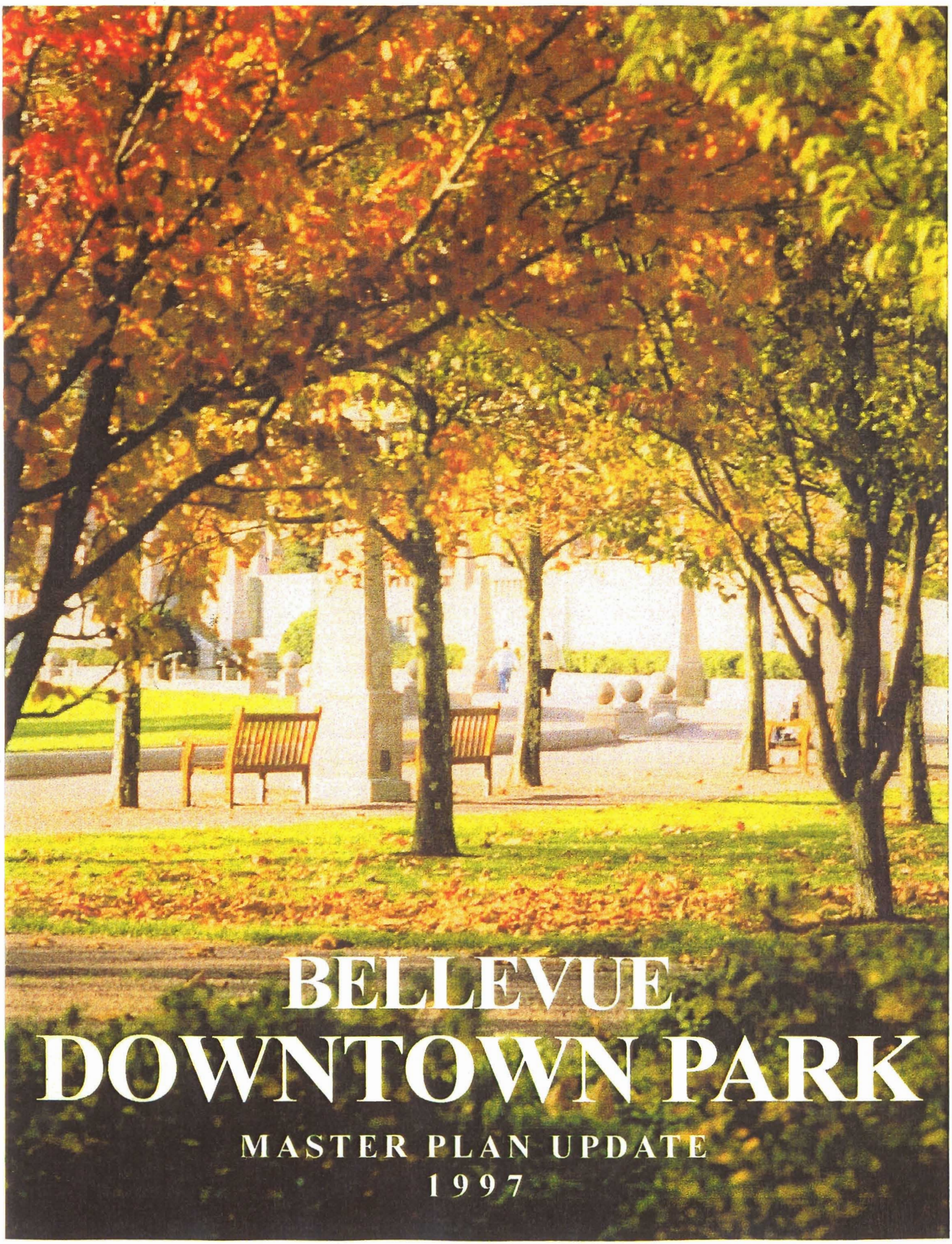

BELLEVUE DOWNTOWN PARK

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

1997

City of Bellevue
Post Office Box 90012 • Bellevue, Washington • 98009 9012

April 7, 1997

The Honorable Ron Smith
Mayor, City of Bellevue
P.O. Box 90012
Bellevue, WA 98009-9012

Dear Mayor Smith:

I would like to report on the successful completion of the work of the Downtown Park Master Plan Update Citizens' Advisory Committee and to provide you with a summary of the Committee's recommendations. Since the work of the Committee began in October 1996, the Committee met on five occasions to identify issues related to the Downtown Park, work with the City's consultant to develop master plan options, and reach consensus on recommendations for future park development.

As described by the design team, led by Mr. Robert Beckley and Mr. Terry Reckord, the Committee has embraced the original vision for the Park established at the time the park design was adopted by the City Council in 1984. The design solidified both the desire for a passive park that allows for maximum flexibility and contains opportunities for walking, relaxing and people watching, while creating a park unique to Bellevue - a park with a strong visual character. Over the past decade and a half, civic and private leadership have joined forces, supported by a strong team within City administration, to keep the Park and its original vision on course.

Recommendations

The Master Plan Update calls for completion of specific sections of the Park which, in total, will achieve much of what was proposed in the original design. The major recommendations of the Citizens' Advisory Committee include the following:

• Southeast Corner Completion - The southeast corner improvements include the completion of the primary design feature of the park - the shaded circular promenade and canal and the double row of trees, as well as a formal connection between the park and Old Bellevue at the termination of 102nd Avenue NE.

• Corner Entries - Key park improvements will be the completion of the northeast, northwest, and southwest entrances to the park. These entrances will better connect the park with Downtown, Meydenbauer Bay and the surrounding neighborhoods and help to create a more visible presence and park identity on the surrounding streets. As identified in the ULI recommendations, the park entrance improvements will provide a better connection through the park from Downtown to Meydenbauer Bay.

• West Side Development - After extensive discussion of automobile parking by the Committee, the group favored the consolidation of existing parking into a single lot along 100th Avenue NE. The recommendation calls for parking to be consolidated into a 130-stall surface parking lot along the west side of the park and the addition of approximately 25 parallel parking stalls along the east side of 100th Avenue NE. Within the Park boundaries, additional parking for off-site uses is not recommended.

In addition, the master plan calls for a bandstand for small events to be located near the northwest corner of the park. To the south of the proposed parking area will be a multi-use plaza area, restrooms, and covered shelters near the family picnic and expanded children's play areas.

The Committee also has recommended that modifications be made to the Land Use Code and policy language be added within Comprehensive Plan to identify the importance of the Downtown Park as integral to the success and viability of Downtown now and in the future.

Priorities

The committee also discussed extensively how to best prioritize the sections of future park development. The overall priority remains - the completion of the original vision of the Park. Flexibility will be necessary in the implementation of the Master Plan to allow for completion of portions of the park through donations or partnerships as opportunities arise in the future. The Committee established the following priorities for the various portions of future park development.

- 1st priority - southeast corner - complete canal/promenade, tiered seating, 102nd Avenue NE entry
- 2nd priority - northeast corner - plaza, fountain, covered shelters
- 3rd priority - west side - parking, bandstand, play area, restrooms/shelters, basketball
- 4th priority - northwest corner - entry plaza.

Conclusion

In ending, the Citizens' Advisory Committee recommends that the Master Plan Update and Design Report dated March 1997 be adopted by the City Council and accepted as an amendment to the original Downtown Park Master Plan. The updated Master Plan shall serve as the framework for future park planning, development, and budgeting decisions.

In updating the Master Plan, the Committee has affirmed the original vision of a world class park in Downtown Bellevue, while addressing key issues that have arisen since the Park's conception. The Committee eagerly awaits the completion of this jewel in Downtown Bellevue.

Sincerely,

John Ellis, Chair
Downtown Park Master Plan Update
Citizens' Advisory Committee

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

John Ellis, Chair
The Honorable Ron Smith, Mayor of Bellevue
The Honorable Georgia Zumdieck, Mayor Pro Tem of Bellevue
The Honorable Rob McKenna, King County Councilmember
Harry Andresen
Eva Chiu
Alden Clark
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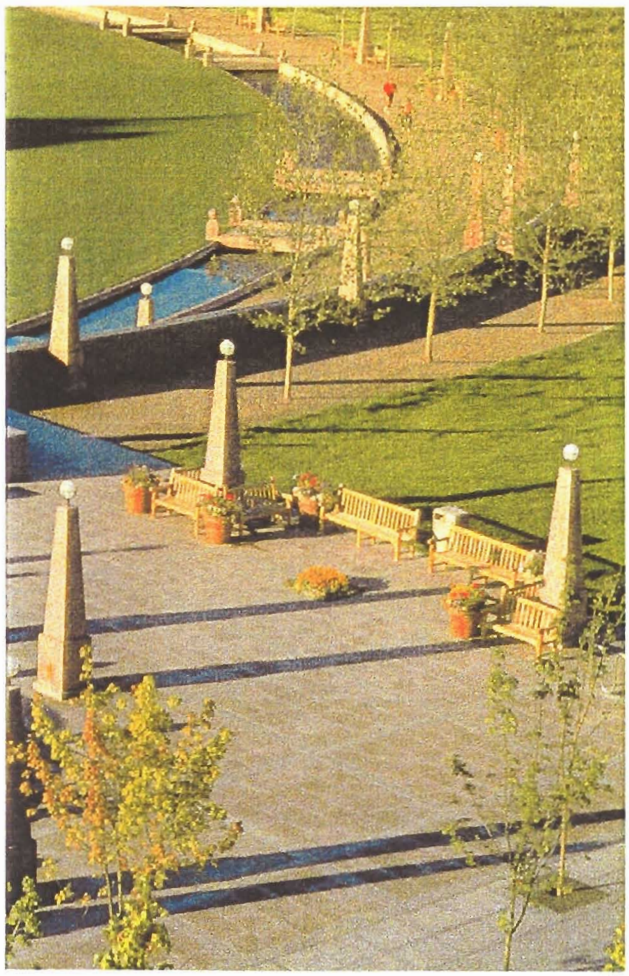
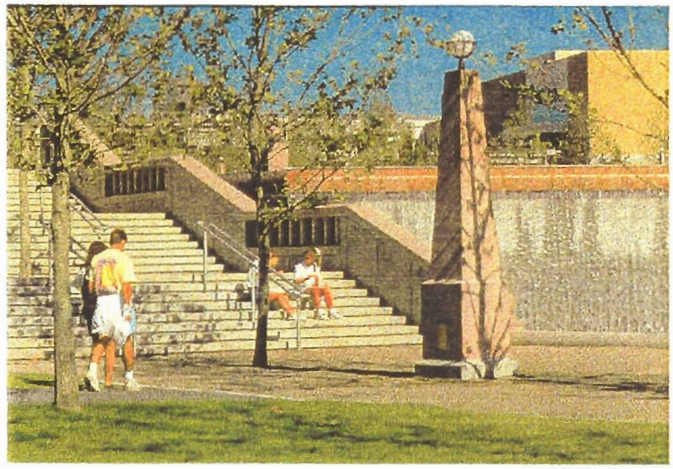


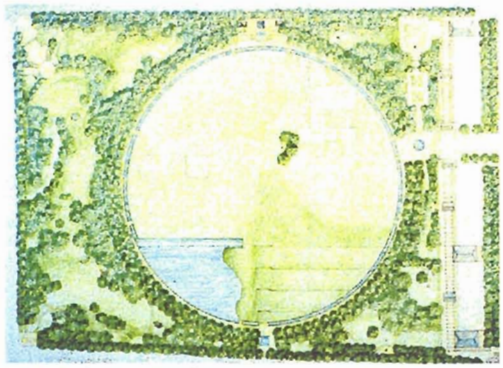


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

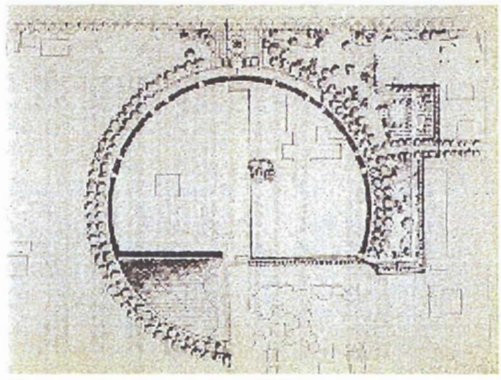
The Bellevue Downtown Park was launched in December 1983 with the acquisition of 17.5 acres of land from the Bellevue School District. In 1984 an international competition for the design of a park on this site resulted in the selection of a design submitted by Beckley/Myers Architects. This design satisfied both the desire for a passive park which would contain opportunities for walking, relaxing and people watching with the desire to create a park with a strong visual character unique to Bellevue. Phase one construction consisting of the north east quarter of the competition design was completed in 1986 following a private fund raising drive chaired by Mr. John Ellis. A second phase of construction for the western side of the Park was completed in 1990 following approval of a City Parks Bond Issue. Since that time several small additional improvements have been made to the Park.

