked (Woodinville – Renton), could revert to freight rail.



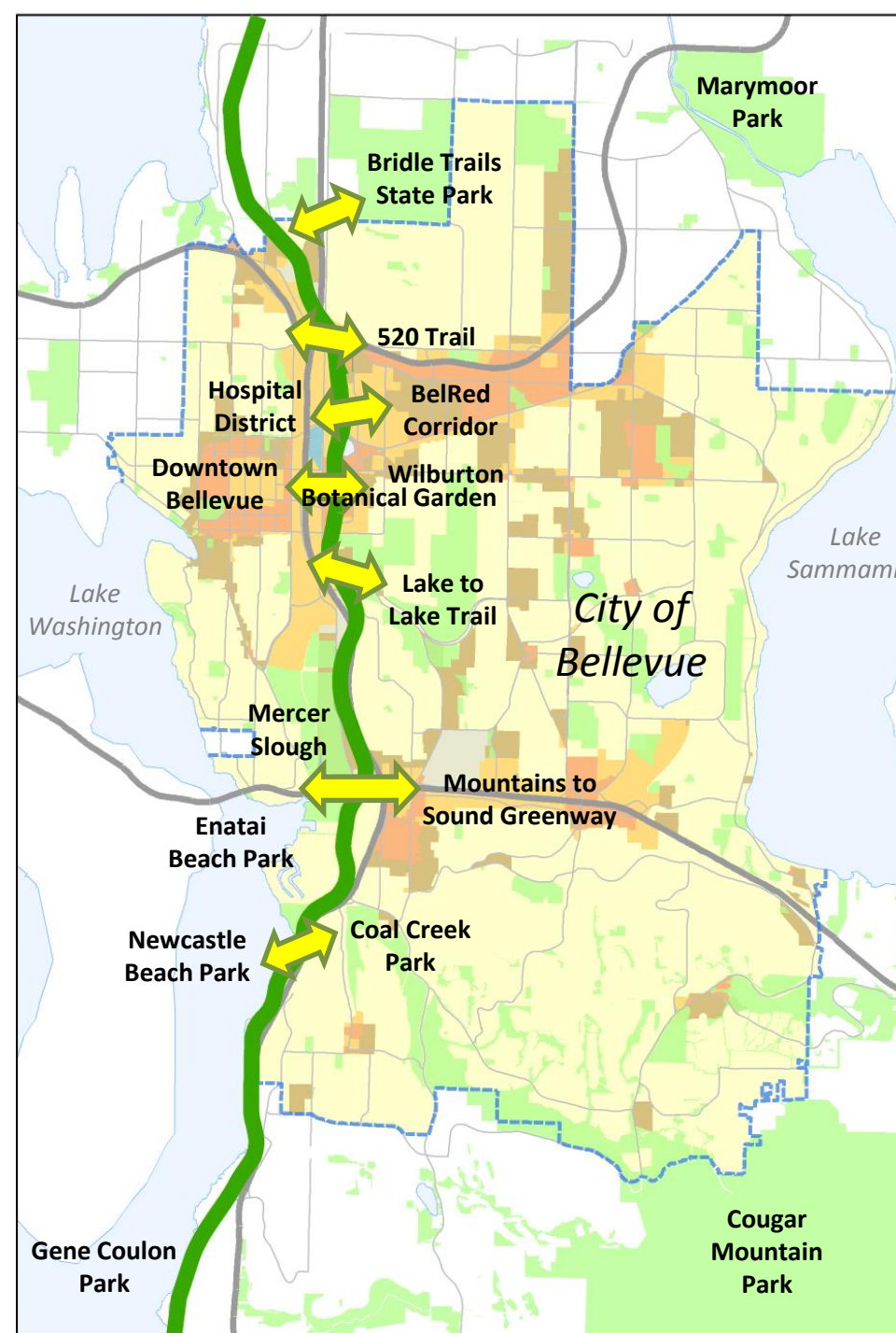
Regional Advisory Council

- Authorized by King County Council in December 2012
- Charged with planning how the owners of the 42 mile Eastside Rail Corridor can collaboratively make corridor a rail, trail, and utility asset for the people of the region
- Owners:
 - King County, Sound Transit, City of Redmond, City of Kirkland, Puget Sound Energy
- *Bellevue is an “Associate”, not a formal member of the Regional Advisory Council.*

Eastside Rail Corridor

 Key Bellevue Connections

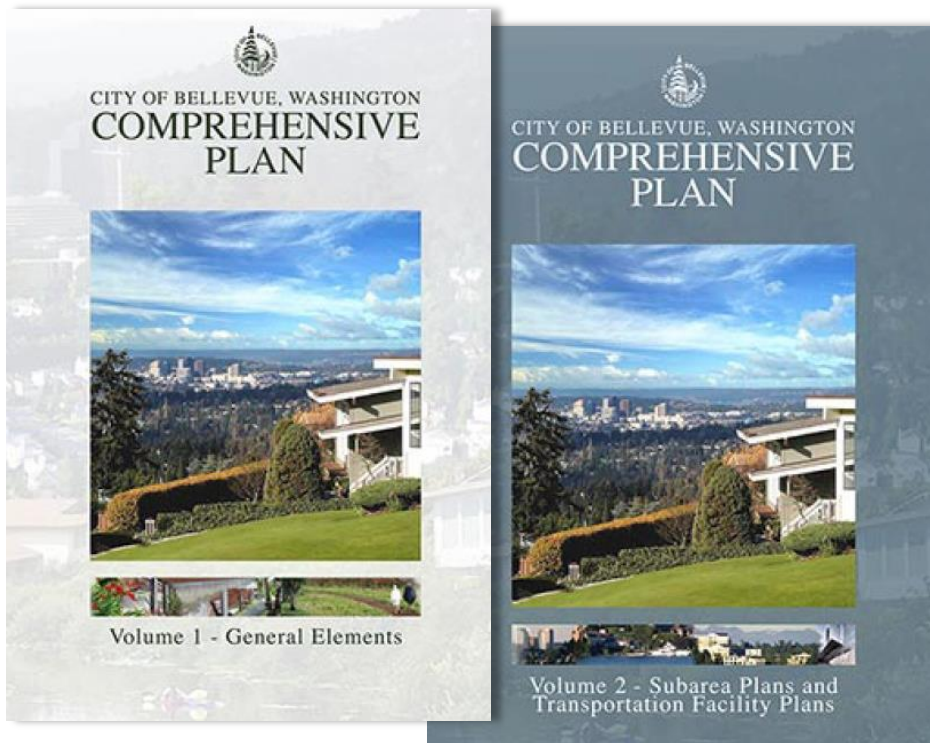
- ERC occupies a key north-south route through Bellevue.
- Connects many significant origins and destinations within the city and regionally.



