

Newport Hills Subarea Plan

OVERVIEW

The Newport Hills Subarea is bordered on the west by I-405, on the south by S.E. 69th Street and on the north and east by Coal Creek Parkway. Its proximity to I-405 and I-90 makes downtown Seattle, Bellevue, and the Cascade Mountains easily accessible.

The Subarea is made up of a number of single-family neighborhoods and multifamily neighborhoods surrounding a core commercial district. Despite the emphasis on residential development, portions of the Newport Hills Subarea retain a semi-rural feel, protected by steep ravines and tree covered hills. Secluded woods and wetlands are home or migratory corridors for deer, raccoons, coyotes, mountain beavers, possums, squirrels, red-tail hawks, and eagles. Coal Creek and the Newport Hills tributary once supported runs of salmon and steelhead. Past coal mining activity and recent residential development have reduced these streams' abilities to support sustainable fish populations.

Residents are loyal to their neighborhood and many have moved to other homes within the Newport Hills Subarea. The commercial district is its nucleus, providing a link between schools, the YMCA, swim and tennis club, county park, and residences.

Current issues center around:

- revitalizing the appearance and viability of the commercial district;
- protecting residential neighborhoods;
- addressing major transportation issues;
- providing pedestrian links between commercial, residential, and park areas;
- preserving natural areas to enhance wildlife habitat; and
- acquiring open spaces for parks.

The policies in the Newport Hills Subarea Plan guide the continued development of the Subarea.

History

Initial development of the area now known as the Newport Hills Subarea was tied to the 1863 discovery of coal in the hills around Cougar Mountain. The Newcastle mine, located southeast of the present Newport Hills, helped make coal the leading industry in King County during the 1870s and 1880s. In fact, from 1875 to 1890, over one hundred thousand tons of coal were mined annually. It was through Newport

Hills that coal was transported from the mines, first by wagon, then from 1865 by a tram-like railway. The railway came up south of S.E. 60th Street and down to Lake Washington, south of Pleasure Point, where the coal was loaded onto barges and transported to Seattle and San Francisco.

For a number of years, ferries and railways served as the major transportation links between Newport Hills and points north, west, and south. Passenger boats with a capacity of less than ten people ferried from Newcastle Landing to Seattle. People on shore signaled these vessels by raising a flag. Beginning in 1878, the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad ran from the mines at Newcastle, through Hazelwood, down to Renton and Seattle. In later years, commuters could connect with an interurban line that ran south to Kent, Auburn, and Puyallup before returning to Seattle. But, following the closing of the coal mines in 1929, all rail service between Newcastle and Renton ended.

C.D. Hillman influenced the development of Newport Hills for homesteading when he platted and sold five-acre parcels in the Hazelwood area, east of 116th Avenue S.E. and south of S.E. 60th Street. Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, and French-Canadian immigrants, hungry for land ownership, came to his “Garden of Eden,” the name which identifies the neighborhood today. These workers were originally employed in the mines or in Renton, but it was their self-sustaining farms which carried their families through the Depression years. Some of the homes, built as early as 1907, are still owned by descendants of the original homesteaders.

Development has changed the character of the area from rural to suburban. Although completion in 1940 of the Mercer Island floating bridge was expected to precipitate rapid growth of the Eastside, the war and the presence of bridge tolls delayed that growth until after 1950. In 1958, the real estate company, White and Bollard, whose offices were in a building on the corner of 119th Avenue S.E. and S.E. 56th Street, planned and platted Newport Hills, and within the next few years the commercial district was built. It was during the “Boeing Boom” between the late 1950s and early 1970s when many of its employees bought homes in Newport Hills that the area experienced its greatest growth.

Urbanization and rapid growth seem to dominate the Eastside landscape. However, in the 1990s the Newport Hills Subarea retains some elements of the past. Horses populate the remaining farm pastures. In the shadows of a new subdivision, cows and sheep graze in rolling meadows. Deer and other wildlife flourish in the greenway provided by the Coal Creek habitat system, occasionally emerging to wander through backyards. Residents and the community as a whole cherish these remnants of their rural beginnings. They provide a context for the area’s history, a history made that much richer and more real by the fact that some of the original, historical residences remain standing today.

