

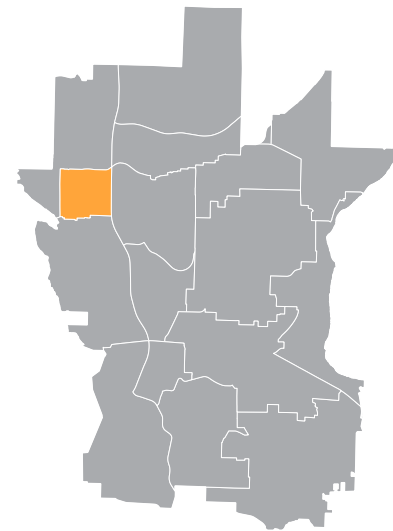


Downtown

GOAL

The great place strategy

To be a great place for people, Downtown Bellevue must be viable, livable, memorable, and accessible. As the heart of the Eastside, Downtown Bellevue has cultural, commercial, entertainment, residential, and regional uses located in distinct, mixed-use neighborhoods connected by a variety of unique public places, great public infrastructure, and accessible mobility options.



WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER

The community Vision for Downtown, providing the policy framework to support development of Downtown Bellevue as the primary urban center of the Eastside, consistent with countywide and regional plans.



OVERVIEW

A community's vision

Between 2001 and 2003, the city worked with Bellevue residents and business interests to strengthen the community's vision for Downtown while focusing on planning issues that face a maturing urban center with many of the basic elements already in place. This second generation of planning addressed solutions for increased transportation demand as well as the character of future Downtown development over the next twenty years.

This document provides the policy framework to support development of Downtown Bellevue as the primary urban center of the Eastside, consistent with countywide and regional plans. This Subarea Plan is implemented through regulations that guide the scale and character of new development, targeted public investments such as roadway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, new parks, affordable housing and public buildings, as well as private-sector investments in office, residential, hotel, retail and entertainment and cultural attractions that continue to further the vision for Downtown.

Bellevue strives to be inclusive and responsive to the needs of the community. Therefore, the community plays an important role in updates to the Downtown Subarea Plan. The city works

to ensure all communities have the information and means to participate, while identifying who is most impacted by decision-making and prioritizing equitable representation of viewpoints. Downtown Bellevue is one of the City's most diverse neighborhoods and a variety of engagement tools are used to reach the many different communities, including renters and the business community.

EVOLUTION OF DOWNTOWN BELLEVUE

Downtown Bellevue has dramatically transformed over the past century. Downtown Bellevue is located on the ancestral homelands of the Coast Salish people, where the Native tribes relied on the natural resources for thousands of years and lived in villages along the waterways. The Coast Salish people lived a self-sufficient life until colonial traders came initially, and later White settlers arrived in the mid-19th century. A ferry landing on Meydenbauer Bay just west of the present Downtown boundary was the early impetus for commercial development in the area. By the early 1900s, a few blocks of retail and other businesses had sprouted on Main Street around the landing, in the area known today as Old Bellevue. The area that became Downtown Bellevue and Wilburton was almost exclusively agricultural and was largely farmed by Japanese-American immigrants in the early 20th century up until World War II and the internment of Japanese-Americans.

Significant development in Downtown Bellevue awaited completion of the first bridge across Lake Washington in 1940. This growth was stimulated by the removal of the bridge toll in 1949. When Bellevue was incorporated in 1953, Downtown was a cluster of structures primarily along Main Street and Bellevue Square having opened in 1946, was a growing outdoor shopping center. The city's first Planning Commission embraced the idea of intentional Downtown growth planned in an orderly and efficient manner.



Downtown experienced rapid growth during the 1960s. By the mid-1970s, the area was becoming a significant business center, though much of the development was suburban in nature with acres of surface parking. During this period, the city, jointly with Downtown business interests, launched a series of planning studies focusing on the future of Downtown Bellevue. This was partially in response to concerns of a proposed regional mall planned for the Redmond area that was feared to divert customer traffic from Bellevue Square and downtown Bellevue. These studies resulted in a major new vision for the area, adopted by the city as the Central Business District Subarea Plan in 1979. It called for Downtown to be the financial and business hub of the Eastside, and as the appropriate location to concentrate regional retail, major office, residential, hotel and institutional uses.