ERC in Bellevue Comprehensive Plan

General Policy

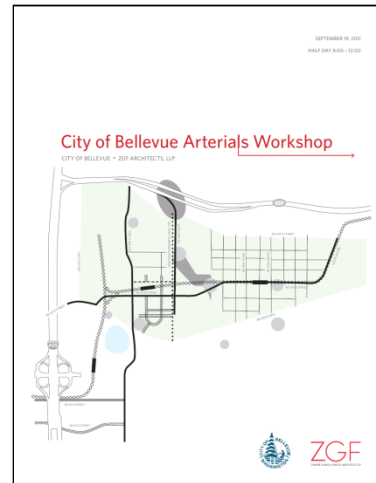
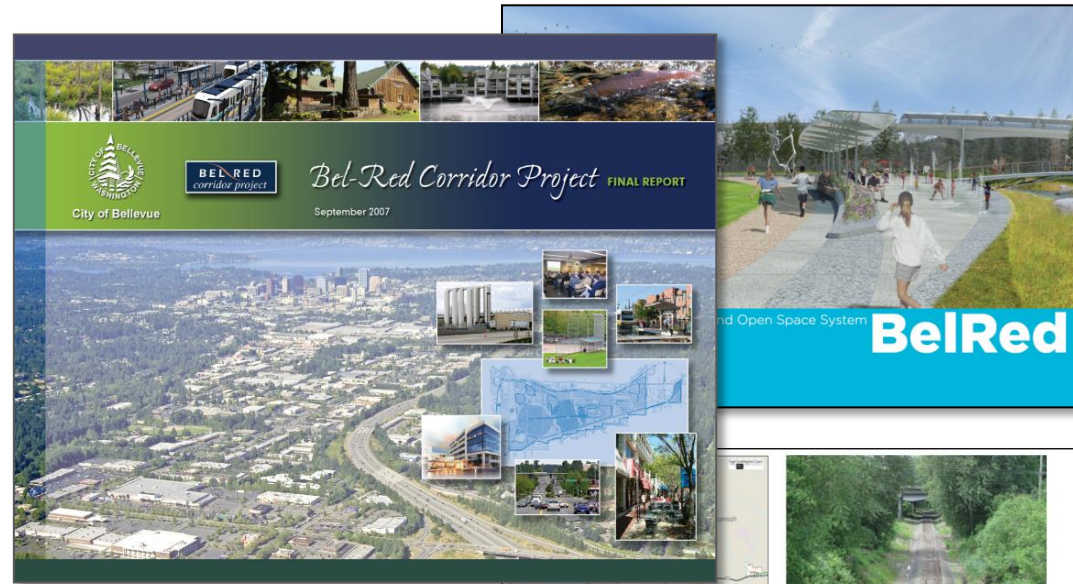
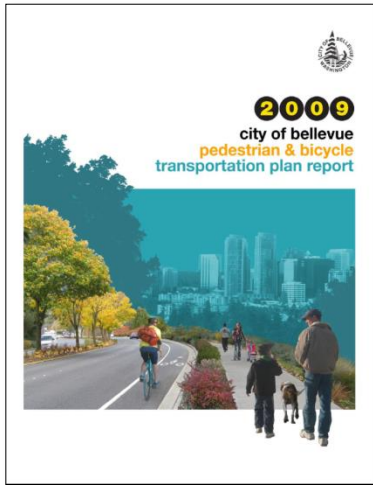
- **POLICY PA-21.** Coordinate with other jurisdictions, including state agencies and the Port of Seattle, in the planning and development of regional greenways, parks, cultural, and recreational facilities, including the BNSF trail system.



Rail Corridor Interfaces Seven Bellevue Subareas

- **POLICY S-BR-38.** Provide an interconnected system of non-motorized trails for mobility within the study area, connected to the larger, regional trail system, including Marymoor Park and Bridle Trails State Park. The system will emphasize recreational use and provide transportation benefits as well:
 - a. Provide non-motorized trails along the stream corridors to connect parks and other land uses, and links to the trail systems along the BNSF Corridor and NE 16th Street. Initial emphasis will focus on the West Tributary and Goff Creek stream systems;
 - c. Support the development of a regional north-south multi-use trail along the BNSF Corridor that could coexist with potential long-term future rail use, linking to the NE 16th Street regional trail and other local trail access points.
- **POLICY S-BR-64.** Develop a multi-use trail system throughout the Subarea that provides both local and regional connections, including major non-motorized facilities along the extended NE 16th Street, along the West Tributary of Kelsey Creek and other stream corridors, and incorporating the planned regional trail along the BNSF railroad corridor.
- **POLICY S-BR-65.** Develop multiple access points to the planned BNSF corridor multi-use trail.
- **POLICY S-NB-41.** Retain existing forest land between the Burlington Northern Railroad right-of-way and I-405 in its current rural, natural, and wooded state through careful site planning.
- **POLICY S-RV-24.** Encourage the retention and enhancement of special features designated by the Urban Design Element such as unique open spaces, landmarks, and viewpoints. *Discussion: In Richards Valley the stream and wetlands qualify as unique open space, the railroad trestle as a landmark and the view from Woodridge School grounds as a designated viewpoint.*
- **POLICY S-WI-31.** Recognize the transportation and recreation uses under consideration for the BNSF rail corridor when considering public and private improvements adjacent to the corridor and preserve the opportunity for future multimodal transportation use and access.

ERC in Plans, Reports, Studies



ERC Interest Statement



BELLEVUE INTEREST STATEMENT FOR THE EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR

Adopted July 22, 2013 by Bellevue City Council

Key points:

- Support for regional efforts to develop ERC for public use and benefit.
- Support for regional Advisory Council, seeking a role for Bellevue.

Council included \$1m for ERC in new 2015-2021 CIP. Specific use TBD.

The City of Bellevue supports regional efforts to develop the Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) for public use and benefit. The City has long supported preservation of this important public right-of-way for multiple public uses. This approach is consistent with regional organizations, local governments, and owners of the corridor. The development of the ERC within King County offers a significant step toward providing important north/south connectivity between local communities from Renton to Woodinville and points along this major public corridor. Over time, this connection provides a rare and unique opportunity to create a variety of benefits and uses for the public. The Bellevue City Council supports the following principles for future corridor design and implementation processes within the King County segment of the corridor:

1. **Governance Structure and Implementation Plan.** Following on the work of the 2013 ERC Regional Advisory Council, Bellevue strongly supports the establishment of a standing regional governing body, including a seat for Bellevue, to provide oversight of the planning, development and implementation steps among affected jurisdictions and parties. This body should be responsible for developing an interim and long-term conceptual plan for the corridor. Examples of the range of work should include the following priority objectives:
 - **Advance the work of the ERC Advisory Council.** Refine the vision developed by the ERC.
 - **Plan for the future.** Develop a roadmap for the design, management and implementation activities in the corridor vision.
 - **Develop a phased, well-integrated plan.** Ensure affected local intersections and state highway interchanges along the corridor are carefully analyzed, planned and phased, especially where there are overlapping or competing interests for uses of the ERC right-of-way in highly constrained locations.
 - **Balance continuity and local interests.** Ensure all efforts address continuity of design incorporating the diverse interests of communities along the corridor.
 - **Be strategic and transparent.** Develop the corridor in a highly collaborative, open and transparent manner that achieves multiple objectives and efficiencies in design, funding, construction and ongoing maintenance of the corridor.
 - **Engage the public.** Design and conduct a comprehensive public outreach program that ensures stakeholder involvement throughout the process.
2. **Develop a Complementary, Comprehensive and Sustainable Financial Plan.** The regional governing body and affected parties should work closely to secure financial support from a range of sources including state, federal and private organizations for capital and operating improvements. Specifically, the financial plan should:
 - Prioritize key investments along the corridor.
 - Provide guidance concerning specific funding alternatives.
 - Use innovative financing mechanisms.
 - Ensure that value engineering, cost containment and other mechanisms are used to optimize funding.