A substantial number of major park features were built in these two construction phases. Lack of land to complete the park and lack of budget to develop certain features have hampered implementation of the total Park concept as approved in the original Downtown Park Master Plan. This Downtown Park Master Plan Update has been made in response to recent land acquisitions, circumstances impacting the Parks design and new opportunities to continue development of the Park. A Citizens' Advisory Committee was appointed by the Mayor of Bellevue in the Fall of 1996 to study specific issues identified as impacting the Park's future. Working with the team of consultants who developed the original design and implemented subsequent construction phases, the Committee has created this Master Plan Update with the goal of completing the Park as originally conceived while at the same time addressing certain key issues impacting the Park more than a decade after its conception.

Original Site - Aerial Photograph



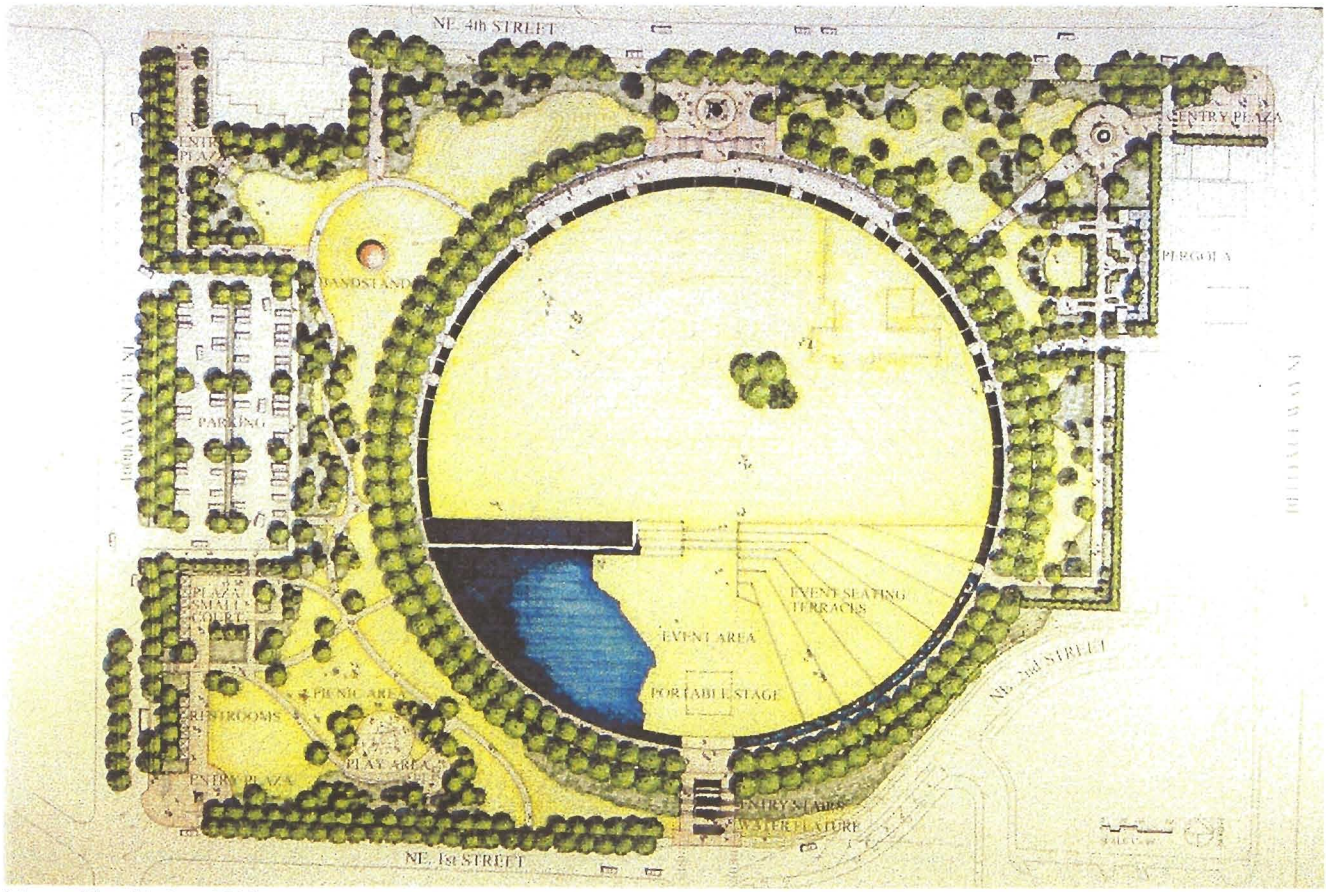
Original Master Plan Proposal 1984



Current Developed Area 1996

Aerial Photograph 1996

This Master Plan Update calls for completion of specific sections of the Park which in total will achieve much of what was proposed in the original design. These improvements include: the completion of the primary design feature of the park—a shaded circular promenade and canal, the development of key entrances to the Park that connect it with various elements of downtown and the surrounding area, the addition of adequate automobile parking, additional event places, and children's play and family areas.

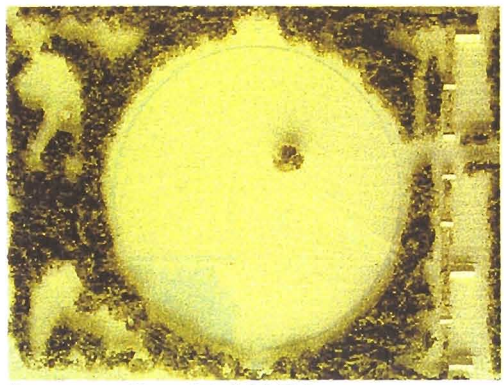


Master Plan Update 1997

BACKGROUND

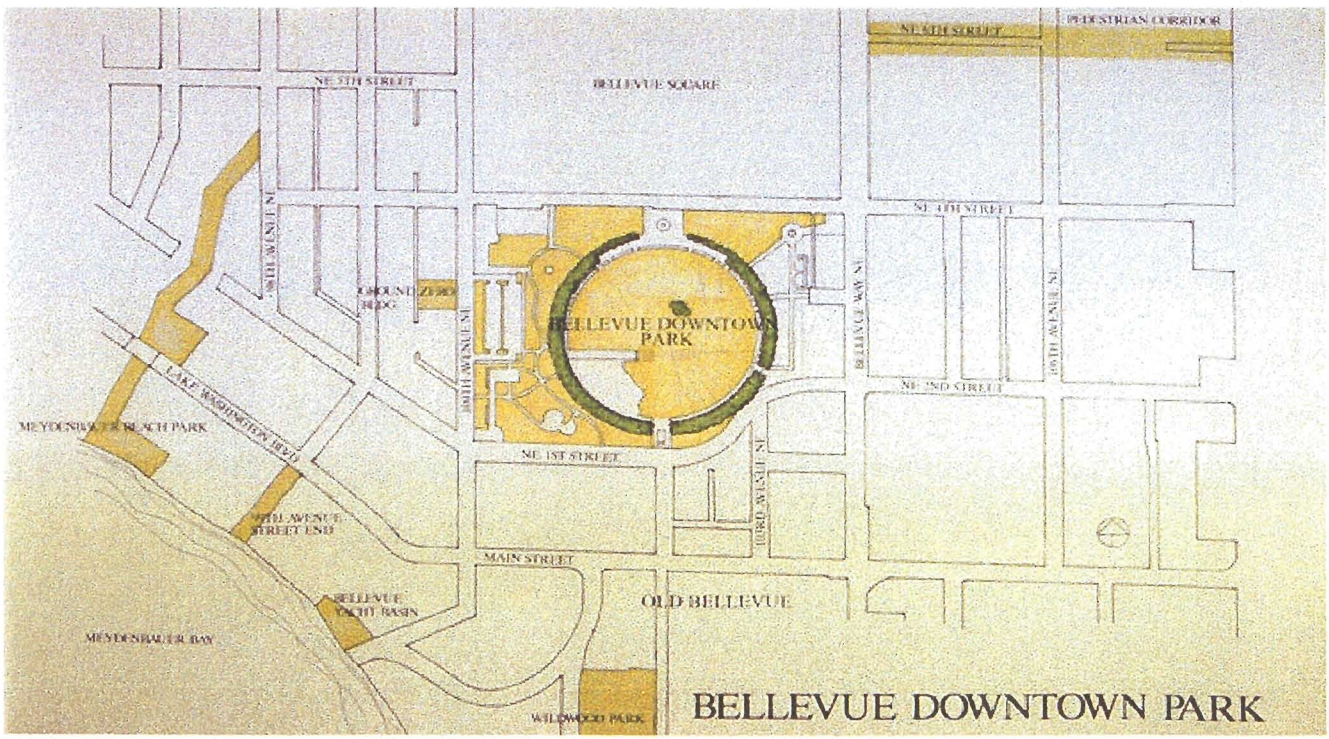
The original park master plan, approved by the City Council in 1984, established the long-term vision for the Downtown Park. In the intervening 12 years, critical acquisitions, including property in the northeast, southwest, and northwest corners of the park and several parcels along its west boundary, have added approximately four acres to the original 17-acre site.

As the Park developed over the past decade, it has become a central gathering place for special events and emerged as an important factor in the developing identity of downtown Bellevue. The Park creates an important open space for downtown workers and residents and is used daily for walking, jogging, eating lunch and people-watching. It is one of Bellevue's finest assets and plays a pivotal role in making the downtown an appealing area to live, work, and play.



Competition Entry Model 1984

Downtown Park Land Acquisitions



Relationship of Downtown Park to the Surrounding Area

As the City continues to mature and our downtown evolves into one of the region's important urban centers, we find that there are a number of significant design and development issues relating to the Park which require further analysis and direction. Of particular importance to resolve are questions pertaining to the following:

- long-term park boundaries;
- the various entryway improvements;
- future development of the southeast corner;
- potential siting of the Bellevue Art Museum;
- relationship to Bellevue Way, the "S" curve, and adjacent privately owned land;
- parking-reasonable expectations surface/underground/location/capacity;
- conversion of pond to skating rink in winter;
- appropriateness, location, and size of a proposed amphitheater;
- disposition of the building used by Ballet Arts Studio;
- relationship to Old Bellevue/Meydenbauer Bay;
- surrounding business and residential interface with the Park; and
- the inclusion of more active recreation facilities in the area outside the circle.