Citizen Participation

Shortly following the annexation of the Newport Hills Subarea, a citizen's advisory committee (CAC) worked for five months to develop policy and land use recommendations for the Subarea. The work of this committee is of critical importance for the long-term evolution of the Newport Hills Subarea as a vibrant and attractive neighborhood. Though the policies are in place, it is essential that the community remain active in anticipating and planning for the changes that are inevitable.

Citizen committees communicate with government and with other entities to assist with implementing the policies in the Newport Hills Subarea Plan.

Existing policies in the Citizen Participation Element of the *Comprehensive Plan* encourage community involvement in all planning processes. In addition to the legally required noticing, the City of Bellevue notifies area community groups when development applications are received. Especially important is early communication between developers and neighbors about potential impacts and potential solutions to compatibility issues.

It is essential for business and the community to work together in revitalizing the Newport Hills commercial district. Ongoing communication and involvement in joint efforts are essential to achieve increased business vitality and community appearance.

The community should work with Newport Hills businesses and residents to establish a central place for distribution of information and community events.

POLICIES

POLICY S-NH-1. Encourage developers of subdivisions or commercial buildings to engage in early communications with nearby residents and community groups to identify issues and opportunities.

POLICY S-NH-2. Solicit the input of Newport Hills CAC members and other interested citizens in implementing the Newport Hills Subarea Plan policies.

General Land Use

Since the 1950s, the Newport Hills Subarea has largely developed with residences, along with schools, churches, and businesses. Little undeveloped land remains. Single-family homes are the predominant housing type. An example of a newer

style of residential development is attached townhomes. Multifamily residences are clustered around the intersection of 119th Avenue S.E. and S.E. 60th Street, where the core commercial district provides neighborhood shopping opportunities.

The Newport Hills commercial district provides goods and services for the neighborhood, and is also the community's focal point. Both functions may be enhanced in the future through greater communication and cooperation between business owners and residents. Redevelopment opportunities in the Newport Hills commercial district could include a mixed-use component where retail and housing are integrated. Introducing housing to this neighborhood business area may help support a greater variety of retail uses.

Much of the Newport Hills Subarea was developed with insufficient provisions for public parks and open space, according to current standards. The Newport Hills Community Park at S.E. 60th Street and 120th Avenue S.E. is the only public park in the Subarea. It is heavily used and should be expanded, with adequate facilities and connections to neighborhoods. New neighborhood-scale parks and miniparks should be acquired and developed throughout the Subarea, especially in association with new subdivisions.

Land available for new residential development is limited, yet how these parcels develop will affect the character of Newport Hills. It is important that new neighborhoods retain significant open space, provide public trail connections, and protect and enhance environmentally sensitive features. Clustering new lots and homes with respect to the visual character of existing open space and environmentally sensitive areas enables property owners reasonable development opportunities while protecting features important to the community.

Several streams run through the Newport Hills Subarea, most of which have deep, steep-sided ravines. Steep, unstable slopes significantly reduce opportunities for development along these streams. Much of the undeveloped property along stream corridors is in private ownership. While not designated as such, this land functions as open space between neighborhoods. Additional community benefit may accrue through the development of nonmotorized transportation projects through the stream corridors.

The Land Use designations depicted on the Land Use Plan (*Figure S-NH.1*) reflect the existing and desired land use pattern in the Newport Hills Subarea. Changing circumstances over time may prompt a review and possible amendments to the Land Use Plan. Private property owners or the City may initiate a review of a particular land use designation. Amendments to the *Comprehensive Plan* must meet the criteria specified in the Land Use Code, and must be approved by the Planning Commission and the City Council following extensive public involvement.

West Ravine

West Ravine Creek originates in the residential areas and open pastures south of S.E. 60th Street and west of 120th Avenue S.E.. After flowing through a culvert deep beneath S.E. 60th Street, the runoff is concentrated in a small creek at the bottom of a steep, wooded ravine. Storm drainage from the Newport Hills and Lake Heights neighborhoods periodically contributes to the creek's volume, eroding the loose sand and gravel from the ravine's slopes. Storm water and sediment are collected in a detention pond south of the Newport Hills Park-and-Ride lot. The creek then enters a culvert, passing beneath the Park-and-Ride, I-405, and the Lakehurst Lane residential area west of I-405 before its outfall into Lake Washington. East and north of the Park-and-Ride, the ravine slope is steep and geologically unstable.