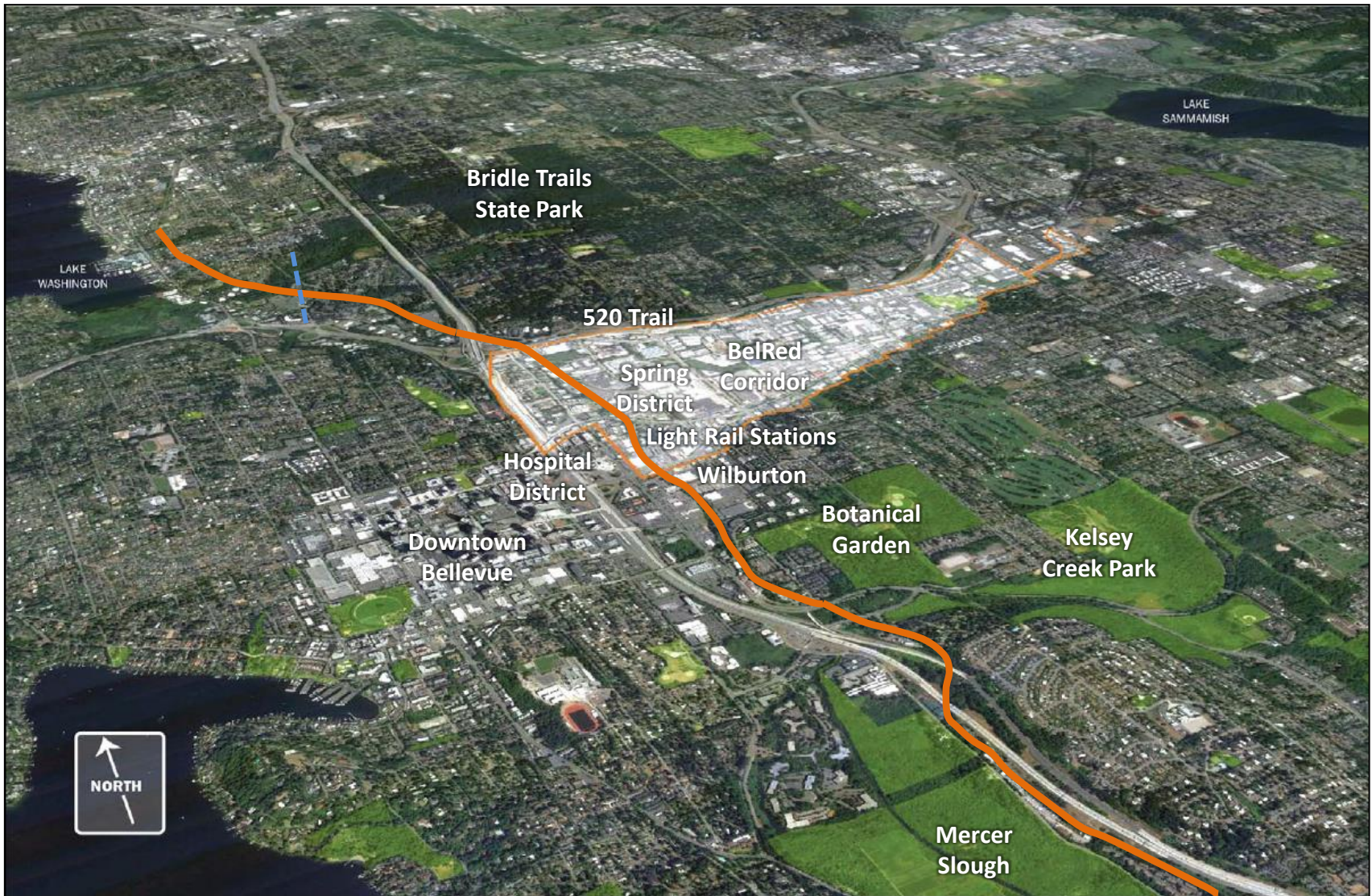
ERC Interest Statement

Key points:

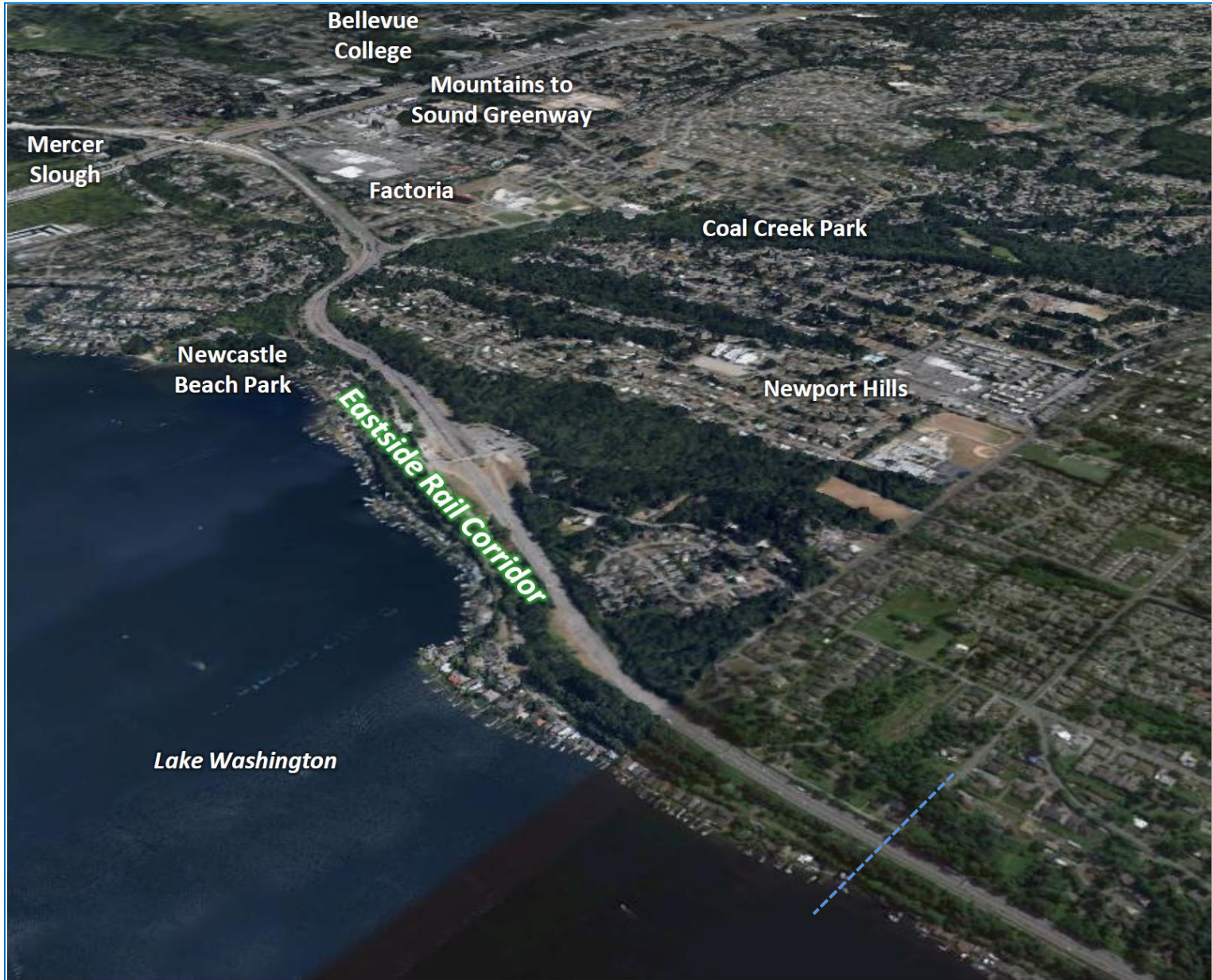
- Support for multiple uses
- Grade separation may be needed at some locations
- Ensure public access at optimal locations
- Trestle is iconic, should be optimized for public use.
- Provides connections to locations within Bellevue as well as to the region.