The Park as a community gathering place

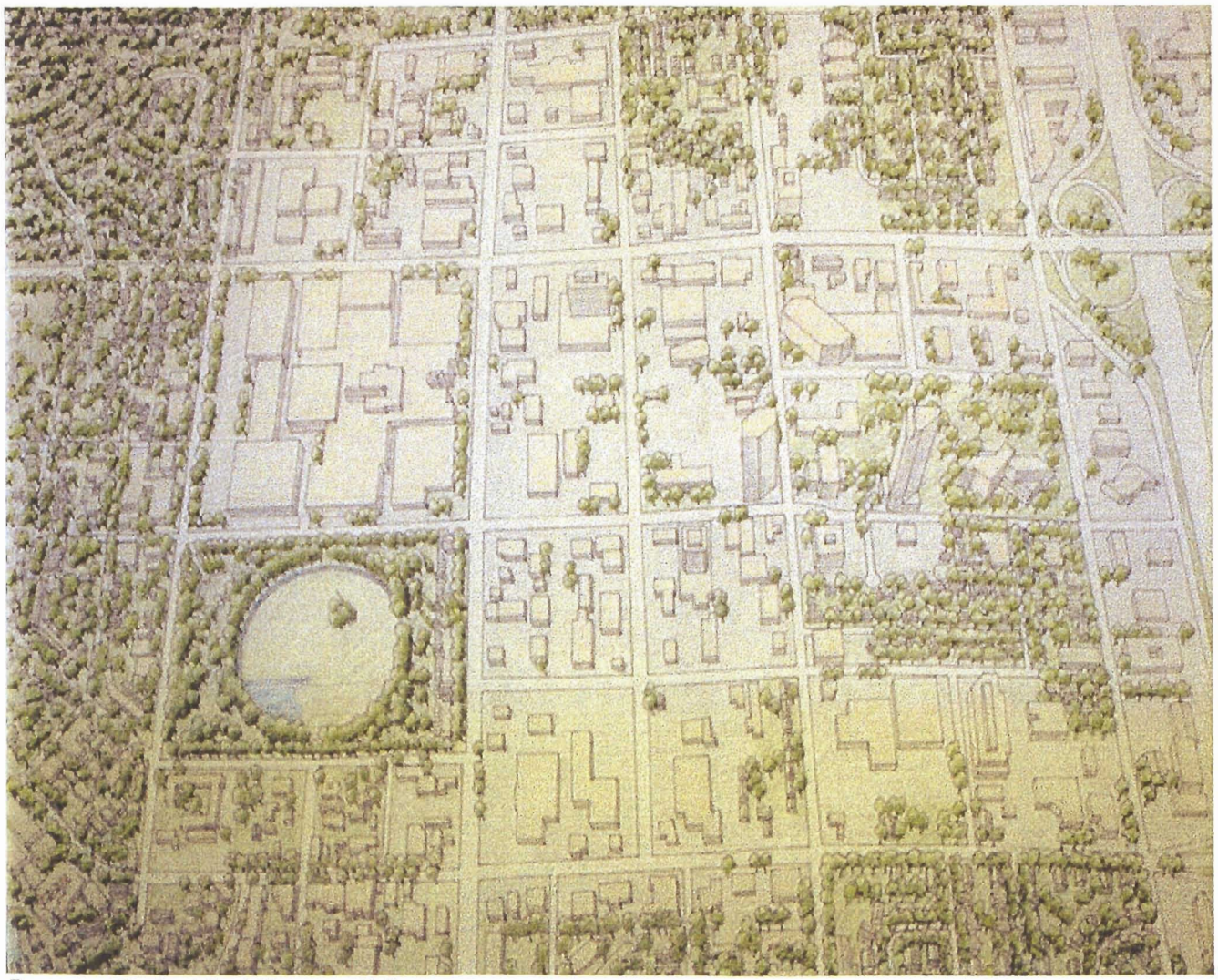
The Park as a place of solitude

Mayor Ron Smith convened a twelve member Citizens Advisory Committee chaired by John Ellis, the former Chair of the Downtown Park Design Competition and the Downtown Park Citizens' Committee, to review alternative solutions to the identified issues that would be sensitive to the original vision for the Park. Consultants MacLeod Reckord Landscape Architects, Architect Robert Beckley, FAIA, the original designer of the Downtown Park, and a team of subconsultants made up of ARC Architects, VanDeMark Partnership and KPFF Engineers were hired to assist the staff and Committee in analyzing issues and developing options for the Committee's consideration and to update the Master Plan.

The Committee met on five separate occasions over a four month period before reaching consensus on the various issues. The results of those discussions are included in the recommended master plan and this design report.

HISTORY/OVERVIEW

The idea for a park in downtown Bellevue was created from civic and private leadership which saw the city's potential for shaping its future during a time of rapid growth and development. In the early 1980s economic forces were rapidly influencing the character of downtown Bellevue. Its center was emerging as a vital regional magnet for commercial and business activity even as the city retained its attraction as a very desirable residential community. In the middle of this dynamic period of growth the City Council and community leaders saw the necessity of creating an amenity within the City which would help to define its character and provide open space in an increasingly urban downtown core. The idea for the Downtown Bellevue Park was born.



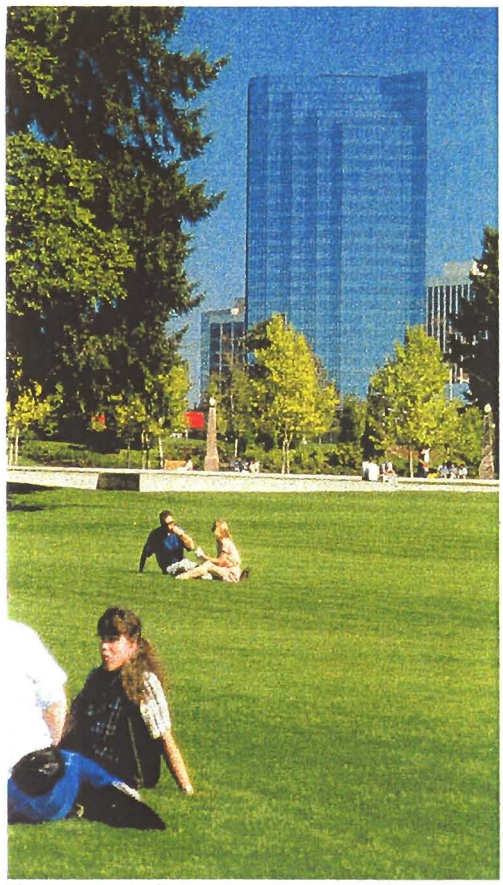
Downtown Park - A Park Unique to Bellevue

A competition was conceived of as a way of creating public involvement in the design process. Before the competition was begun a questionnaire was circulated among Bellevue citizens which asked what kind of park they would prefer in the downtown. The survey results, compiled from more than 5,500 people stated a preference for a park for walking (95%), resting and relaxing (65%), people watching (64%) and a place which had, open green space (57%), fountains (52%) and ponds (51%). This survey inspired the winning design entry of Beckley/Myers, Architects. Working with two blocks of land newly acquired by the City Council from the Bellevue School District totaling 17.5 acres, the winning design entry proposed shaping this land into a highly imagable open space which would be unique to Bellevue and the crown jewel in a necklace of parks which serve the outlying areas of the city.

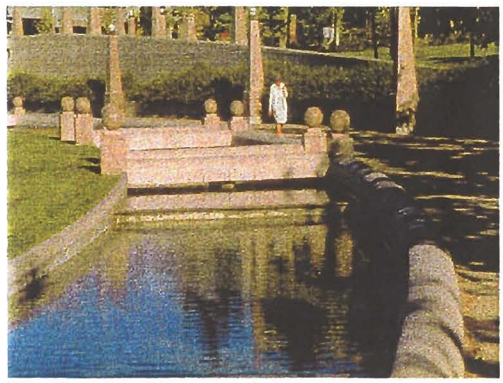
The design itself called for a circular promenade for walking which defined a large open green space bordered by a canopy of trees and a continuous canal terminating in a giant waterfall, cascades and a reflecting pool. Between the promenade and surrounding streets, the design proposed opportunities to create small park venues for other activities that ranked highly in the citizens' survey. These other activity areas included a formal garden, outdoor performances, picnicking, and children's play.

No public undertaking of this magnitude is accomplished with a single stroke of the brush and controversy is bound to ensue as circumstances and leadership change. The Downtown Park has commenced in stages. Meanwhile the city has acquired other property which will allow the original vision of the Park to be substantially completed.

Over the last decade and a half, civic and private leadership have joined forces, supported by a strong professional team within the city administration, to keep the Park and its original vision on course. This Master Plan Update, created by a team of civic leaders and private citizens assembled by the Mayor and assisted by the same professional team who envisioned the original park concept, serves as a plan that can guide Park development through its concluding stages.



The Lawn at Bellevue Downtown Park



The Canal and Promenade

The Waterfall and Pond

DESIGN PRECEDENTS

The designers of the Park have been inspired by great urban parks from around the world. Features from many of these highly successful and proven parks have served as precedents for the Bellevue Downtown Park design.

Walking: The Promenade and other paths.
objective: creating inviting places to walk

Resting and Relaxing: Benches, seating walls and lawn.
objective: creating formal and informal seating opportunities

People Watching: Overlooks and gathering places.
objective: creating a place where the whole world can be a stage

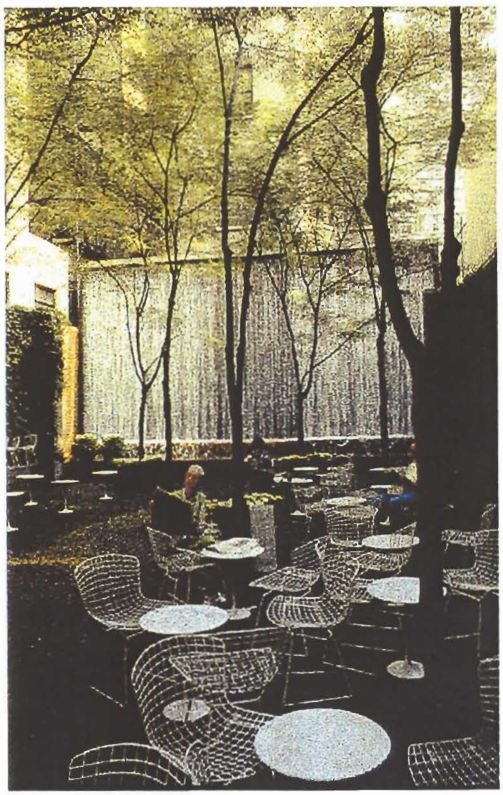
Open Green Space: A big and open lawn.
objective: creating a green oasis in the city

Promenade, Lucerne Switzerland

Cranbrook Academy, Michigan

Central Park, New York

Private Garden



Paley Park, New York

Fountains: Bowls, sprays, cascades, grottos and waterfalls.
objective: animating and beautifying space with moving water

Pools: A canal and pond to create a path and destination.
objective: to mirror the sky and surroundings and add quiet

Formal Gardens: Flowering geometric landscape.
objective: to create an outdoor room of elegance

Children's Play and Picnic: Family gathering area.
objective: to create a destination for family outings

Outdoor Performance: A community gathering place.
objective: to create a focus for community activity

A Unique Park: A place with outstanding features.
objective: to create a strong/unique visual identity

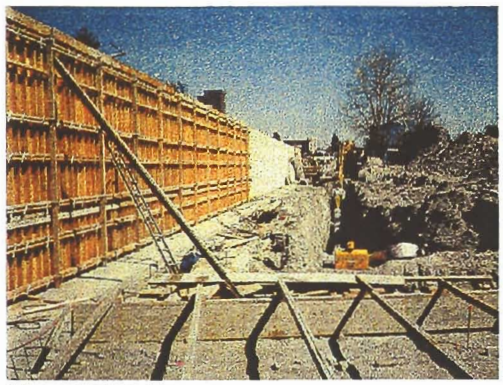
Bradley Estate, Wisconsin

Museum of Modern Art Garden, New York

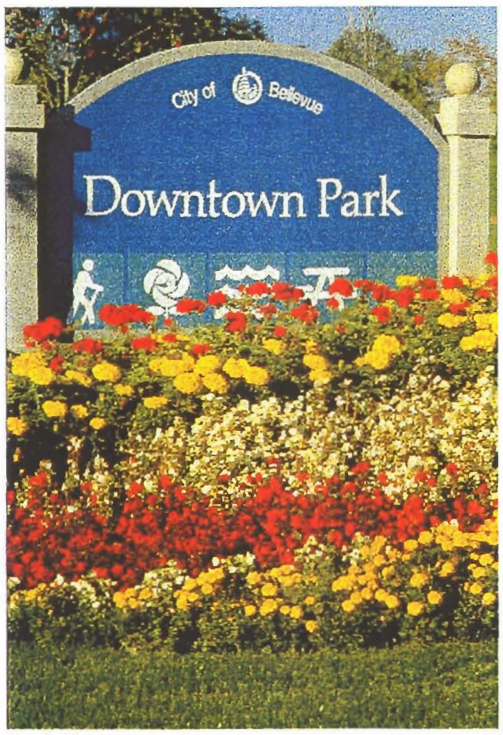
MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The Master Plan Recommendations set forth in this document recognize the considerable accomplishments already achieved in the Bellevue Downtown Park development. It builds upon the original concepts which were embodied in the award winning entry submitted by Beckley/Myers, Architects and MacLeod Reckord. It also recognizes lessons learned from subsequent use and incorporates these in the updated plan. This plan also addresses the several issues put before the Citizens' Advisory Committee, discussed at length and resolved in this Master Plan, which constitutes the recommendation of the Committee.

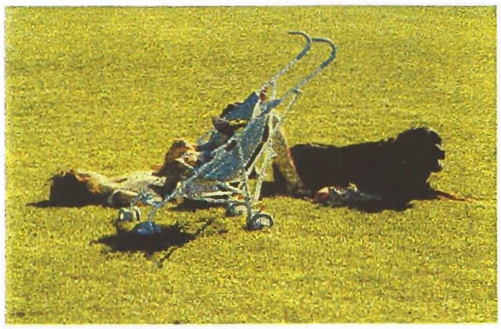
The Master Plan illustrated here represents an end state of development for properties presently owned by the City of Bellevue which can be incorporated for Park use. Adding elements to the Park in piecemeal fashion is expensive and compromises Park development which has already been completed. The present configuration of the Park, however, does provide some discreet opportunities for development which can be considered independently. It is important to keep in mind that the purpose of a Master Plan is to combine the various parts of a development so that the total adds up to more than the sum of the parts. This is particularly important to keep in mind for the design of this Park. Landscape takes time to mature, and there is great cost, financial and aesthetic, in having to redo sections as other sections are added. This is particularly true in areas where there is significant earthwork to be done. Moving earth away from the site for one stage and then back for another stage is wasteful, indeed. The Park was originally designed to create a balance to the earth moving. This can still be achieved, in part, if the Park is further developed in rational increments. The Key Components to the Master Plan which follow represent critical increments which can best be achieved when considered as a whole. These components, when combined, will result in a Park true to the intentions of the original design and the expectations of the citizens of Bellevue.