While residential development is absent from the West Ravine, limited activity has occurred. Huge, rotting stumps testify to the logging operations early in the 20th century. Later, when the Newport Hills neighborhoods were being developed, stumps, logs, and construction debris were dumped in the south part of the Ravine near S.E. 60th Street. Then in the 1960s and 70s, sand and gravel from the Ravine's east slope were quarried and removed from the site. In the late 1970s the State Department of Transportation constructed the Park-and-Ride lot, filling the Ravine rather than disturbing the landslide-prone slope to the east.

Residential development proposals for the Ravine during the 1980s did not materialize due in part to environmental constraints. On the south, a proposed subdivision encountered the landfill of construction debris. This unconsolidated fill was found to be slowly sloughing toward the west into the Ravine. While an engineering solution to stabilize the fill may be feasible, the one proposed (a gabion wall on the steep, protected slope of the Ravine) was not acceptable to King County because it was within the steep slope area. Northeast of the Park-and-Ride, proposals for high density residential development conflicted with measures deemed necessary by the County to minimize the landslide potential of the steep slope. In this area, sand and gravel deposits over layers of clay create a landslide hazard, dictating a complex engineering solution to stabilize the hillside following proposed excavation for buildings and infrastructure. A scaled-down plan approved by the County that protected the slope was never pursued.

The Newport Hills Subarea Plan defines the housing potential in the West Ravine, but alerts developers to the environmental conditions that may restrict future development.

In the future, development on the Park-and-Ride lot may evolve into a mix of uses, retaining the parking function but adding retail and services for the commuters and the residents of the immediate neighborhood. The site may also include

some housing. While the current land use designation (SF-H) does not allow for commercial activity, the City recognizes this potential and may, as circumstances change, support changes to the land use designation for the Park-and-Ride to accommodate a greater range of uses.

Special development conditions exist (identified by the “*” on the map following the land use designation) that are intended to protect the environment and ensure that new development is compatible with the existing neighborhoods.

POLICIES

POLICY S-NH-3. Recognize land uses as depicted on the Future Land Use Map (*Volume 1, Map LU-1*).

POLICY S-NH-4. Retain the current land use designation for churches and schools.

POLICY S-NH-5. Encourage new development to use the Planned Unit Development (PUD) mechanism to preserve the visual character of existing open space and protect environmentally-sensitive areas in new subdivisions by clustering housing on the least sensitive portions of a site.

POLICY S-NH-5a. Encourage the combining of contiguous parcels in the West Ravine in a single Planned Unit Development (PUD) application to take advantage of favorable site conditions and access. [*Amended Ord. 4803*]

POLICY S-NH-5b. Vehicular access to housing development in the south half of the West Ravine (south of approximately S.E. 56th Street) should be from S.E. 60th Street. [*Amended Ord. 4803*]

POLICY S-NH-5c. Require vehicular access to development in the north half of the West Ravine (north of approximately S.E. 56th St.) from the right-of-way at the Newport Hills Park-and-Ride. [*Amended Ord. 4803*]

POLICY S-NH-5d. Utilize the Sensitive Areas Overlay District regulations (*Land Use Code Part 20.25H*) in effect at the adoption of the land use designation to determine the maximum number of dwellings to be developed on the sites. [*Amended Ord. 4803*]

POLICY S-NH-6. Require, as a condition of new subdivision development, a nonmotorized transportation link to the pipeline trail from S.E. 64th Place.

POLICY S-NH-7. Require new subdivisions to improve street frontages to urban standards, including nonmotorized improvements identified in the Transportation

section of this subarea plan and in the most current adopted Pedestrian/Bicycle Transportation Plan.

POLICY S-NH-8. Protect significant trees and environmentally-sensitive areas (steep slopes, riparian corridors, and wetlands) in accordance with the provisions of the Land Use Code.

POLICY S-NH-9. Require new subdivisions in the area known as the West Ravine to provide public easements and to construct the nonmotorized transportation facilities as identified in this subarea plan and in the most current adopted Pedestrian/Bicycle Transportation Plan.

Housing

Housing in the Newport Hills Subarea is generally of high quality and is well maintained. This holds true across the range of housing types, ages, and locations.