With unprecedented growth in the region during the 1980s, Downtown Bellevue, with the implementation of its new plan was in a strong position to receive a major amount of the Eastside's growth. Numerous high-rise office towers were built in Downtown Bellevue through the 1980s, giving Bellevue a skyline and nearly doubling employment. Bellevue Place, the city's first true mixed-use project, brought the Hyatt Regency and set the stage for more national hotel brands to locate in the central core of the city. During this period in Downtown Bellevue the form and character of the area changed significantly as new towers rose and major streets like NE 4th were widened while single-family residential areas in Ashwood and NE 2nd receded away. The Bellevue Square shopping center was redeveloped into an enclosed two-level shopping mall in the early 1980s, creating a regional draw for the City. The landmark 20-acre Downtown Park opened in 1987 on the site of a former junior high school and gave Downtown Bellevue its central park. Additionally, the NE 6th Street 'Pedestrian Corridor' and the Transit Center were built in the mid-1980s as additional anchors of this new emerging 'Edge City' downtown.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Achieving the vision for Downtown as a vibrant, mixed-use center
- Enhancing the pedestrian environment
- Improving Downtown as a residential setting
- Enhancing the identity and character of Downtown neighborhoods

During the 1990s, Downtown added additional open spaces, including Ashwood Park and the centrally located Compass Plaza. NE 10th Street and 110th Avenue NE were extended through several blocks, completing the downtown grid network. Major civic projects were constructed, including King County's flagship regional library and the Meydenbauer Convention Center & Theater, both opening in 1993. Housing in downtown began to take off in the mid-1990s and has continued up to present. During the early 2000s, a high-rise office cluster emerged, focused around 108th Ave NE and a new iconic building for the Bellevue Arts Museum opened in 2001. In 2005, Bellevue's first pedestrian bridges were built to connect Bellevue Place, Lincoln Square and Bellevue Square's expanding mixed-use campus, creating an additional regional draw for the city. While preliminary planning for light rail began in the 1990s, the 2008 passage of ST2 began the formal process of the planning and design work for light rail. This culminated with the opening of the 2-line in 2024 and the Seattle connection across Lake Washington planned for opening in 2026.

Viability, livability, memorability

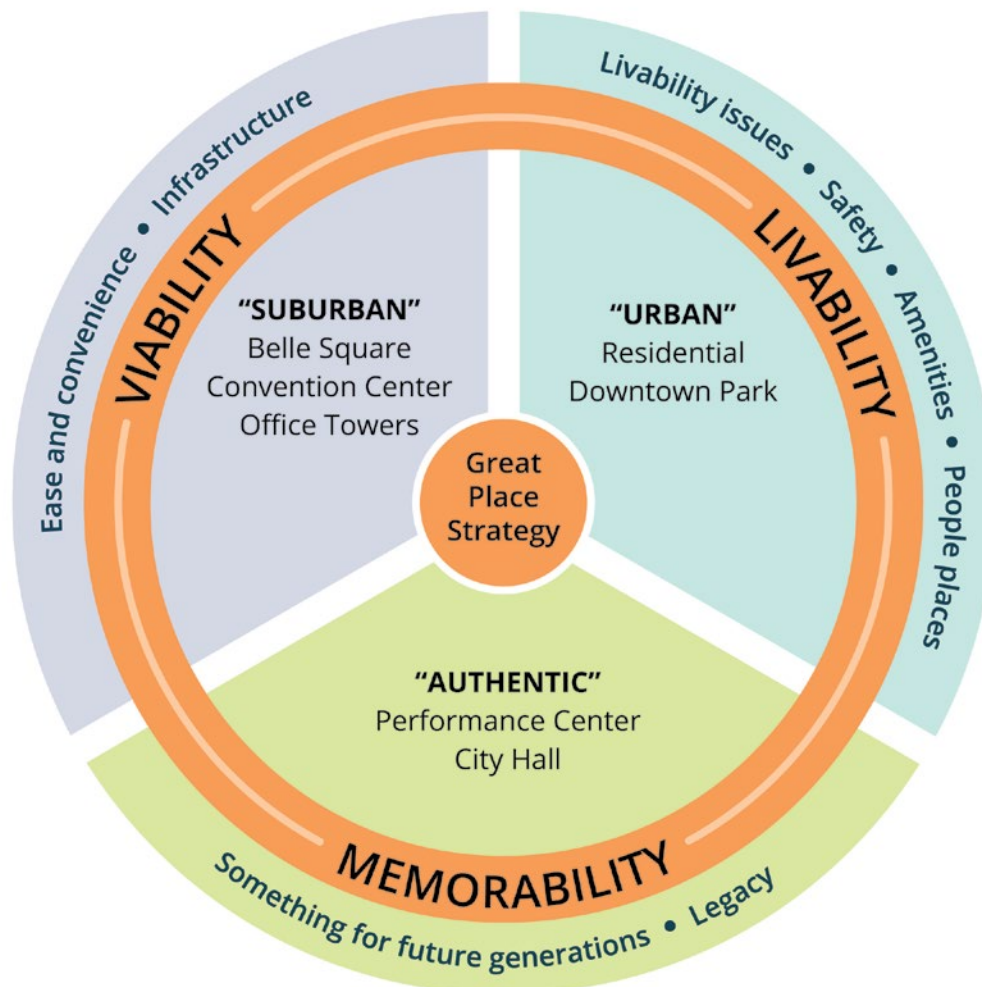
Downtowns evolve through a dynamic process as shown by the graphic here. This is a non-linear progression in which cities are relatively more viable, livable, or memorable during different stages of their growth (Figure S-DT-1). This is a constantly changing response to an array of economic, social and political influences. As Downtown Bellevue is now well into the 21st century, it continues to balance vitality and livability in its evolution.