Phase 2 Under Construction



Park Entry



Relaxing on the Lawn

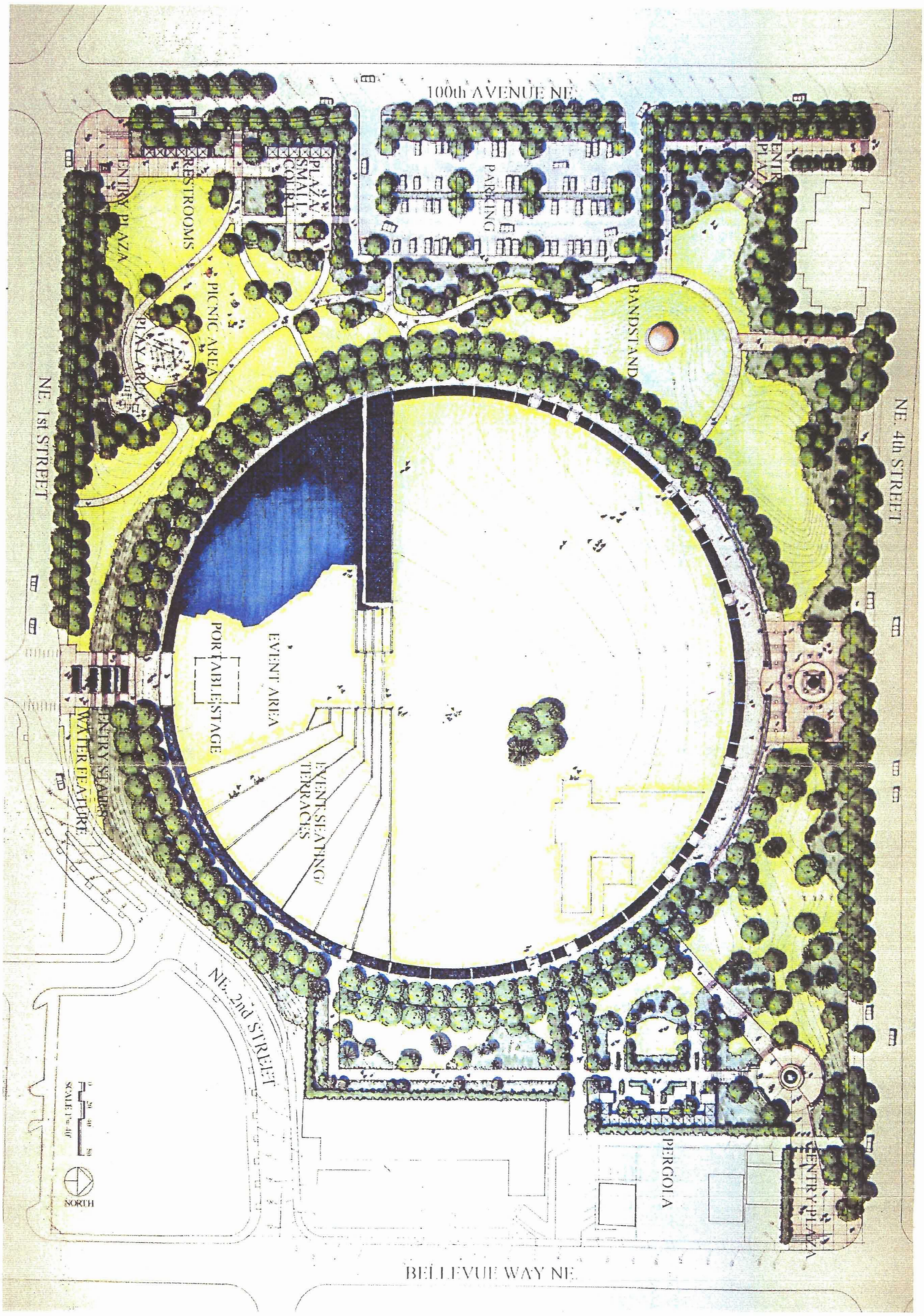
MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES

The Downtown Park Master Plan Update proposes the completion of the original design concept, that is, the creation of a large open space defined by a canal, promenade and double row of shade trees, surrounded by more intimate areas for park activities. The Park is enhanced by water features throughout and an emphasis is placed on passive uses—walking, relaxing and people watching. The Master Plan addresses specific needs which have been identified for the Park. These are automobile parking, easy and attractive access from the areas surrounding the Park, an expanded children's play and family picnic area, a bandstand, an enhanced area for larger events requiring a stage, and an area to play basketball. In addition, the Master Plan proposes the all-important completion of the landscape plan which will give the Park one of its most important attributes, that of a green oasis in the middle of downtown Bellevue.

Bellevue Plaza and Fountain

Children's Play Area

Walkway to Formal Garden



◦ BELLEVUE ◦ DOWNTOWN ◦ PARK ◦

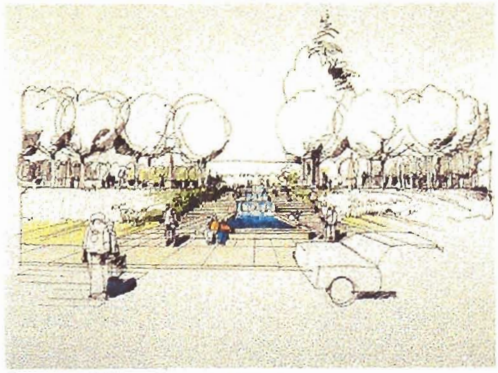
◦ 1997 ◦

◦ MACLEOD RECKORD ◦ ROBERT BECKLEY ◦

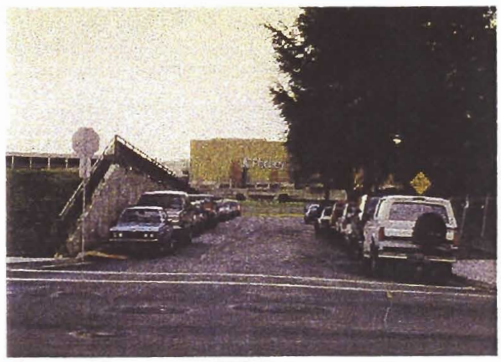
KEY COMPONENTS

SOUTHEAST ENTRANCE AND CIRCLE

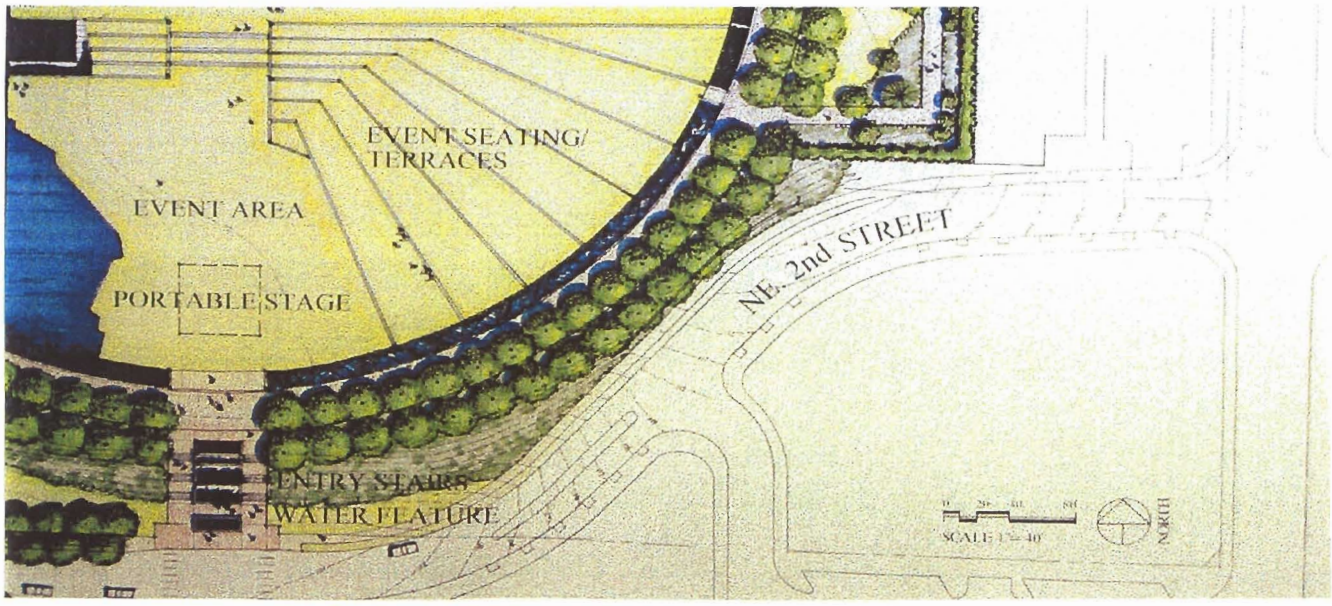
Construction of the 1st/2nd "S" curve roadway creates a natural boundary to the southern edge of the Park. The right-of-way acquired for this road improvement allows for the completion of the circle, i.e. the canal, promenade and alleé of trees, as well as a formal connection between the Park and Old Bellevue at the termination of 102nd Street N.E. The canal in this quarter of the circle will be at a steeper slope and will consist of a continuous cascade of sparkling water as the canal drops 11 feet from its current elevation to the level of the pond. The area within the completed circle will be terraced in grassy slopes, each terrace defined by a low retaining wall which can be used for seating. To make this a workable "event area", foundations will be laid and utilities supplied for a portable stage. The terraces will be able to comfortably accommodate 2,800-3,000 people. Between the waterfall and terraces will be a stairway which will ascend to the large section of lawn to the north. At the southern terminus of 102nd Street N.E. there will be a stairway with a cascading waterfall which will serve as a strong visual entrance to and from the Old Bellevue retail and commercial area. The slope between the promenade and the "S" curve will be lushly planted to provide a strong visual edge to the road and a clear separation between road and park.



Proposed Entrance at 102nd Avenue N.E.



Existing Entrance at 102nd Avenue N.E.

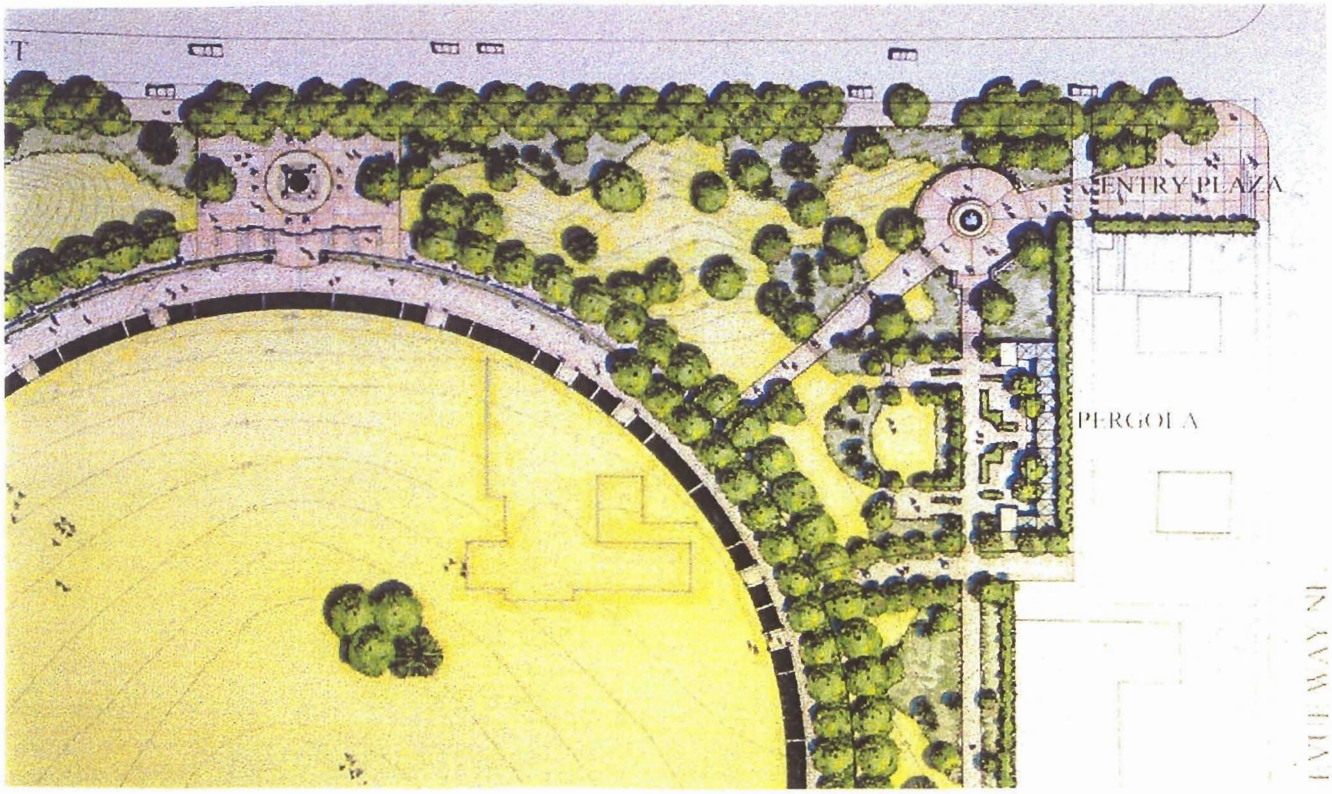


NORTHEAST ENTRANCE

The northeast corner is an important functional and aesthetic connection to downtown and the Pedestrian Corridor which terminates a half block north of this intersection (N.E. 4th Street and Bellevue Way). Even though there is an alley right-of-way across this corner which serves business along Bellevue Way, this corner can be developed to allow the occasional service vehicle using this alley to cross the plaza without undue interruption or inconvenience to either vehicles or park users. Bollards will separate this alley easement and pedestrians. The corner will be developed as an entry Plaza. Because of the topography of this corner, steps will descend into the plaza from N.E. 4th Street and ascend from Bellevue Way, while the corner itself will be at level with the intersection. The plaza will widen into a circle, a pinwheel, from which one can enter either the area of the canal and promenade to the west or the formal garden to the south. This second plaza will have a major fountain, another water feature different from others in the Park. This feature will be particularly important as a landmark for this major intersection in downtown Bellevue.