The 1950s through 1970s saw rapid housing development in Newport Hills. As these structures age, general maintenance is of increasing importance to ensure their continued safety and attractiveness. A periodic housing quality survey would indicate the need for maintenance or restoration in older neighborhoods. Bellevue periodically conducts a citywide housing conditions survey (last survey in 1995). This survey monitors the health of the housing stock, serving as an early warning system for repair and rehabilitation needs. While repairs are generally the owner's responsibility, the Housing Rehabilitation Program provides financial assistance to low-income residents for housing repairs.

Of the 2,866 housing units (1993) in the Newport Hills Subarea, 78 percent (2,234) are the single-family detached type and 22 percent (632) are attached, either townhomes, apartments, or condominiums. There are limited opportunities for new housing development in the Subarea: on acreage in the southern portion, and in a mixed-use setting in the Newport Hills commercial district.

The City of Bellevue has regulatory incentives for development to include housing in Neighborhood Business (NB) districts, in mixed-use projects. Mixed-use development combines housing, retail, and professional office uses in a single structure or building complex. Bellevue design guidelines assure that mixed-use projects will be inviting places to live and shop and will enhance the appearance of the Newport Hills commercial district.

POLICIES

POLICY S-NH-10. Support development proposals that include housing opportunities in all Neighborhood Business (NB)-zoned land in the Newport Hills commercial district.

POLICY S-NH-11. Conduct periodic surveys of housing conditions in Newport Hills to identify maintenance needs and to anticipate future commitments of City resources.

Transportation

Newport Hills Subarea neighborhoods need a safe and adequate system for nonmotorized transportation. The neighborhoods, schools, parks, and commercial district are not connected with sidewalks. Continuous trail or sidewalk links are needed between regional transit facilities and the local activity areas. The pipeline trail on the east side of Newport Hills is a major nonmotorized corridor that accommodates many types of users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and occasionally, equestrians. In the Subarea, much of the off-street trail system will require easements across private property.

Bicycle lanes or shared-road bicycle facilities on arterials are needed to enhance safety and to encourage use. Bicycle lanes are especially needed on Lake Washington Boulevard to provide a safe connection to the Newport Hills Metro Park-and-Ride, and complete a link in the Lake Washington Loop bicycle system. Other arterials on which bicycle facilities would benefit the community are 119th Avenue S.E., S.E. 56th Street, and S.E. 60th Street. The Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP) is a means to implement many nonmotorized transportation projects.

Eastside Catholic High School was built originally as a junior high school, and lacks the sufficient parking capacity of a high school. Students then park on the adjacent public streets. The streets are not designed to accommodate on-street parking, so there is some interference with traffic and pedestrians during school sessions and other events such as special activities after school. Additional on-site parking should not be considered the only solution because of environmental and urban design policies established elsewhere in this subarea plan and because limited land supply in the Subarea should be appropriately used.

The school, the City, and Metro (the regional transit provider) should work together to discover creative solutions to increase pedestrian safety, decrease parking demand, and provide alternatives for transportation.

Parking and pedestrian safety is also a major issue around the Newport Community Park. Reconstructing S.E. 60th Street and 120th Avenue S.E. to full urban standards designed to accommodate on-street parking and curb, gutter, and sidewalk would minimize safety concerns at both the park and school sites.

Metro transit facilities do not meet the needs of Subarea residents for safety and comfort. Bus stops with paved and covered waiting areas are needed, especially for heavily-used stops along 119th Avenue S.E. and S.E. 60th Street. In the vicinity of the Newport Hills commercial district, passenger shelters should be uniquely designed to enhance the character of the business area (for example, see Crossroads bus shelters).

The existing network linking Newport Hills with other Eastside destinations makes standard Metro connections a challenge. Local transit service should be improved within the Newport Hills Subarea neighborhoods, then connected to the Newport Hills commercial district and regional transit facilities. This service improvement would be in addition to the existing Metro routes 114 and 240.

POLICIES

POLICY S-NH-12. Develop and implement a safe nonmotorized transportation system in designated corridors within the Newport Hills Subarea. Refer to the Pedestrian/Bicycle Transportation Plan matrix and map for nonmotorized designations. The purpose of this system is to link neighborhoods, schools, parks, shopping, transportation facilities, and the regional trail system.

POLICY S-NH-13. Construct sidewalks along arterials as identified in the Newport Hills Subarea Plan and as prioritized in the Capital Investment Program.