- 3. Implement Multiple Uses.** Development of this corridor is an important component for the Eastside's increasingly multimodal transportation network as the Eastside, Bellevue and the region continue to grow. In addition to implementing a trail supporting pedestrian and bicycle uses and passenger rail uses, there are opportunities to achieve multiple policy objectives and efficiencies given the proximity of public utility uses within, under and adjacent to the corridor. As multiple uses are planned, consideration must be given to mitigating noise, mobility, visual and other impacts to residents and businesses along the corridor, improved mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as investigating national and regional best practices and case studies for multimodal uses of the corridor that add capacity to the transportation system.
- 4. City Implementation Challenges.** Bellevue has a number of key interests related to phasing and implementation intended to improve multimodal connectivity, help reduce congestion and maintain public safety where the corridor and other improvements overlap, including the following:
 - **Grade Separation.** The City has a number of intersections (NE 4th, NE 6th and NE 8th streets) that cross the corridor right-of-way. Of particular concern is the highly constrained area at NE 8th that will require careful planning and design and where grade separation must be explored.
 - **Sound Transit Projects.** The City and Sound Transit are working to deliver the East Link light rail project. Within the project envelope, there are a number of areas that will require special design consideration. For example, if the International Paper site is ultimately chosen for Sound Transit's East Link project operations and maintenance satellite facility, it must be carefully vetted and well integrated into the Region's vision for the Eastside Rail Corridor. Similarly, special care should be given to the multiple uses near the new East Link Hospital Station on NE 8th Street.
 - **State Highways.** WSDOT's future highway expansion also overlaps with the corridor in downtown Bellevue. The corridor design process must be fully integrated with affected state improvements, including all areas of over- and undercrossing at I-405 and I-90 (including the crossing that was removed as part of the recent I-405 widening project due north of I-90).
 - **Public Access.** Planning efforts must ensure optimal public access points along the corridor.
 - **Wilburton Trestle.** The Wilburton Trestle is an iconic structure and, to the greatest extent possible, should be optimized for public use.
 - **Regional Trail and Other Major Destinations.** The implementation plan should ensure quality connections to major destinations in Bellevue such as the Mountains to Sound Greenway, Mercer Slough, Coal Creek Park, Newcastle Beach Park, 520 Trail, Bel-Red redevelopment area, and Downtown Bellevue.
- 5. Ensure Planning Consistency and Innovation.** Relevant regional and local transportation plans, including those developed by the Puget Sound Regional Council (VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040), Sound Transit (ST2 and related Long Range Plan and ST3). ST3, a new effort just getting underway, will provide a new list of high capacity transit improvements for a possible 2016 ballot measure. City Comprehensive Plans and other local improvement plans will require updates to reflect current ERC planning and corridor analysis.

ERC – Northern Extent in Bellevue



ERC – Southern Extent in Bellevue



Bellevue North Segment

- Kirkland has removed rails in 5.75 mile segment, constructed “interim” trail improvements.
- North segment in Bellevue (S. Kirkland P&R to Northup Way) presents the fewest apparent challenges to trail implementation.