Proposed Northeast Entrance

Existing Northeast Corner



NORTHWEST ENTRANCE

The northwest corner entry plaza provides an important entrance to the park for adjacent residential neighborhoods and activity centers. This entrance at the intersection of 100th Avenue N.E. and N.E. 4th Street is at the highest elevation of the Park. From this prominent point, spectacular panoramic views open into and across the Park to Mt. Rainier. This vantage point also provides views to the bandstand which serves as the terminus to a series of stepped terraces leading into the Park. This important corridor into the Park occurs between private residential development along the northern edge of the park and parking to the south. Extensive planting will occur along either side of this view corridor to screen these developments.

Existing Northwest Corner

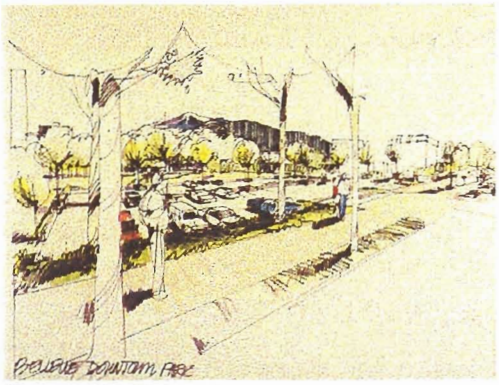
The bandstand located at the juncture between the entrance path and the promenade is intended to be a focal point for ad hoc musical events as well as a picnic shelter and gathering place for other small events. The uniquely landscaped terraces leading down the hill and the bandstand set in a grassy clearing will create a magical and peaceful entrance to the promenade.

Bandstand in the Boston Common

CONSOLIDATION OF PARKING

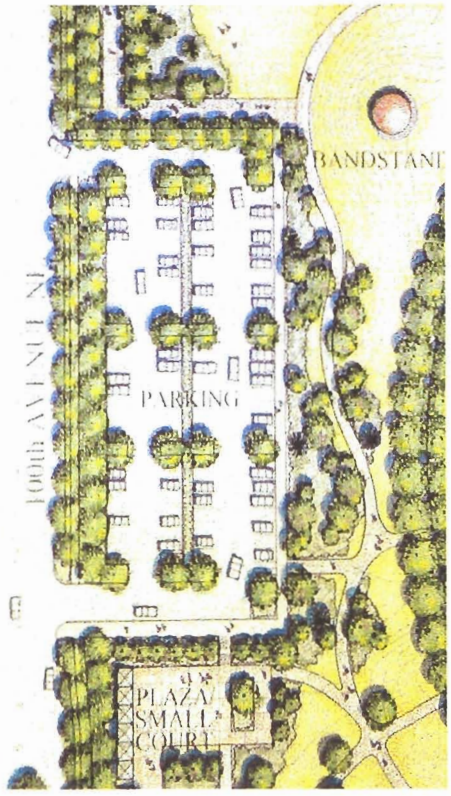
Parking which serves the Downtown Park has been of continuous concern since the competition for the design of the park was originally undertaken and has been the subject of much discussion in the preparation of this Master Plan Update. The Park occupies a unique location downtown, bounded by commercial areas on three sides and a residential mixed-use neighborhood on the other. The land uses surrounding the Park impact whatever parking supply might be provided in the Park. The Park itself also, in turn, impacts parking facilities in surrounding areas. Special events, the season and time of day all pose specific problems for providing Park access by automobile. The recommendations contained here are aimed at providing adequate parking for the everyday uses of the Park while maximizing the amount of land that can be used for Park purposes, as originally intended in the purchase of this land. The Park should not be used to solve the parking problems associated with surrounding land uses.

The west side of the Park provides the best location for consolidating parking. Parking consolidation (i.e. locating all the parking in one area) will help to optimize the amount of land which can actually be used for park purposes. Two complementary actions are incorporated in this Master Plan: parallel parking along 100th Avenue N.E. which is anticipated to provide 23 parking stalls and a terraced surface parking lot for 130 cars which would replace the existing lots along 100th Avenue N.E. and N.E. 1st Street. The terraced parking lot is designed to provide unobstructed views into the Park from the street and to provide easy automobile access to major park functions.



View overlooking parking area

Undeveloped Park property on 100th Ave. NE

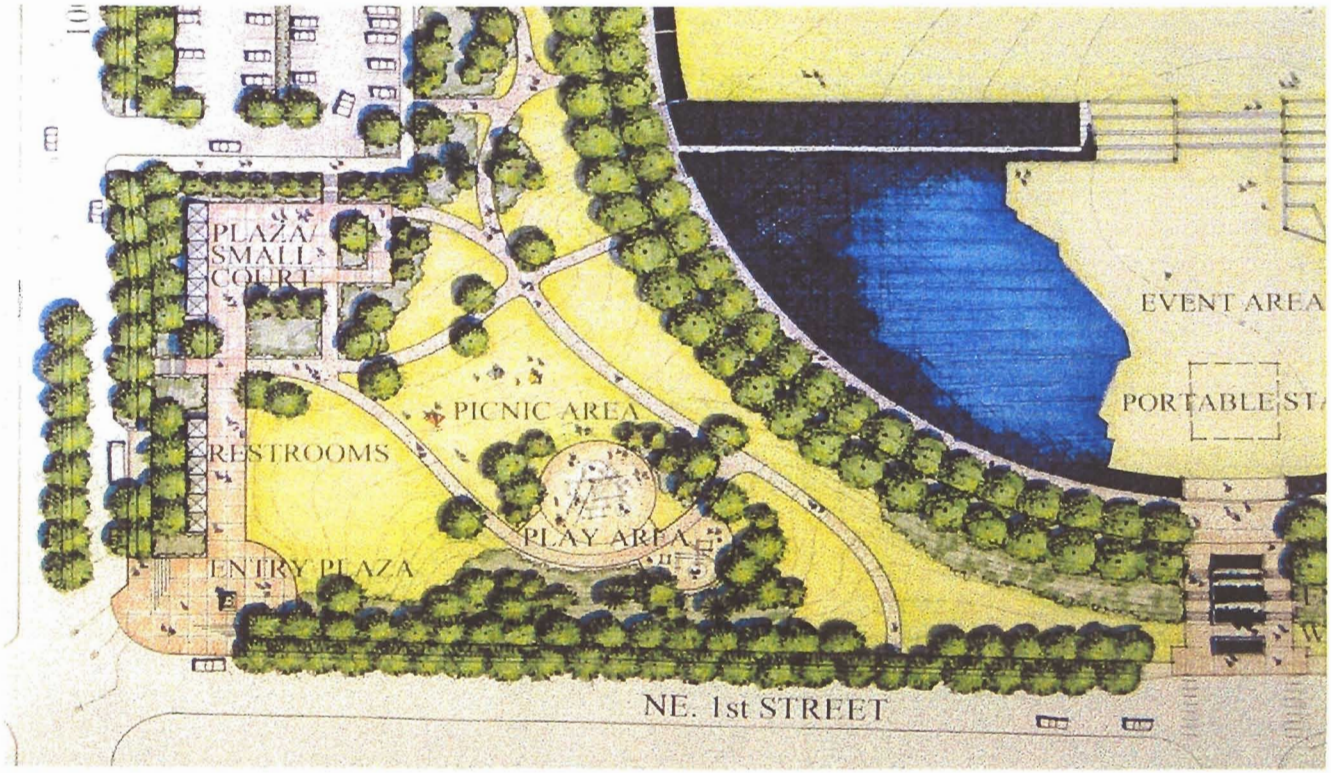


COMPLETION OF SOUTHWEST ENTRANCE

The southwest corner is another important entrance to the Park. This corner connects the Park to Meydenbauer Bay and the western edge of Old Bellevue. To enhance this connection to the Bay we recommend that 100th Avenue N.E. be treated as a boulevard street from the Park to the Bay itself, providing a continuous 'avenue of green' from the Park to the Bay. This corner, at the intersection of 100th Avenue N.E. and N.E. 1st Street, is similar to the NE corner. A rapid change in elevation at this corner will call for a plaza directly accessible from the corner with stairs descending from 100th Avenue N.E. and ascending from N.E. 1st Street. This plaza will provide direct access to the children's play area and picnic area. Elimination of the temporary surface parking lot presently accessed from N.E. 1st Street will allow for expansion of the children's play and picnic areas. A dramatic view is provided from this vantage point as well, across the children's play area to the pond and promenade, waterfall, and the City skyline in the background. Restrooms and pergolas to be used for Park shelters will be located here as well, and a small plaza area for basketball and other court games is accessible from this entrance.

Proposed entrance at Southwest corner

Existing Southwest corner

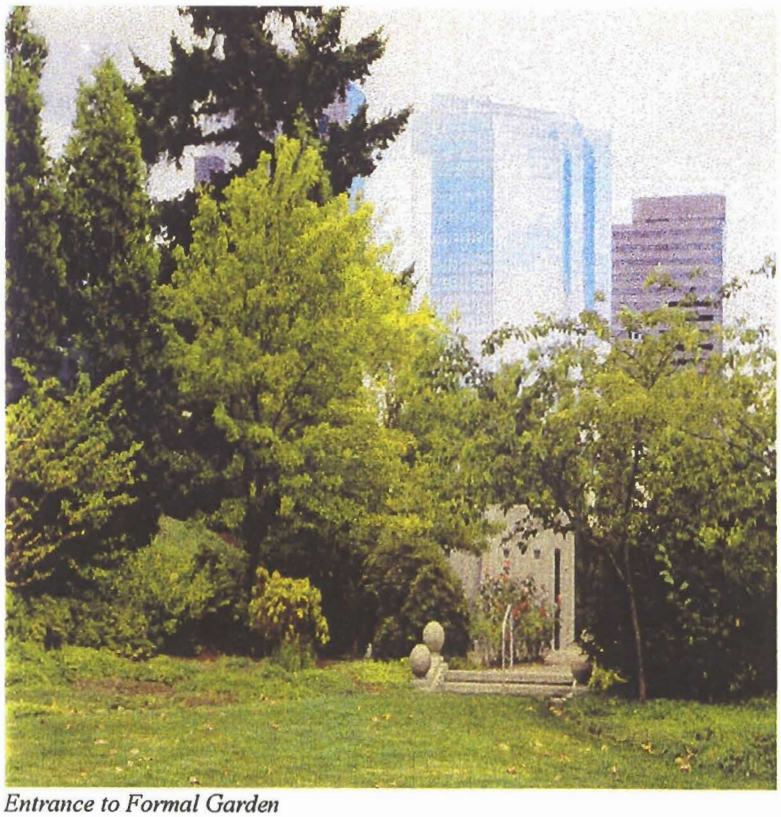


LANDSCAPE & INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS

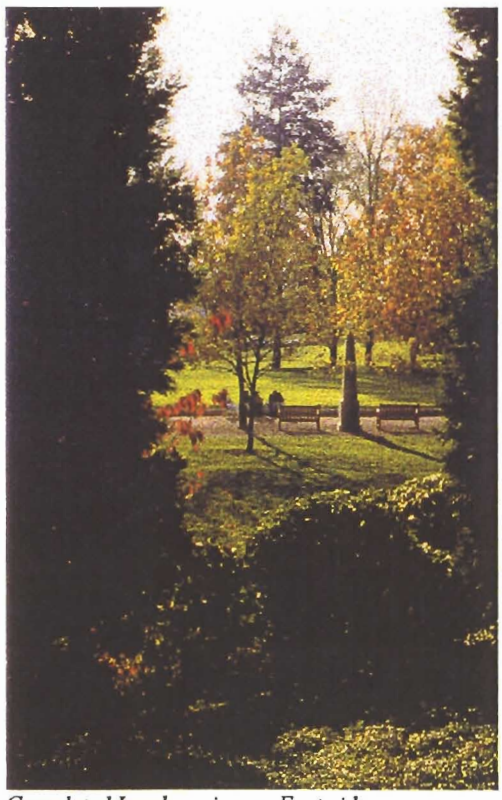
For the Park to reach its full maturity as a 'green oasis' in downtown Bellevue more attention needs to be given to implementing the Parks landscape plan. While Phase One (the northeast quadrant) of development included an adequate budget for landscape, Phase Two was never adequately landscaped beyond the circle itself. The primary objective in completing the landscape portion of the Park is to appropriately provide planting along the edges which will guide people to the Park entrances, create a strong street edge to the Park and create small scale openings and sequences of spaces along the edge of the Park in contrast to the sweeping area of lawn which serves as its core. In completing the Park's landscaping, it will be critical to configure and organize the planting in a manner that gives the park user a sense of safety and visibility.