POLICY S-NH-14. Construct bicycle lanes or shared roadway facilities along arterials as identified in the Newport Hills Subarea Plan and as prioritized in the Capital Investment Program.

POLICY S-NH-15. Develop an off-street trail system within the Newport Hills Subarea, upgrade the existing trail segments to standards, and construct new segments as land and funding becomes available.

POLICY S-NH-16. Ensure that public nonmotorized easements remain open for public access.

POLICY S-NH-17. Encourage Metro to enhance neighborhood transit service within the Newport Hills Subarea, with connections to other Bellevue and Eastside destinations.

POLICY S-NH-18. Recommend to Metro that local Newport Hills Subarea transit service connects conveniently with the regional transit hubs, including the Newport Hills Park-and-Ride and the I-405 Coal Creek transit transfer station.

POLICY S-NH-19. Encourage Metro to improve pedestrian safety and comfort at transit stops by installing paved waiting areas, shelters, and improved street crossings where appropriate, especially along 119th Avenue S.E., S.E. 60th Street, and the I-405 Coal Creek transit transfer station.

POLICY S-NH-20. Address cut-through traffic, speeding, and other traffic control problems through the City of Bellevue’s Neighborhood Traffic Control Program.

POLICY S-NH-21. Encourage the cooperation of Eastside Catholic High School, the Bellevue School District, and the City of Bellevue to create safe on- and off-street parking on S.E. 60th Street between 118th Avenue S.E. and 120th Avenue S.E.

POLICY S-NH-22. Provide adequate parking and pedestrian facilities at the street frontages of the Newport Hills Community Park.

POLICY S-NH-23. Encourage Eastside Catholic to implement traffic demand management techniques for transportation to and from the school.

POLICY S-NH-24. Support the efforts of other jurisdictions, including King County, to develop the portions of the regional nonmotorized system that connect to the Newport Hills Subarea, especially Lake Washington Boulevard, S.E. 69th Street, and the Coal Creek County Park.

Economics

The economic vitality of the Newport Hills commercial district is a unique and important aspect for the character of the Newport Hills Subarea. The continued viability of this district — the reason to come to it — depends on the relationship between it and the Newport Hills community.

The Neighborhood Business (NB) and Professional Office (PO) zoning that has been established for the commercial district emphasizes support of existing uses and opportunities for mixes of new uses. Local businesses, the community, and the City of Bellevue should creatively integrate these new and existing uses to enhance the area’s economic viability.

A first step in this integration may be a market study which characterizes the served population and which identifies underserved uses. The community should seek opportunities to accomplish this study, perhaps through higher education institutions.

POLICIES

POLICY S-NH-25. Recognize the Newport Hills commercial district as a neighborhood center, now, and in redevelopment efforts.

POLICY S-NH-26. Emphasize unique retail uses which enhance Newport Hills identity in a redeveloped shopping and commercial district.

Environment

The Newport Hills Subarea is a plateau between Lake Washington on the west and the Coal Creek Basin that wraps around the area on the north and east. Elevation varies from about 50 feet above sea level along Coal Creek to about 420 feet south of the Newport Hills commercial district. Two deep, steep-sided stream ravines run roughly north-south and dissect the hill into distinct neighborhoods. Adding further to the geographic isolation of some parts of the Subarea are the steep slopes along Coal Creek and Lake Washington.

The soil types in the Newport Hills Subarea are primarily of the Alderwood and Kitsap types. These soils are generally suitable for urban development but are subject to severe erosion and landslide potential on steep slopes (greater than 40 percent). In many areas, residential and commercial development occurred without adequate storm water management, contributing to surface water pollution and stream-bed erosion. As a result, the streams no longer support sustaining fish populations. Storm water management is an expensive undertaking, especially in redevelopment. Yet this investment will yield incremental improvements to water quality in proportion to the magnitude of the project.

Much of the fish and wildlife habitat is located in the steep, undeveloped stream ravines, notably Coal Creek and the Newport Hills tributary. Salmon habitat has been damaged by erosion and sedimentation, but efforts are underway by the City of Bellevue, King County, and residents to control storm water runoff, stabilize the channels, and reintroduce migratory fish species. Deer migrate down the Coal Creek ravine from Cougar Mountain to find food and shelter in the ravines. Many wildlife species find homes in private yards and gardens, especially those adjacent to ravines and other undeveloped areas.