Vitality is about quantity; about creating synergy. Vitality is achieved through large-scale, single-action projects and factors such as large transportation infrastructure, regional shopping destinations, zoning for growth, and planning for the addition of jobs.

Livability is about quality; about weaving an urban fabric rich in resources and quality of life. Livable cities provide welcoming places and sources of entertainment. Livable cities develop parks and open space. Truly great cities are also memorable. Memorable cities impart an unforgettable experience from having visited there. Memorable cities have strong, clear identities.

Downtown Bellevue should work to make progress on all three of these dimensions. But at today's point in Downtown Bellevue's evolution, it is important to focus extra attention on graduating to a higher level of livability.

Figure S-DT-1: Downtowns evolve through a non-linear process





Regional role

Downtown Bellevue is the primary hub for commerce and cultural activities for the city of Bellevue as well as for the greater Eastside. Extending from NE 12th Street south to the Main Street area and from 100th Avenue NE to Interstate 405, Downtown covers nearly 410 acres, or two percent of the city's land area.

As of 2019, there were 57,000 jobs and about 13,700 residents and 10,000 housing units in Downtown Bellevue. The 2044 forecast is for an additional 37,600 jobs and 14,500 housing units, or roughly half of the city's future employment and residential growth. This focus of future development within Downtown takes pressure off existing residential areas within Bellevue.

Planned growth in Downtown Bellevue is an important part of the Central Puget Sound's growth management strategy. The Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 20450 and King County's Countywide Planning Policies identify Downtown Bellevue as a Metropolitan Growth Center (Metro Center) and Regional Growth Center. As a Metro Center, Downtown Bellevue plays a primary regional role with dense existing jobs and housing, high-quality transit service, and also planning for significant future growth. Downtown Bellevue will also continue to serve as a major transit hub for the region, providing regional services and function as a major civic and cultural center. Downtown Bellevue is a place where growth should continue to be focused for the region to further its growth management

goals, such as reducing sprawl, encouraging the use of active transportation and transit, and retaining open space.

The 2025 update of this Plan recognizes several major regional transportation projects: planning for the Grand Connection, improvement of Eastrail, and the opening of the 2 Line. This plan is designed to leverage these large infrastructure investments by focusing growth in their vicinity, reinforce Downtown Bellevue as the regional hub for employment and commerce, enable greater use of transit and active transportation, and relieve growth pressure from existing residential areas within Bellevue.