Unimproved Western edge

Temporary picnic area



Entrance to Formal Garden



Completed Landscaping on East side

MAJOR ISSUES

In formulating the Downtown Park Master Plan Update the Citizens' Advisory Committee was presented with a number of topical issues to address. In brief, the major issues were a possible Park location for the Bellevue Art Museum, the nature of an amphitheater performance and events area for the Park, entrances to the Park, automobile parking, active recreation elements, restrooms and other amenities, landscaping and additional land acquisition. Many other issues, such as the relation of the Park to the "S" curve street improvements, etc. fell within the scope of these larger issues. The issues which have been given considerable attention by the Committee and which have led directly to the Master Plan presented here, are given a brief discussion in this section.

MUSEUM SITING

Recommendations:
A Museum located within the boundaries of the Park would serve neither the Museum nor the Park's interests. Access to the Museum by people and vehicles would be severely compromised and the Park itself would be overwhelmed by a building of this magnitude. A Museum located in the Park is not recommended, though a Museum located adjacent to the Park could be a great asset.

AMPHITHEATER

Recommendations:
An amphitheater with a capacity to hold upwards of 3,000 people is not recommended. The size and scope of such a project is beyond that which can be accommodated within the area of the Park. Particularly problematic is the amount of parking required (100 spaces for fixed seating and an additional 400 spaces for lawn seating). A substantial area of the Park would have to be dedicated to fixed improvements to accommodate this activity for only three months of the year, fencing would be required for ticketed events, and special truck and service access would have to be provided to backstage areas causing disruption to other park areas. Our recommendation is for a bandstand which can be used for small ad hoc performances not requiring ticketing or backstage support. The bandstand can also serve as a park shelter, for picnics, weddings, receptions, etc.

A more structured lawn area with seating terraces is included in this Master Plan for development of the southeast corner. This events area will more conveniently accommodate larger gatherings of people for public gatherings and events.

PARK ENTRANCES

Recommendations:
It is recommended that each of these entrances to the Park be developed according to the Master Plan. Each has its own role to play in the Park's design.

Northeast Corner: The northeast corner is the primary connection to Bellevue's office and business district. This is also a primary entrance to the Park for special events. The entrance is located on one of the busiest street intersections in Bellevue, providing visibility to the Park for large numbers of people. The corner has been conceived of as having a major water feature which will create a strong visual identity from the busy intersection. Since many people may not venture into the Park any further than this area, it is developed with ample seating opportunities and as a destination point for those most treasured Park activities, relaxing and people watching. From this entrance there will be access to two primary Park features. The Circle and Promenade is the destination for the first of these paths. The second is an entrance into the area of the formal garden. To provide continuous service access to shops along Bellevue Way, provision will have to be made for a service drive which will cross this entrance plaza from north to south, until such time as the Bellevue Way property is redeveloped.

Northwest Corner: As of this writing, properties adjacent to the Park along N.E. 4th Street, near 100th Avenue N.E. are being developed as residential condominiums. While it will be important to provide screening between the public plaza and the private residences, there may be the opportunity to integrate the public space with any commercial or retail establishment that might be developed at the west end of the building. The corner has another important characteristic. It is the entrance which is highest in elevation of all the entrances, with a most advantageous view into the Park and to Mt. Rainier beyond. This area is to be developed as a small plaza to take advantage of the unique vista overlooking the mountain, the Park and bandstand area.

Southwest Corner: This entrance is identified as a key pedestrian link to Meydenbauer Bay. From the Downtown it will be possible to enter the Park at the Northeast corner, walk through the Park and continue through the southwest entrance to the Bay. The reverse of this path could lead visitors arriving by boat to Bellevue via the Bay into downtown Bellevue on a path which will go through the Park. This connectivity between downtown Bellevue and the Bay has symbolic and aesthetic purposes as well as functional, for it is the one place where a significant connection can be made between Bellevue's center of activity and its primary water feature, the Bay. This entrance also serves as the primary entrance into another of the Park's features, the children's play area, located here because of this corner's strong relationship to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

N.E. 1st and 102nd N.E. : This entrance is seen as a key element connecting Old Bellevue to the Park and Bellevue Square. The water feature will draw people from the Park to its southern edge which will have a commanding view of Old Bellevue looking towards Main Street Because of the elevation of the Park's promenade and canal, 8 to 10 feet above the Street, this entrance will have an important prominence from surrounding areas, even at some distance. It will provide a fitting terminus to the view from Old Bellevue and Main Street looking towards Bellevue Square. This entrance will also have a major waterfall, a cascade and fountain which will be visible from as far away as Main Street.

AUTOMOBILE PARKING

Recommendations:
Our recommended option, which is believed to adequately solve the problem of automobile parking for Park users on a daily basis, is the provision of on-street parallel parking along 100th Avenue N.E. and a terraced surface parking lot parallel to that street. This new terraced parking area would replace the smaller existing lot in this area and the temporary lot which is accessed from N.E. 1st Street and which presently inhibits expansion of the children's play area. This solution to parking reduces the physical and visual impact of parking on the Park and provides a maximum number of spaces most economically. The design of the terraced parking allows a significant amount of the surface parking lot to be recessed below the level of the street, thus preserving views into the Park from the street. The east terrace will be 4.5 feet below the west terrace. The two terraces will be connected by a ramp and separated by a planting strip. Each terrace will have direct access to the Park pathway system and each will provide access for disabled persons. The amount of parking provided is comparable, as a ratio, to that provided in other Bellevue Parks.

ACTIVE RECREATION

Recommendations:
Expanded Children's Play Area: A children's play area was part of the original park concept and a temporary play area was installed a few years ago. This play area has proven to be quite popular. The original design was a fantasy garden for children, a play area unlike all others in Bellevue. The present play area does not meet this goal, but its present popularity suggests that a children's play area should be retained and expanded. The southwest corner of the Park can be expanded dramatically to accommodate more play opportunities and a family picnic area. More planting in this area should give the children's area a greater sense of security from cars and parking and make strong linkages to the areas of the pool and waterfall. Restrooms in this area are also an essential addition for the comfort of users.

Basketball Courts: Outdoor basketball is a socializing activity for youths and young adults. While the original programming, based on community surveys, did not identify basketball as a critical activity to accommodate in this Park, a small hard surface area with backboard and hoop for pick-up games may add an important attraction to the Park for this population.

Ballet Arts Studio: In the earliest phases of programming and master plan development, it was determined that maintaining the structure that houses the Ballet Arts Studio was not consistent with goals for the Downtown Park. Park features were intended to be for general community use, not special purpose facilities requiring membership such as the Ballet Arts Studio. In addition, the existing building style is not compatible with the park architecture and the structure blocks views into and across the park. As part of the redevelopment of the west side for new construction of restrooms, expansion of the play/family area and consolidation of the parking area, it will be removed or relocated from the site.

Ice Skating: A provision to use the pool for ice skating was created when the waterfall and pool area were designed. A dam and drainage system exists which would allow for the continuous operation of

the waterfall while the water level of the pond is lowered to allow for freezing and ice-skating. Using the pool for ice skating, however, is problematic. Refrigeration equipment is a very large initial investment. Commercial vendors feel that the pool/rink could not operate efficiently without being covered for protection, largely from rain. If users of the rink were to be charged a fee for its use, fencing of some kind would have to be installed to control access. Limited by the season and weather conditions it is predicted that use of such a facility would be limited to ninety days a year. Because of the investment it would require to prepare and operate the pool for use as an ice rink this option is not recommended at this time.

RESTROOMS AND SHELTERS

Recommendations:
Southwest corner: The area developed for children's play and family picnics is particularly in need of restrooms for users of this part of the park. Pergolas, a traditional form of park shelter, could usefully extend the times and seasons for use of this area, and provide a shelter for family picnics, a protected place to gather during surprise showers, or a place to retreat out of the sun, etc.

Formal Garden: The formal garden was designed to have a Pergola along its eastern edge with wings at either end, extending to the west and connecting to the restrooms. The addition of the pergola here would enhance the use of this part of the Park for weddings, receptions and small gatherings, as well as provide shelter for the everyday users approaching the Park through the northeast entrance.

LANDSCAPING

Recommendations:
It is recommended that areas of the Park not presently landscaped appropriately be developed to meet the criteria established in the original plan. In addition, the final planting design should respond to the phasing of Park development, the changes in development of adjacent properties and Park management issues of maintenance, safety and security.

The full potential of the Park as a place of rest and relaxation can only be achieved when the landscape plan is fully realized.

LAND ACQUISITION

Recommendations:
Further acquisition of Park land seems impractical at this time. Should the opportunity arise, however, the City of Bellevue would benefit from having an edge of the Park exposed to Bellevue Way, one of the most traveled thoroughfares in Bellevue. Absent this, the development of the properties along Bellevue Way should be encouraged in a manner which would complement the Park.

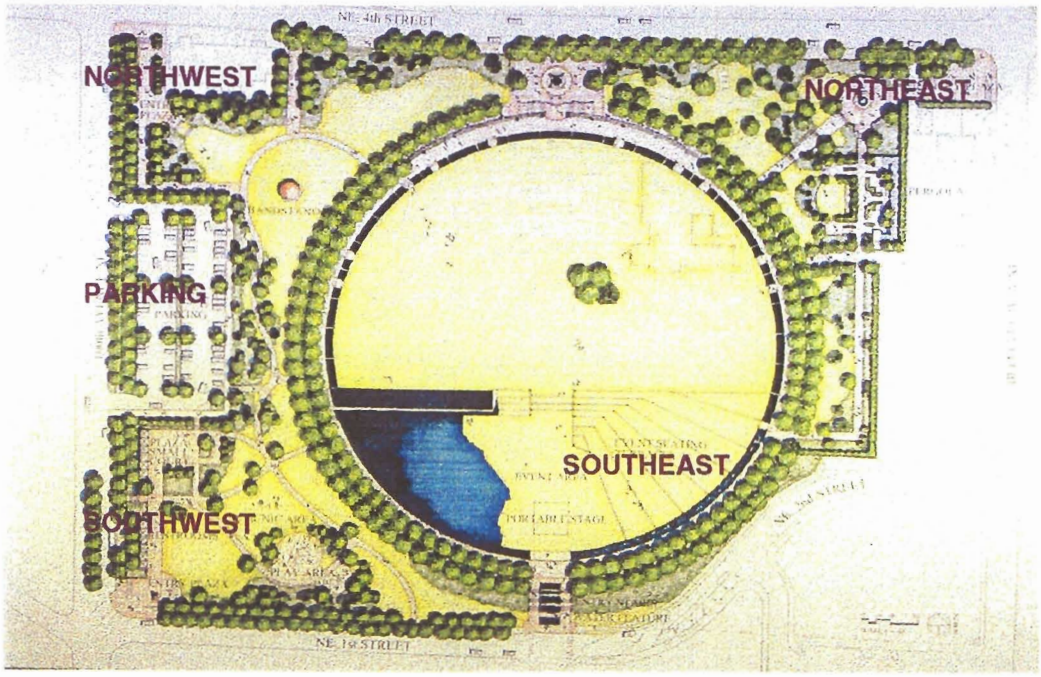
COMPONENT COSTS

The construction of a park, such as the Downtown Park, is much more complex than it appears. Because the Park is surrounded by streets and existing properties which cannot be disturbed, the layout of the park and its topography is complicated. Furthermore, its infrastructure, that is, drainage, irrigation, lighting and power supply, and the sensitive nature of plant materials, walkways and water features makes building the Park in phases extremely difficult and costly.