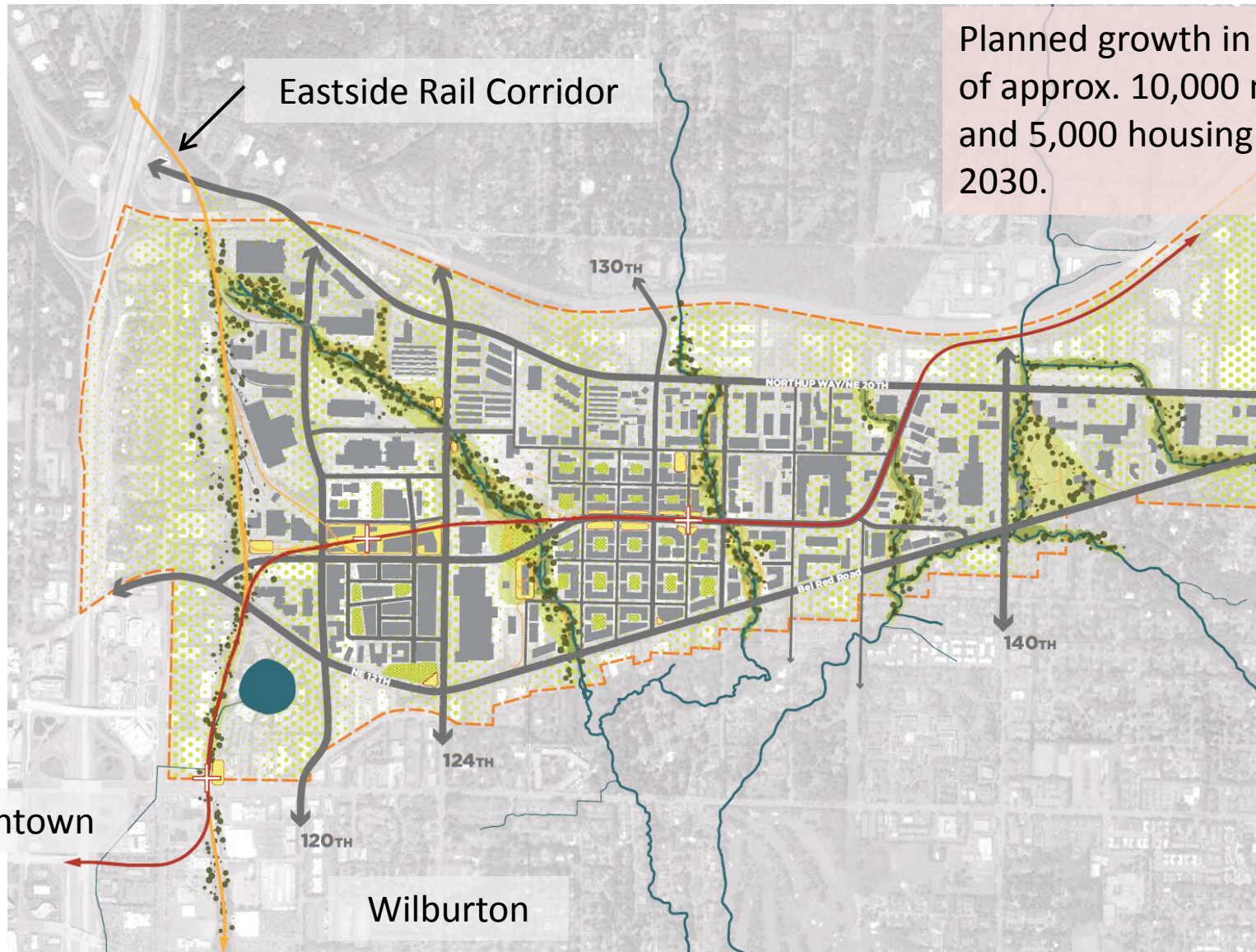


Bel-Red Subarea



Bel-Red Subarea Vision

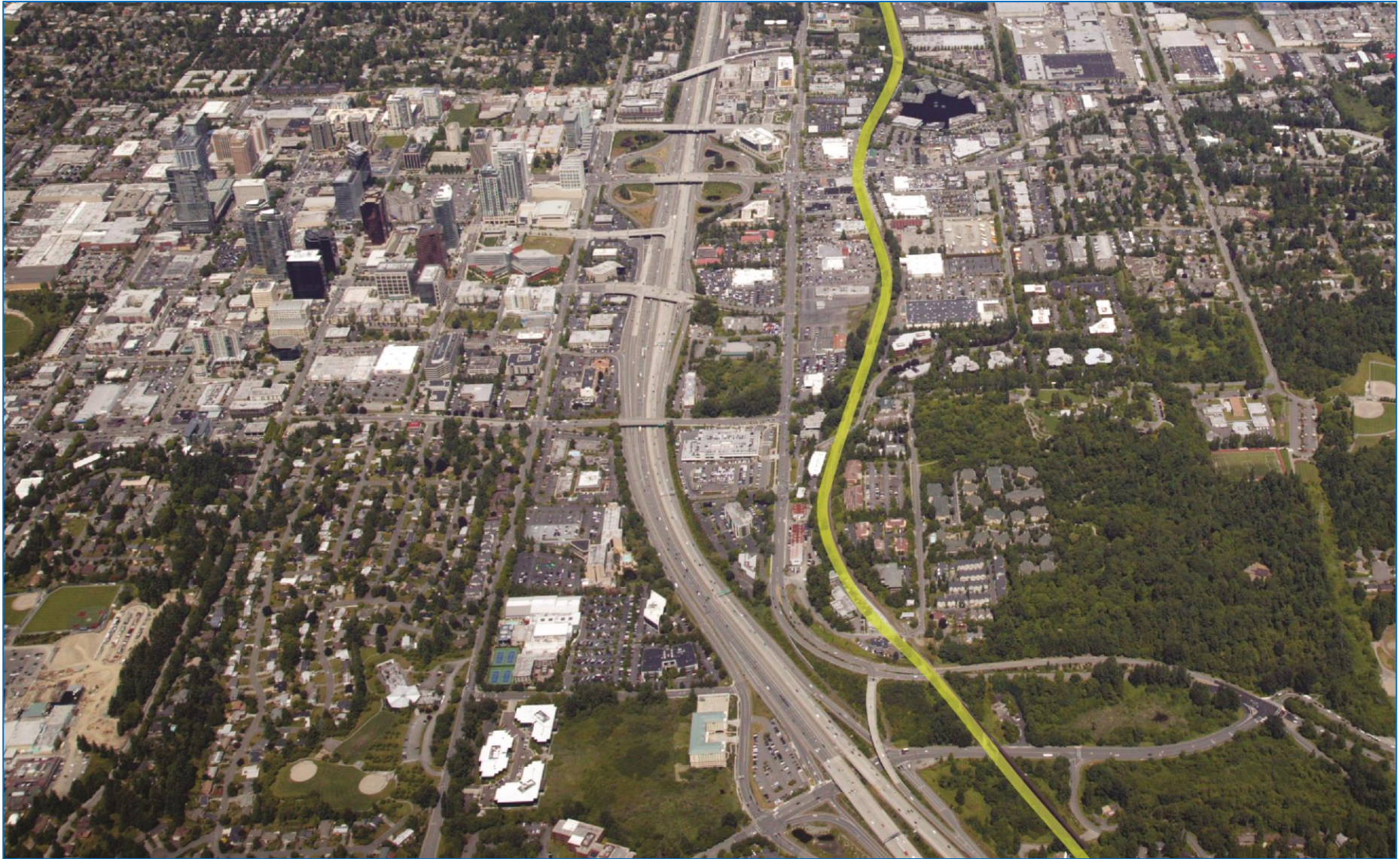
Planned growth in Bel-Red of approx. 10,000 new jobs and 5,000 housing units by 2030.



ERC Supports Bel-Red, Downtown



Downtown/Wilburton



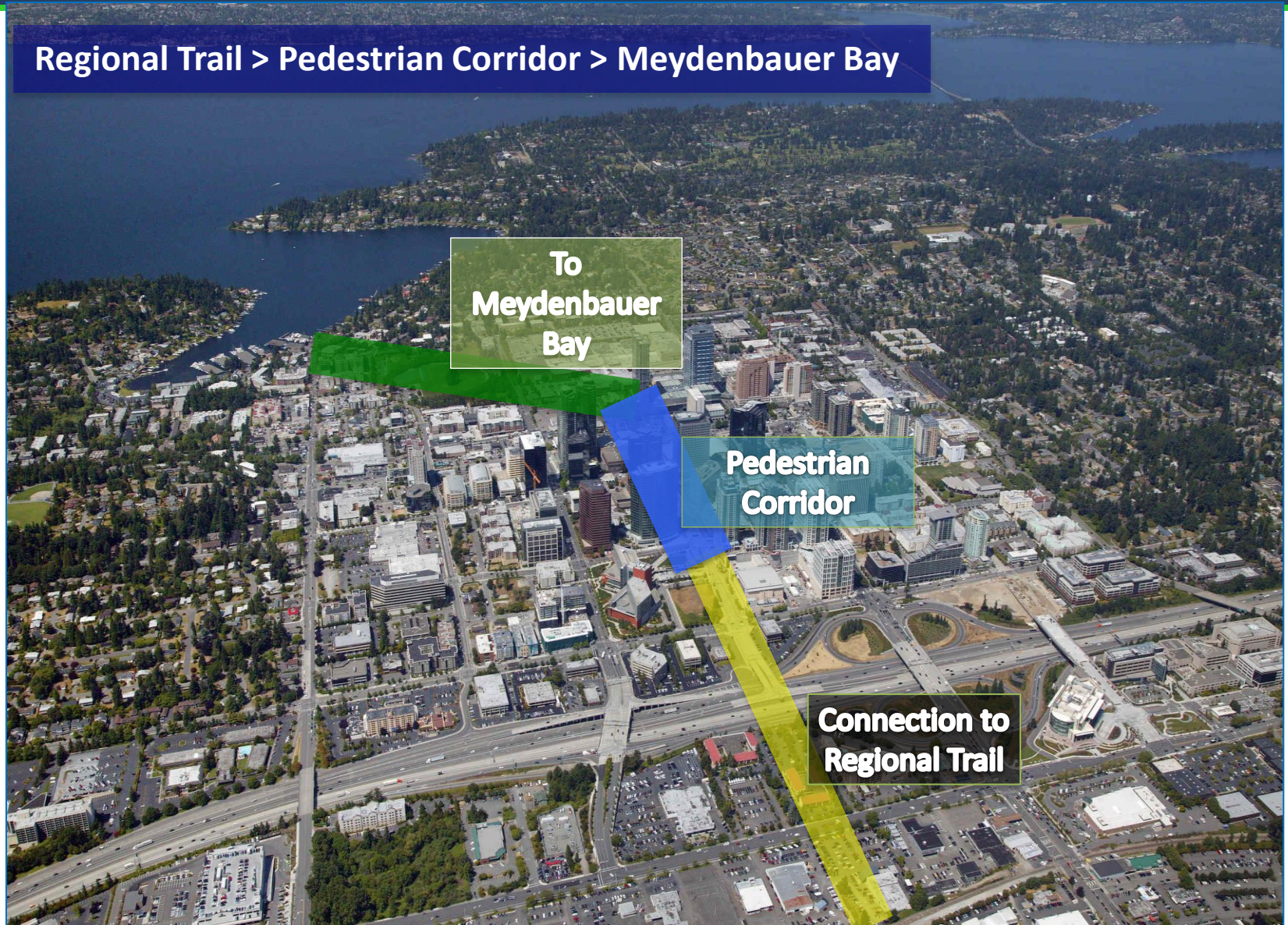
Wilburton Area

- Multiple street crossings:
 - NE 8th Street
 - NE 6th Street (future)
 - NE 4th Street
 - SE 1st Street
 - SE 5th StreetAt some, it is anticipated trail crossing will need to be grade-separated.
- Forthcoming planning initiative to focus on Wilburton Special Opportunity Area (NE 8th St to Main St)
- Concept for Grand Connection to Downtown, waterfront.