Protecting these critical habitat areas and corridors helps ensure viable populations of wildlife species that are compatible with the urban environment. Most undeveloped land is wildlife habitat. With new development some wildlife habitat will be eliminated.

Some areas in the southeast portion of the Newport Hills Subarea are potentially impacted by past coal mining practices. Subterranean coal mines may subside or collapse, causing property and utility damage. The City has prepared a map of the coal mine hazard areas and has developed regulations intended to steer development away from potentially hazardous areas.

POLICIES

POLICY S-NH-27. Encourage new commercial and residential development and redevelopment to minimize impervious surfaces.

POLICY S-NH-28. Ensure that all new development and redevelopment includes measures to protect and enhance surface water quality.

POLICY S-NH-29. Complete the Sensitive Areas Notebook for the Newport Hills Subarea by mapping and classifying environmentally-sensitive areas.

POLICY S-NH-30. Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in environmentally-sensitive areas.

POLICY S-NH-31. Preserve wildlife habitat along Coal Creek, the Newport Hills tributary, and the West Ravine creek (*CR-0281*).

POLICY S-NH-32. Improve the quality and restrict the runoff rate of surface water drainage from commercial areas when redevelopment occurs.

POLICY S-NH-33. Install signs on the perimeter of designated native growth protection easements to inform residents of the protected status of these areas.

POLICY S-NH-34. Protect and preserve natural buffers between incompatible land uses.

POLICY S-NH-35. Expand the City's water quality and wildlife enhancement programs to the Subarea, especially to Coal Creek, its tributaries, and to the West Ravine Creek (*CR-0281*).

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Much of the Newport Hills Subarea was developed with insufficient provisions for public parks and open space, according to current standards. However, significant acreage of undeveloped, private and public land exists in the several stream corridors that separate Newport Hills neighborhoods. Public recreation opportunities in stream corridors are limited by environmentally sensitive features, but could include trails and nature study.

Open space areas in the Newport Hills Subarea should be physically linked with trails systems and parks to benefit both wildlife habitat and public recreation. The Subarea trail systems and parks should be fully integrated into the regional parks and open space system. A strategic link in that system is the Coal Creek County Park. Coal Creek separates Newport Hills from the rest of Bellevue and provides a corridor to the Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park and connections to the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway System. A trail system within the Coal Creek Park would enhance regional connections. Bellevue should coordinate with King County to develop and maintain local sections of regional trail systems.

A high priority is to acquire and develop small parcels of land throughout the Subarea for mini-parks and neighborhood parks. These parks would provide recreation opportunities close to where people live and should be linked with the local parks system and with the system of pedestrian and bicycle transportation. Identified trailheads are ideal locations to acquire small parcels for parks. These small parks and trailheads are to be designed for wheelchair accessibility, but access by motorized vehicles will be restricted.

The City of Bellevue is working with the Bellevue School District to coordinate services and facilities. Schools sites are generally available for public use after school hours but some facilities may need to be upgraded to better serve the community as a whole. City/School District partnerships reduce the need for separate facilities to accommodate Parks and Community Services programs. Because it is the social and economic center of the community, a location in the Newport Hills commercial district should be evaluated if the City of Bellevue considers developing a community center to meet the needs of the larger community south of I-90. The same location should be considered for a neighborhood center which would meet community needs. These needs for the Newport Hills Subarea as identified by the Newport Hills CAC include such features as:

- day care;
- teen and senior activities;
- indoor and outdoor recreation facilities;
- classroom, performance, and meeting space;
- a community information kiosk;
- a mini-library; and
- a small cafe.

POLICIES

POLICY S-NH-36. Acquire land for park purposes, especially adjacent to existing parks, public facilities, and trailheads.

POLICY S-NH-37. Acquire parcels suitable for mini-parks, especially where such parcels can be integrated into the pedestrian/bicycle system.

POLICY S-NH-38. Enhance accessibility to the pipeline trail by eliminating unnecessary barriers.

POLICY S-NH-39. Provide additional landscaping to improve the appearance of pipeline trail access areas.

POLICY S-NH-40. Coordinate with the Bellevue School District and tenants on district property to enhance recreational, social, and cultural opportunities at school sites in the Newport Hills Subarea.