Taking into consideration the topographic and construction constraints imposed by the site, the completion of the Park has been divided into five components: 1) Southeast Entrance and Circle; 2) Completion of the Northeast Entrance; 3) Completion of the Northwest Entrance; 4) Consolidation of Parking; 5) Completion of the Southwest Entrance.

Prioritization of these components is difficult because of the many variables which might affect development, including funding and partnership opportunities, phasing with non-park projects which may impact a component, and design and construction variables. Costs are approximate only and will be affected by the timing and phasing of the various components.

SOUTHEAST	1,108,000
NORTHEAST	1,011,000
NORTHWEST	1,224,000
Parking	722,000
(Parking Structure as Alternate)	(3,000,000)
SOUTHWEST	2,078,000
TOTAL (excluding parking structure)	**$6,143,000**

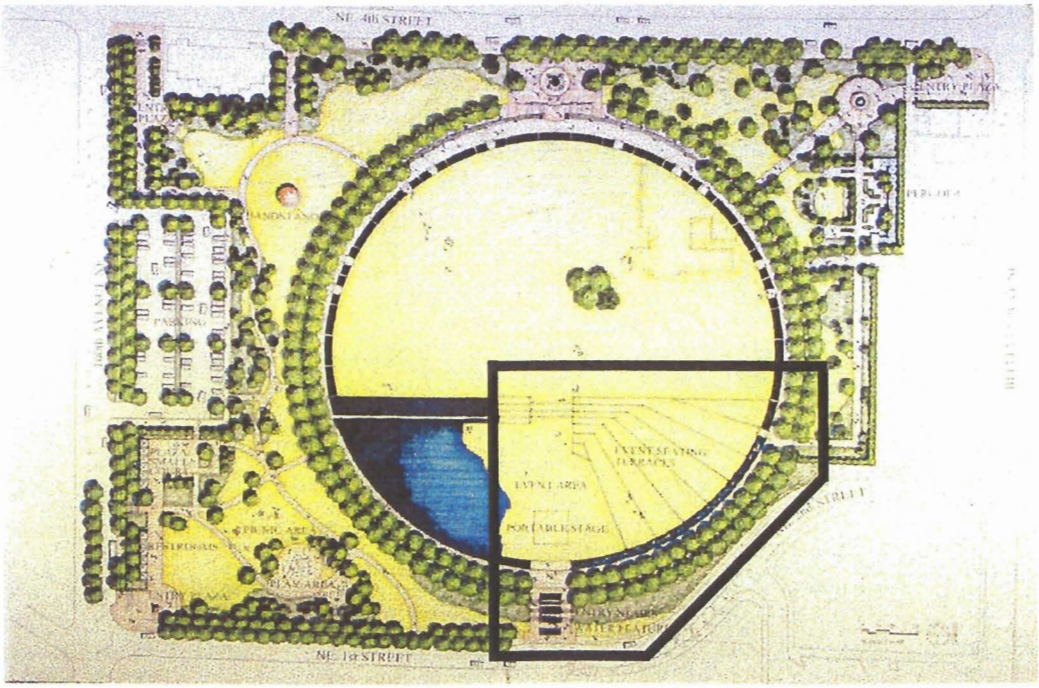


SOUTHEAST ENTRANCE AND CIRCLE

Completion of the southeast corner and circle would have the single greatest impact on the Park and its design intentions. The contribution it would make to completing the central design element of the Park, the circular canal, promenade and border of trees, would not only add to enjoyment of the Park but should bring Bellevue significant national and even international attention as the primary concept of the Park is finally realized. The phasing of this section of the Park is affected by both construction of the S-curve and agreements which have been made for interim parking north of the S-curve. Primary components of this area of the Park include completion of the canal, promenade and alley of trees, construction of stepped terraces for events seating, consolidation and balancing of the apparatus which controls the major water works for the Park, and creation of a stair and water feature at the termination of 102nd Avenue N.E. and the entrance to Old Bellevue.

Itemized Costs:

Mobilization (10%)	87,600
Demolition	6,000
Earthwork and Site Preparation	165,000
Promenade Surfacing and Drainage	55,000
South Entry Paving and Walls	40,000
Event Area Stairs and Walls	120,000
Site Furnishings	25,000
Precast	120,000
Canal	45,000
Water Feature (South Entry)	55,000
Planting	70,000
Irrigation	55,000
Utilities	120,000
Subtotal	963,600
Est. Contingency (15%)	144,540
TOTAL	**$1,108,140**

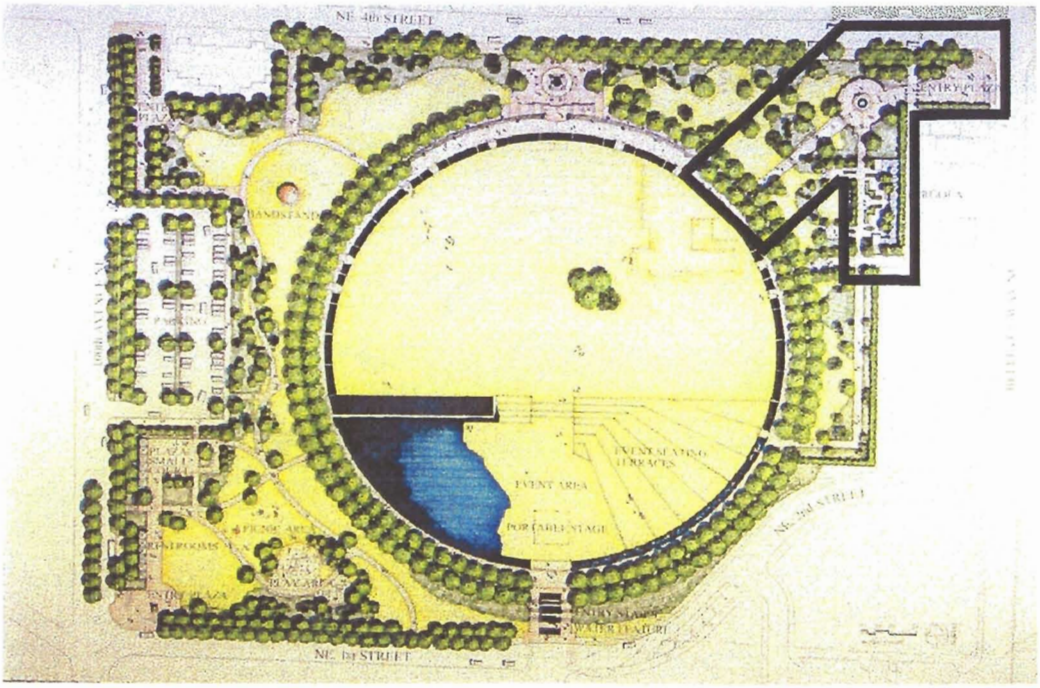


NORTHEAST ENTRANCE

Completion of the northeast entrance will provide the critical connection the Park needs to have with the downtown core and particularly the Pedestrian Corridor half a block to the north. This component is not impacted by adjacent construction and from a contractor's perspective it is perhaps the easiest project to realize without construction complications and may therefore be the most economical for the benefit realized. Critical to the development of this corner is the maintenance of alley egress to N.E. 4th Street from the businesses fronting Bellevue Way. The entrance will contain a major water feature which will be seen from the intersection of N.E. 4th Street and Bellevue Way and entrances to the promenade and the formal gardens. Included as an option is the completion of a covered shelter for picnics, wedding parties and the like.

Itemized Costs:

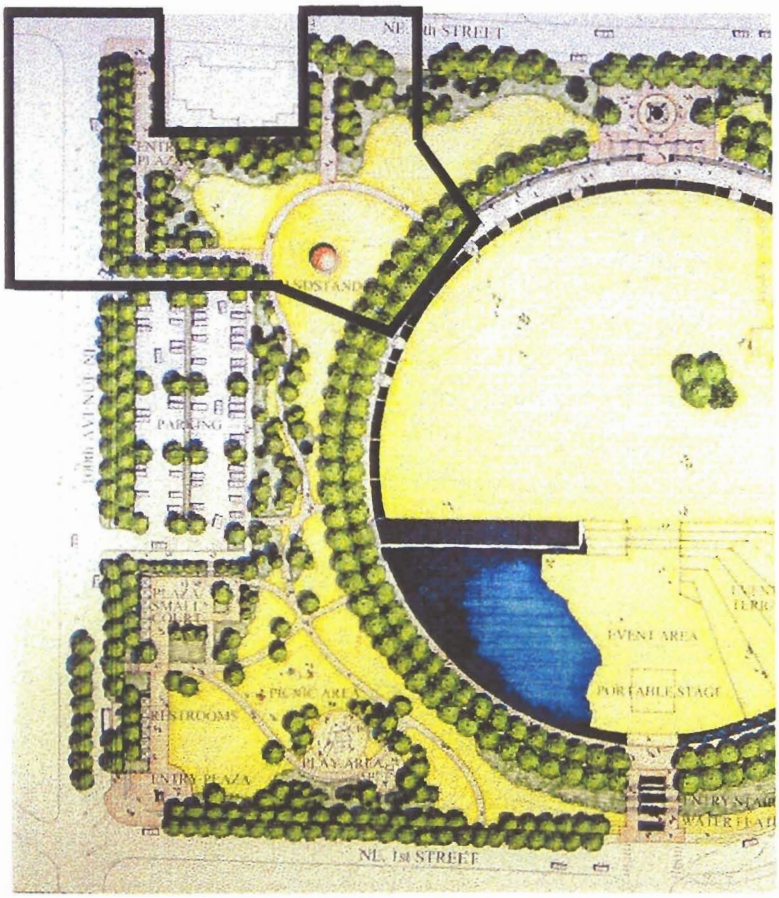
Mobilization (10%)	50,300
Demolition	22,000
Earthwork and Site Preparation	35,000
Walls, Steps & Paving	205,000
Crushed Surface Paths	11,000
Site Furnishings	50,000
Precast	35,000
Water Feature	25,000
Planting	65,000
Irrigation	20,000
Utilities	35,000
Subtotal	553,300
Est. Contingency (15%)	83,000
SUBTOTAL	636,300
Pergola at Formal Garden	375,000
TOTAL	**$1,011,300**



NORTHWEST ENTRANCE

The northwest corner may see a significant private development in the near future. There is the opportunity to coordinate the construction of the entrance plaza to the Park with construction of residential units planned for private property along N.E. 4th Street This entrance provides access to the Park from neighborhoods to the northwest, presents an overlook for the Park and views to Mt. Rainier, and provides terraces for outdoor dining supported by privately provided food services. This feature can be best implemented if constructed in consort with private residential development which will be adjacent to this entrance.

The estimate for the northwest corner is subdivided into two areas as noted: the upper plaza development includes the work between the streets and the proposed private residential development. The balance includes the wide entries from 100th Avenue N.E. and N.E. 4th Street, the wide stairs, the lawn and planted areas and the bandstand structure.