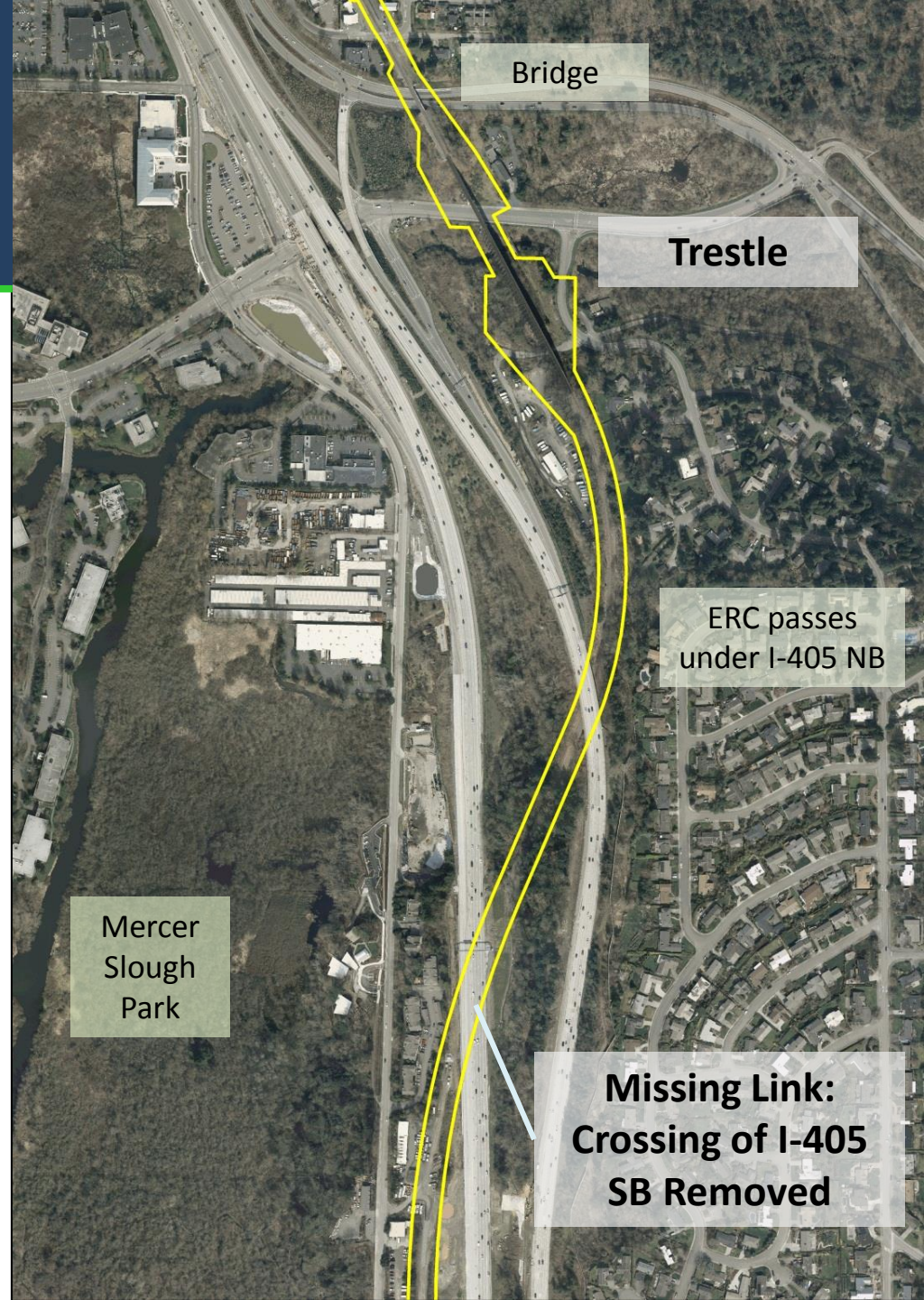
Wilburton to Meydenbauer Link

Regional Trail > Pedestrian Corridor > Meydenbauer Bay

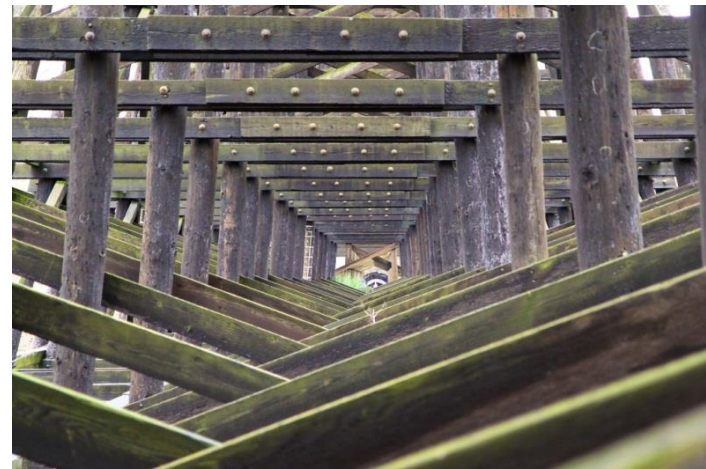
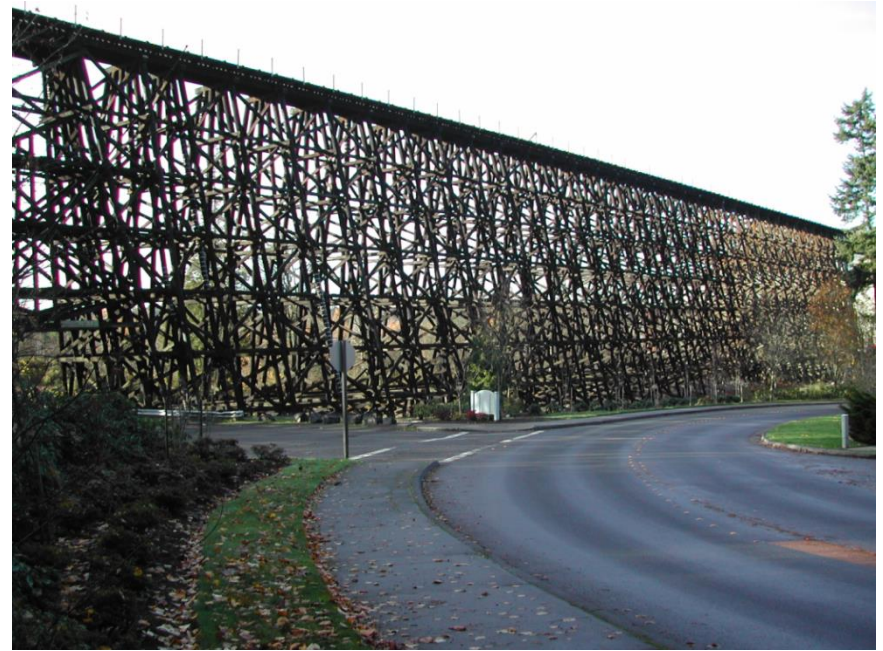


Wilburton Trestle, I-405 Crossing

- Historic (1904) trestle presents an opportunity for an iconic element of the trail.
- Further south, missing segment over southbound I-405.