Major focal points of the subarea plan

The future success of Downtown Bellevue rests on first being a livable place and slowly evolving into a truly memorable place. This will be accomplished through a series of coordinated urban design and transportation initiatives. Downtown Bellevue is beginning to take on the features of a true city center; an exciting place to work, shop, visit, or call home.

The focus of urban design within this Plan is to create a series of distinct, mixed-use neighborhoods tied together by a series of "signature streets" and great public infrastructure. Each district will be unique and have the urban amenities to support an active, fulfilling lifestyle and make it a great urban place.

Transportation planning in Bellevue requires multiple approaches to be undertaken simultaneously. The transportation vision is to provide regional access to Downtown via regional roadway and transit systems; mobility between Downtown and other parts of Bellevue; and safe circulation within Downtown for motorized and non-motorized modes as population and employment increase over time.

SECTIONS, GOALS & POLICIES

General goal

To become the symbolic and functional heart of the Eastside Region through the continued location of cultural, commercial, entertainment, residential, and regional uses.

The vision for Downtown Bellevue is a dense, mixed-use urban center that has a high pedestrian orientation and range of complementary land uses. These policies generally reinforce that vision while providing direction covering the entire Downtown Subarea.



Policies

Land Use

- S-DT-1.** Emphasis shall be placed on Downtown livability, with provisions made for the needs, activities, and interests of Downtown residents, employees, shoppers, and visitors.
- S-DT-2.** Encourage a variety of land uses to occur in mixed-use buildings or complexes where appropriate.
- S-DT-3.** Develop Downtown as an aesthetically attractive area.
- S-DT-4.** The highest intensity development shall be located in the core of Downtown, with diminishing intensities towards the edges of Downtown (see Map S-DT-1 for delineation of Core Area and Perimeter Area).
- S-DT-5.** Organize Downtown to provide complementary functional relationships between various land uses.
- S-DT-6.** Develop Downtown as the Eastside's most concentrated and diverse regional retail district.
- S-DT-7.** Encourage Downtown to continue to serve surrounding residential areas as a neighborhood retail district.
- S-DT-8.** Locate major office development in the Downtown core in order to complement retail activities and facilitate public transportation (see Map S-DT-1).
- S-DT-9.** Provide bonus incentives (related to permitted density, height, etc.) for private developments to accomplish the public objectives outlined in this Plan.
- S-DT-10.** Require design review to ensure high quality, aesthetically pleasing Downtown development.
- S-DT-11.** Encourage the development of major civic, convention, and cultural uses within Downtown.

- S-DT-12.** Expand the convention center as a resource for convention and community uses, and explore opportunities for complementary uses.
- S-DT-13.** Encourage private participation in development of Downtown community facilities.
- S-DT-14.** Encourage visual and performing arts organizations to locate Downtown.
- S-DT-15.** Encourage the assembly of land or coordination of development as appropriate to facilitate a quality built environment.
- S-DT-16.** Restrict the location of drive-in and drive-through activities within the Downtown Subarea.
- S-DT-17.** Support strategies for net-zero and net-positive development and create opportunities to pilot low-carbon building design principles.

Economics

- S-DT-18.** Promote economic development strategies that further Downtown Bellevue as an Urban Growth Center and anchor of employment on the Eastside, consistent with regional plans.
- S-DT-19.** Promote Downtown as the primary commercial area to provide goods and services to the residents and employees within the district and to residents of surrounding neighborhoods and the Eastside region.
- S-DT-20.** Strengthen Downtown's role as the Eastside's major business and commercial center and as an important revenue source for the City of Bellevue.
- S-DT-21.** Maintain an attractive economic environment to encourage private investment through stable tax rates and a predictable regulatory framework.
- S-DT-22.** Recognize the importance of Downtown's historic resources as identified in the Bellevue Historic and Cultural Resources Survey.
- S-DT-23.** Increase access to commercial space that is appropriate to grow and retain small and independent businesses in Downtown.