POLICY S-NH-41. Coordinate with King County to improve community involvement in local county parkland development and stewardship.

POLICY S-NH-42. Directly provide and/or participate in the provision of a variety of services, programs, and facilities to meet the needs of Newport Hills Subarea residents.

POLICY S-NH-43. Acquire public open space in the Newport Hills Subarea to meet the needs of the residents for a variety of recreation opportunities.

Urban Design

The quality of the visual environment in Newport Hills Subarea neighborhood areas is strongly defined by the areas and elements in it. While urban design policy emphasizes protecting and screening these, it also emphasizes linking them together. Out of that comes a connected and coherent pattern, reinforcing neighborhood identity.

Residential areas are defined by housing stock that is well-maintained, landscaping that defines and enhances private homes, and the presence or lack of utility poles and wires.

Shared community facilities such as the Newport Hills Community Park, commercial district, and schoolyards are distinct visual elements whose edges should be defined and integrated into the residential environment. Appropriate screening can accomplish this. Especially among these facilities and the residential areas, inclusion of consistent streetscape and architectural treatment will both define and link the community.

Other street edges, distinct community entry points, major outside boundaries such as Coal Creek Parkway and I-405 corridors, and open spaces which are more urban in

and around the Newport Hills commercial district and more pastoral closer to Lake Washington all serve to frame these elements. These edges, points, boundaries, and spaces should include features which reinforce the pattern of housing and shared community facilities.

The natural environment is the wooded ravines, public and private open space, and Coal Creek County Park. These areas generally have a linear pattern of trees and hillsides which is repeated throughout the Subarea. This pattern frames the more private housing areas.

The unique visual character of the Newport Hills Subarea is a function of how these various elements are compatible with each other. Compatibility is defined by Land Use Code regulations such as Transition Areas and Design Review.

The Newport Hills Subarea contains sites and buildings of historic significance. Whether or not their historic status has been officially recognized, their status should be confirmed before site development occurs. The character of existing older farm structures should be protected if feasible.

POLICIES

POLICY S-NH-44. Emphasize as a distinct visual element the preservation of existing trees on protected slopes and hilltops. Use these trees to screen incompatible land uses.

POLICY S-NH-45. Develop a comprehensive street tree plan.

POLICY S-NH-46. Encourage street tree plantings on arterials to define street edges and separate pedestrians from moving vehicles.

POLICY S-NH-47. Use drought-tolerant, native landscaping materials as vegetative buffers along the street frontage of commercial, multifamily, institutional, and park-and-ride sites.

POLICY S-NH-48. Make edges between different land uses distinct without interfering with security or visual access.

POLICY S-NH-49. Make links between different land uses (such as sidewalks and streetlights) obvious, integrated, and directive.

POLICY S-NH-50. Include the following elements in a redeveloped commercial district:

- street tree beautification plan;
- pedestrian access from streets to shops that is separated and buffered from auto areas;
- parking which is convenient and accessible, but which is in back or to the side of new buildings;
- new commercial buildings at the street edge;
- a consistent architectural identity, including facades, materials, signs, seating areas, street lighting, and Metro bus stop shelters; and
- an outdoor information kiosk.

POLICY S-NH-51. Connect the Newport Hills commercial district to surrounding single-family and multifamily residential areas by emphasizing pedestrian scale access and orientation. Include benches and landscaping in this connection.

POLICY S-NH-52. Clearly identify main entry points at 119th Avenue S.E., S.E. 60th Street, S.E. 64th Street, the Newport Hills Metro park and ride at I-405, and along the southern boundary of the city by using identification signs and landscaping.

POLICY S-NH-53. Include street lighting for pedestrian safety at access points and sidewalks within the commercial district.

POLICY S-NH-54. Preserve existing visual features such as trees and hilltops, views of water, and passive open space in new development when feasible.

POLICY S-NH-55. Encourage undergrounding of utility distribution lines on existing development and require undergrounding of all new utility distribution lines in new development where reasonably feasible.

POLICY S-NH-56. Add to the Bellevue Historic and Cultural Resources Survey those sites and buildings designated historic by King County, and those sites and buildings designated by the City of Bellevue.

POLICY S-NH-57. Recognize historic sites and buildings in site development.