Wilburton Trestle Today



Trestle Conversions to Trails

Creepertrestle Conversion, Virginia



Kinsol Trestle, Trans-Canada Trail
Shawnagn Lake, BC



Creepertrestle Conversion, Virginia



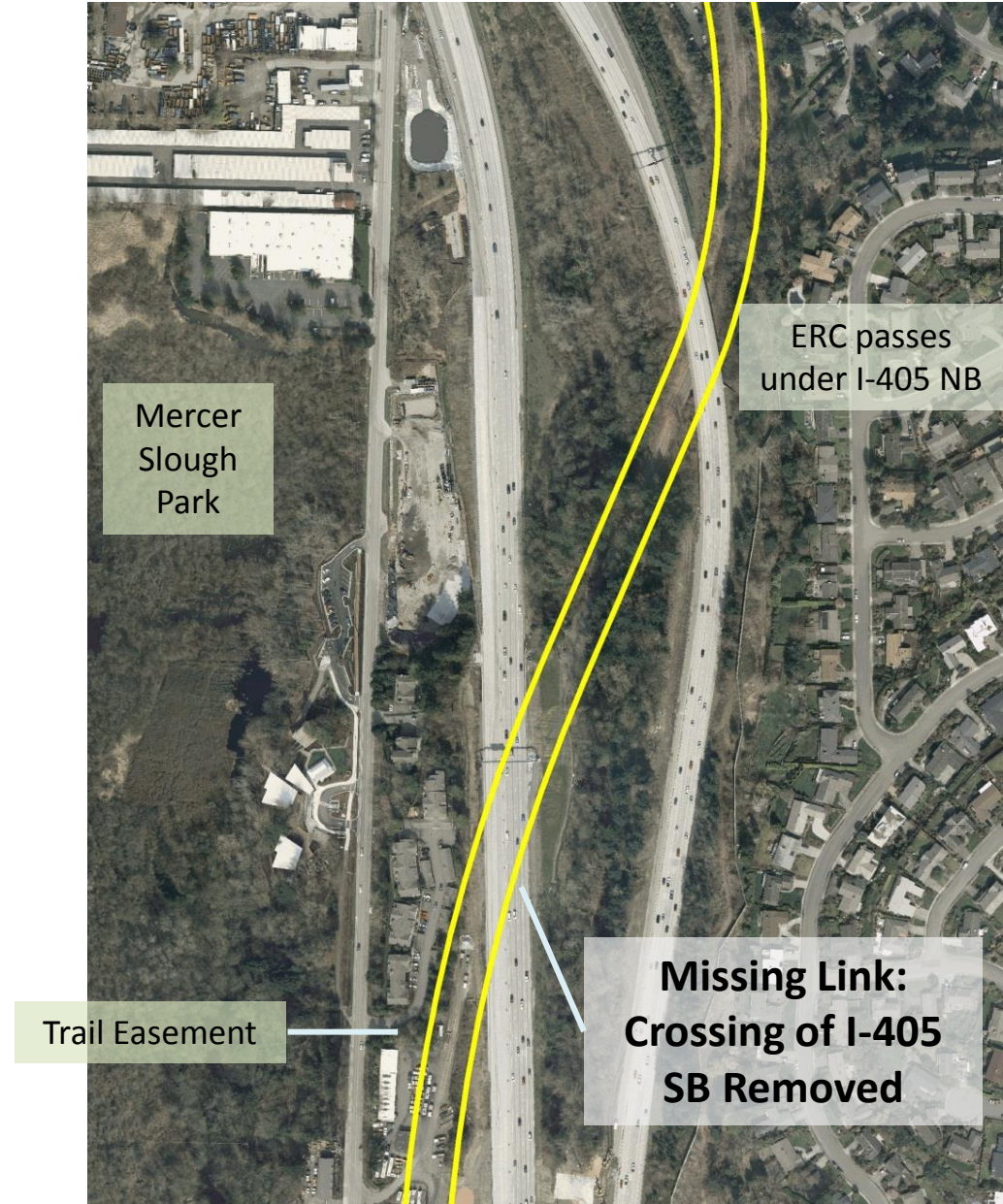
Kinsol Trestle, Trans-Canada Trail
Shawnagn Lake, BC



I-405 Crossing

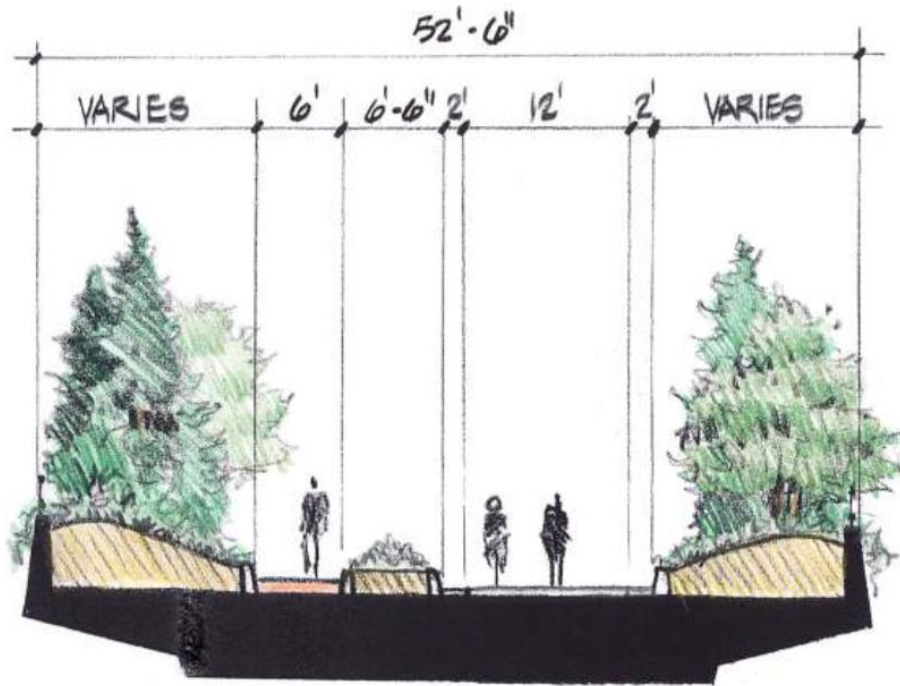


- Wilburton Tunnel removed in 2008
- Agreement with WSDOT provides for restoration of connection
- Potential links from ERC to Mercer Slough Park.