Itemized Cost of Upper Plaza Development only:

Mobilization (10%)	19,550
Demolition (Bldg)	22,000
Earthwork and Site Preparation	18,000
Walls, Steps & Paving	80,000
Site Furnishings	25,000
Precast	15,000
Planting	20,000
Irrigation	3,500
Utilities	12,000
Subtotal	215,050
Est. Contingency (15%)	32,250
SUBTOTAL	247,300

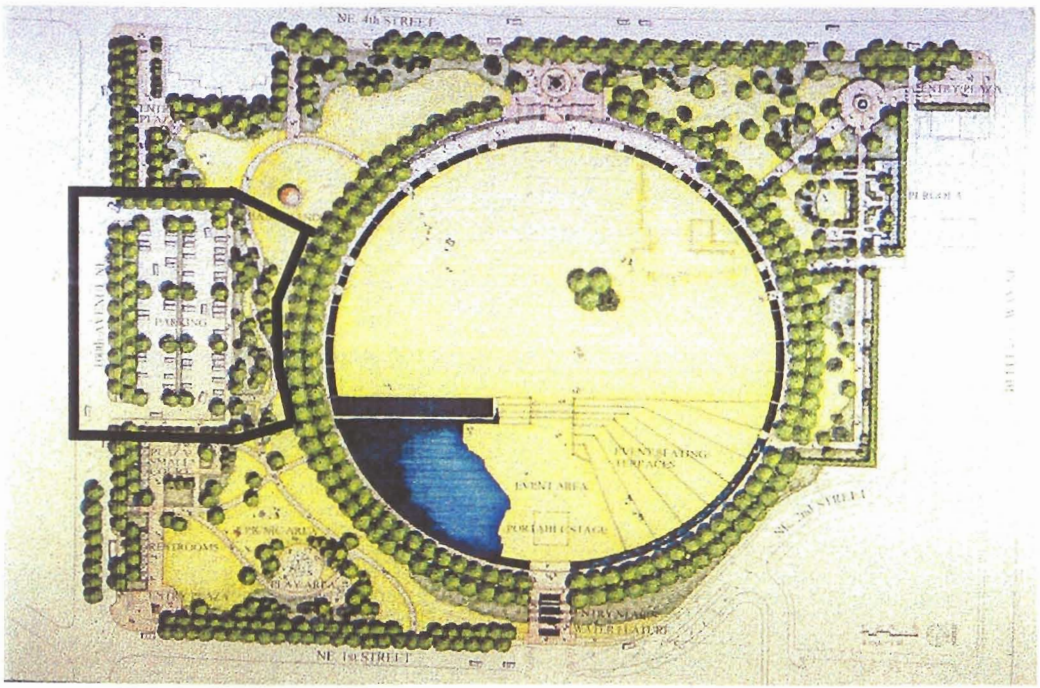
Itemized Cost of Balance of Northwest entrance:

Mobilization (10%)	55,500
Earthwork and Site Preparation	105,000
Walls, Steps & Paving	128,000
Site Furnishings	53,000
Precast	16,000
Planting	175,000
Irrigation	45,000
Utilities	33,000
Subtotal	610,500
Est. Contingency (15%)	91,500
SUBTOTAL	702,000
Bandstand	275,000
TOTAL	**$1,224,300**

CONSOLIDATION OF AUTOMOBILE PARKING

A key variable in the economics of the Park's future construction is the manner in which parking is addressed. The best long term solution to the Park's automobile parking needs is consolidation of parking into a single terraced parking area for 130 cars accessible from 100th Avenue N.E. This solution preserves the largest amount of Park land for park purposes and at the same time maximizes the number of cars on the Park site. An additional 23 car stalls are recommended for 100th Avenue N.E.

Itemized Costs:	
Mobilization (10%)	57,100
Demolition (Bldg)	55,000
Earthwork and Site Preparation	118,000
Paving and Curbs	140,000
Site Furnishings	28,000
Precast	18,000
Planting	125,000
Irrigation	32,000
Utilities	55,000
Subtotal	628,100
Est. Contingency (15%)	94,200
TOTAL	**$722,300**
Parking Structure for 200 cars	3,000,000

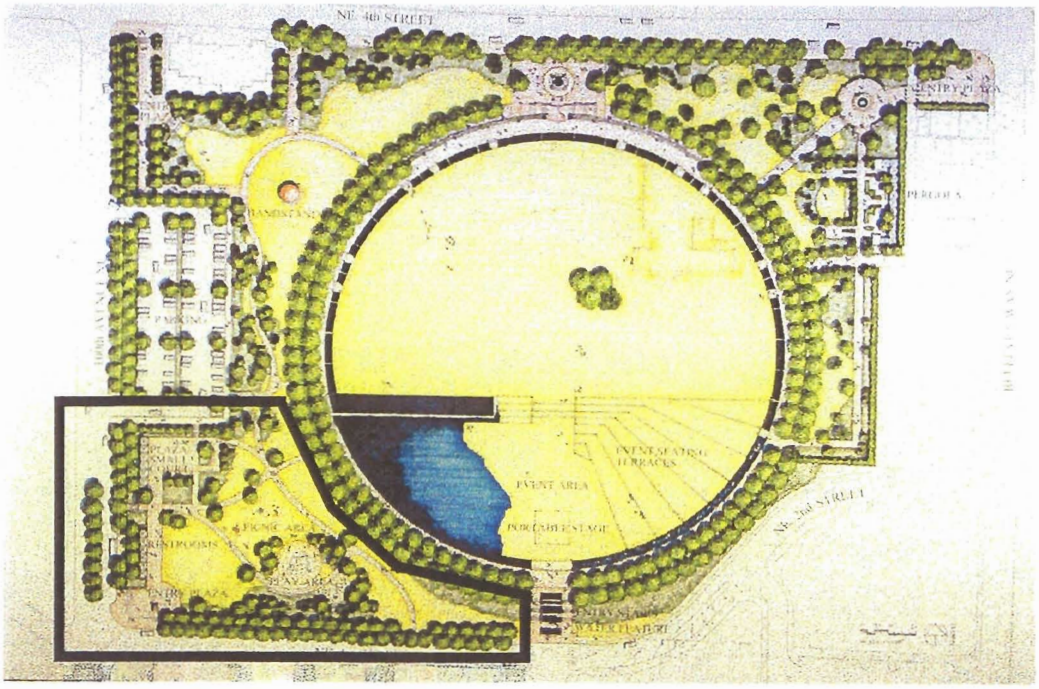


SOUTHWEST ENTRANCE

The southwest corner entrance provides an important linkage to Meydenbauer Bay. This project will also enlarge and improve the children's play and family picnic areas. Restrooms and shelters are included as a part of this proposal, as is a hard surface sport court. Because of the adjacent topography, this area is likely to be significantly disrupted if completed before the final parking plan is implemented.

Itemized Costs:

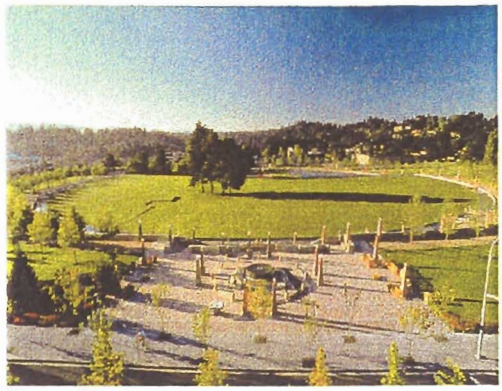
Mobilization (10%)	110,500
Demolition	8,000
Earthwork and Site Preparation	167,000
Walls, Steps & Paving	265,000
Paving and Curbs	140,000
Site Furnishings	85,000
Precast	21,000
Water Feature/Artwork	28,000
Planting	225,000
Irrigation	56,000
Utilities	110,000
Subtotal	1,215,500
Est. Contingency (15%)	182,300
SUBTOTAL	1,397,800
Pergola at SW corner	200,000
Restroom	240,000
Play Area	240,000
TOTAL	**$2,077,800**



RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

ADOPTION OF MASTER PLAN

It is recommended that the Master Plan Update for the Downtown Park dated 1997, be adopted by the Bellevue City Council and accepted as an amendment to the original Downtown Park Master Plan to serve as the framework for future Park planning, development and budgeting decisions.



View of Park across the Belvedere

ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND LAND USE CODE

Policy language is needed that clearly identifies the importance of the Downtown Park as integral to the success and viability of downtown Bellevue, now and in the future.

Comprehensive Plan:
There are no policy references to the Downtown Park in the *General Elements of The Comprehensive Plan*. The Land Use, Urban Design and Parks sections are likely areas in which to include policy direction relating to the Park.

Current reference to the Downtown Park in the *Downtown Subarea Plan* appears in a section entitled Former Bellevue Junior High and Administrative Properties (Downtown Park) This language and the policies that follow are antiquated. They need to be updated.

Land Use Code:
Currently, there is no Land Use Code language which specifically addresses the Downtown Park.

The block within which the Downtown Park is located, is zoned CBD-MU (mixed use). Except for the Perimeter Design District, this zoning allows for a building height of 200 feet. The east edge of the Park is particularly vulnerable to the manner in which future redevelopment occurs on the privately held parcels which border the Park which are needed to preserve the integrity of this public asset.

There needs to be language introduced into the Land Use Code that defines specific design guidelines for properties developing adjacent to the Park.

Recommendations:
It is recommended that the Downtown Park master plan be made part of Bellevue's *Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code* and that specific language be included which addresses the following elements and their relationship to the Park:

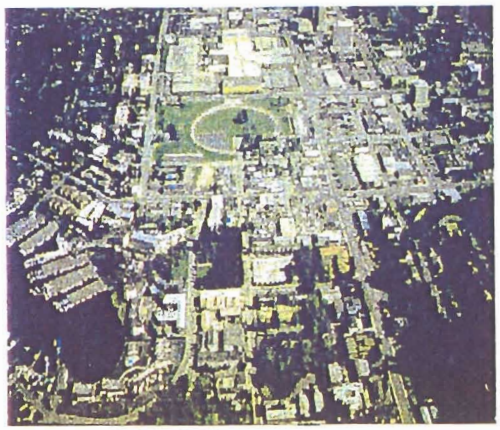
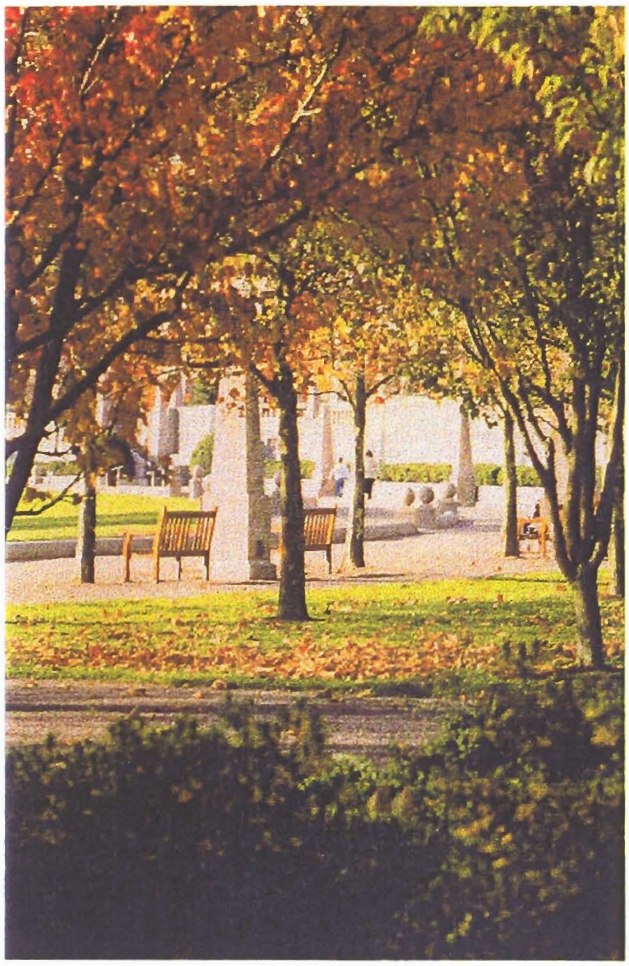
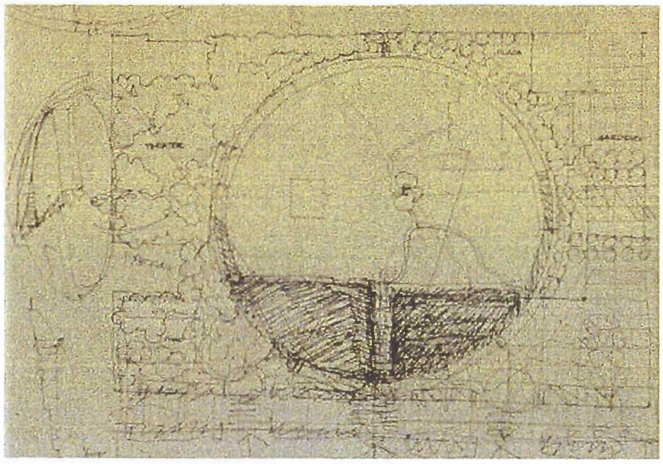
· The following recommendations of the ULI Report have a certain relationship to the Downtown Park and should be addressed in the context of the Park.

- *completion of the Downtown Park*
- *implementation of the Green Street concept, particularly along the south edge of the Park*
- *enhancement of the connection between the Park and Meydenbauer Bay*
- *inclusion of public art downtown*
- *expansion of housing stock downtown*
- *expansion of events and programming downtown*

· Buildings/structures, other than those that support Park activities, should not be allowed within the Park.

· Buildings/structures which are built around the park should create a graceful transition between the private development and the Park. Design guidelines which address shadow impacts and building orientation, building setbacks, building design (height, roof lines, articulation, materials), access from surrounding development to the park, midblock connections from Bellevue Way to the Park will in combination aid in creating a transition that is mutually beneficial.

· The relationship of the Downtown Park to Meydenbauer Bay and the Pedestrian Corridor should be articulated.



Downtown Park 1996