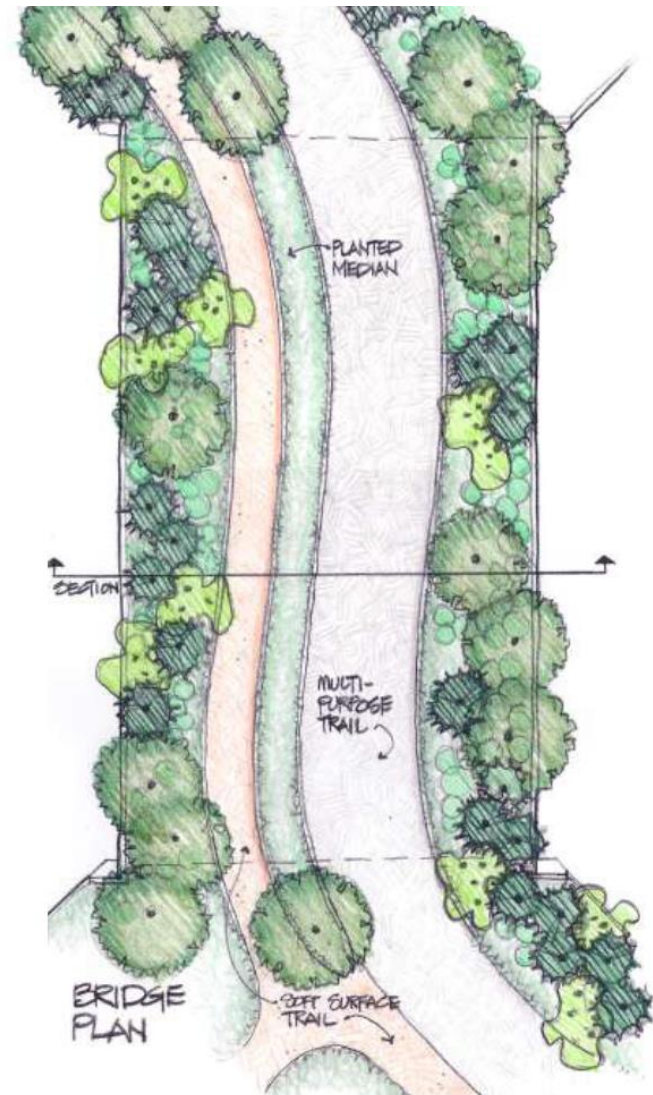


I-405 SB Trail Replacement Crossing

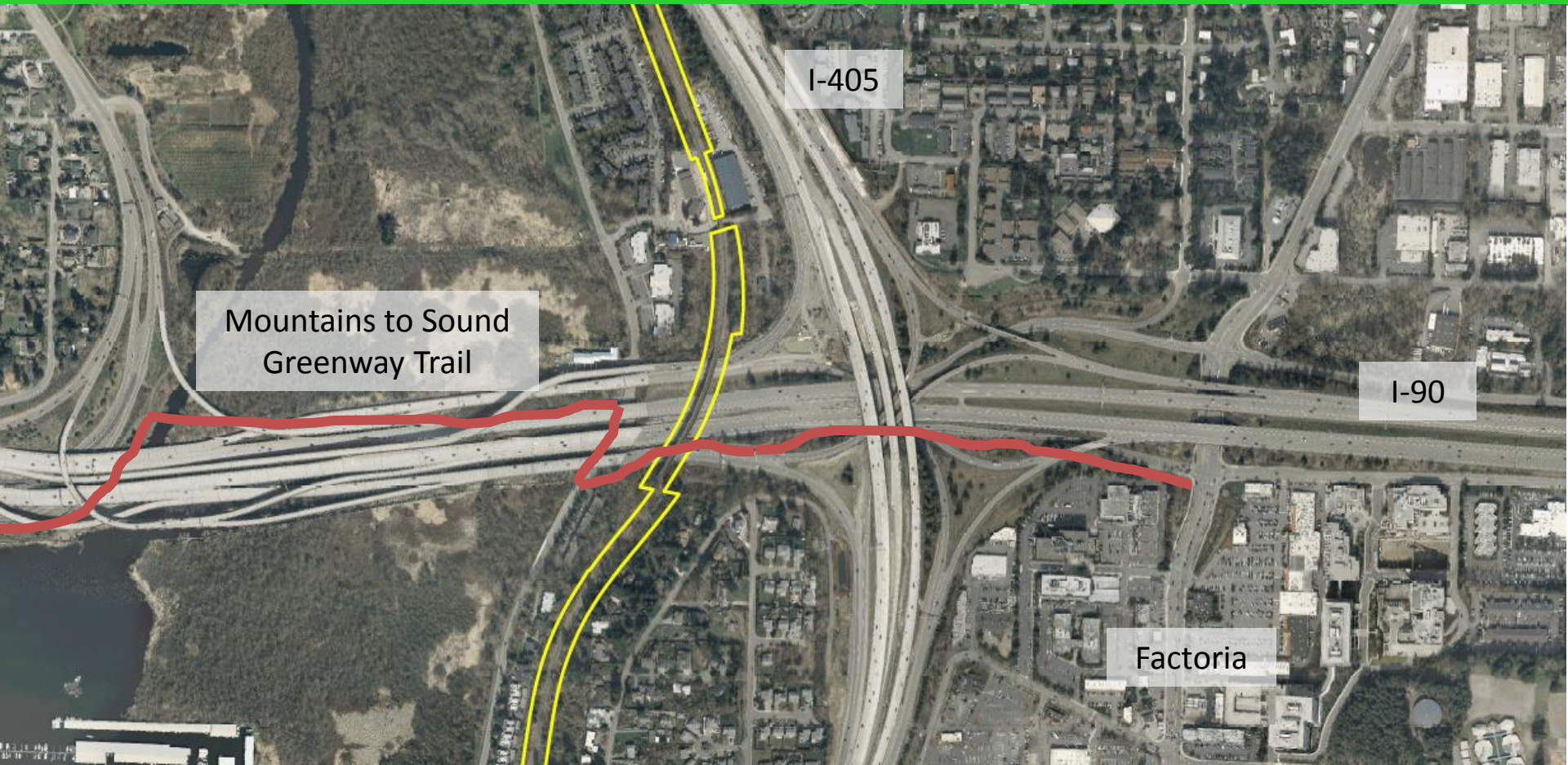
Wilburton Trail Crossing



BRIDGE SECTION



ERC @ I-90/Mountains to Sound

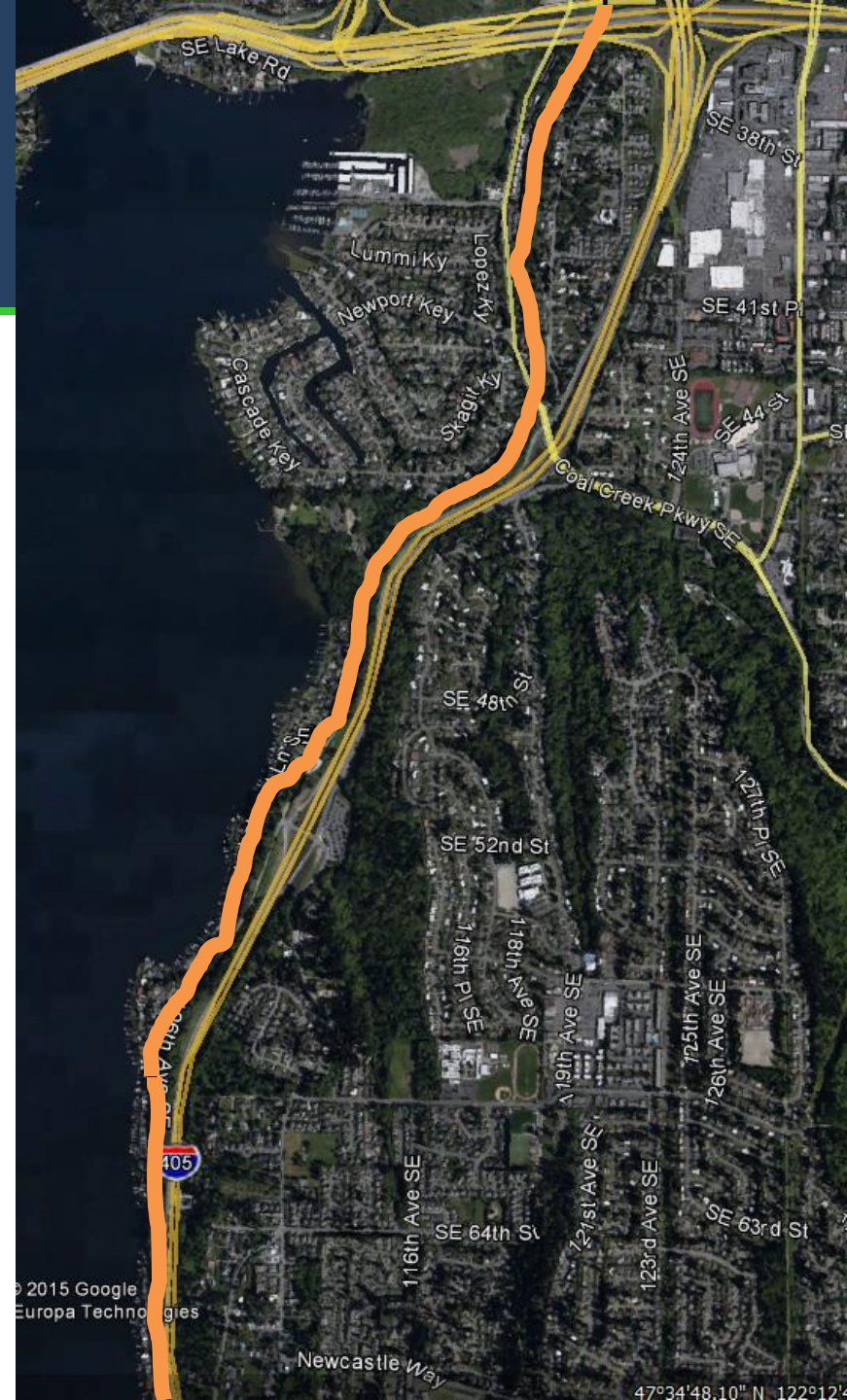


- Existing Mountains to Sound Trail from Seattle to Factoria.
- City currently working on design for MTS Trail “gap” from Factoria to W. Lake Samm Pkwy.
- MTS and ERC trail junction will be important, including in terms of efficiency in connecting from one to the other and quality of user experience.

Bellevue South Segment

Connections to:

- Newcastle Beach Park,
- Newport Hills
- Renton (Gene Coulon Park)



Next Steps for Bellevue

- Support King County Trail Master Plan process
- Additional direction anticipated from Council regarding CIP funding allocation.

Eastside Rail Corridor

Part 2:

- King County Trail Master Plan process