Historic Resources

- S-DT-24.** Work with local heritage groups to:
 - ▶ Collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit items that document the history of Downtown Bellevue;
 - ▶ Use plaques and interpretive markers to identify existing and past sites of historic and cultural importance;
 - ▶ Develop a contingency plan and prioritization for Downtown's historic resources, which may include voluntary relocation of significant historic structures to Bellevue parks property.
 - ▶ Recognize the contributions of historically marginalized communities in the area to Bellevue.
- S-DT-25.** Provide voluntary incentives for the replication or protection of historic facades or other significant design features when redevelopment occurs.

- S-DT-26.** Develop a voluntary mechanism to allow air rights to be transferred from historic properties to other Downtown property.

Residential Development

- S-DT-27.** Provide density incentives to encourage urban residential development throughout Downtown.
- S-DT-28.** Encourage the development of housing within the Downtown including units targeted to workers who are expected to fill jobs created in the Downtown.
- S-DT-29.** Meet the needs of a variety of household sizes in diverse economic circumstances with a range of Downtown urban residential types and densities, using a variety of tools including affordable housing.
- S-DT-30.** Encourage residential uses to occur in mixed-use structures or complexes.
- S-DT-31.** Explore the use of tax incentives to encourage additional work-force housing within the Downtown Subarea.
- S-DT-32.** Work with regional housing organizations to develop additional Downtown residential projects.

Public Safety

As Downtown densities and uses increase over time, it is important to maintain adequate response times for public safety functions. This may be delivered in a number of ways and will be further explored by the city when the need arises.

- S-DT-33.** Provide adequate fire and safety services for the Downtown Subarea as population and employment increase over time.



Utilities

- S-DT-34.** Require undergrounding of all utility distribution lines.
- S-DT-35.** Where possible, combine utility and transportation rights-of-way into common corridors.
- S-DT-36.** Require developer funding for extensions of collection and distribution lines.
- S-DT-37.** Minimize potential impacts to pedestrians caused by utility equipment, such as cabinets, within the sidewalk where possible.
- S-DT-38.** Utility installations visible in the public right-of-way should be consistent with Downtown design guidelines.
- S-DT-39.** Expand sustainable stormwater infrastructure, tree canopy, and landscaping that enhances ecological functions and urban wildlife habitat connectivity.

Urban design goal

To develop a functional and aesthetically pleasing Downtown which creates a livable and highly pedestrian-oriented urban environment that is compatible with adjacent neighborhoods.

Downtown Bellevue has been evolving from the commercial center of a suburban bedroom community into the multi-faceted heart of the Eastside region. To continue this evolution as a great urban place and to remain economically healthy over the coming growth cycles, a number of strategies are needed to take the next step in becoming a livable and memorable place. These strategies will nurture a sense of place in a series of Downtown neighborhoods.

They will recognize the importance of the pedestrian, and establish a high level of significance on the design of buildings and public spaces.



Policies

General Design and Function

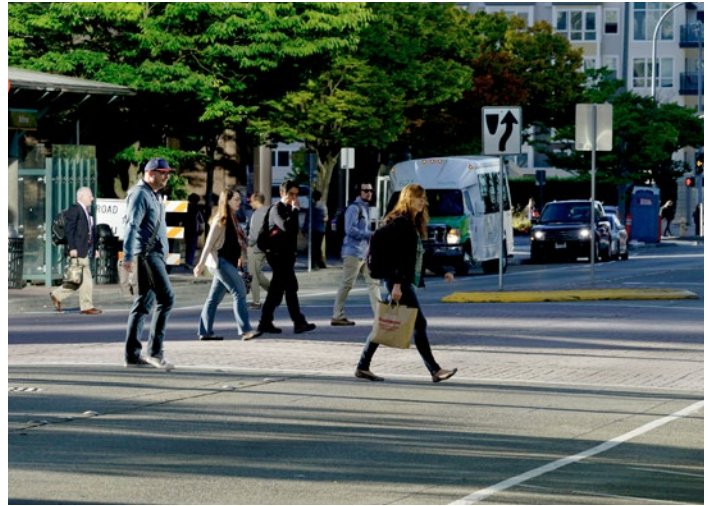
Design and function in Downtown Bellevue is guided by policy direction in concert with development standards and design guidelines. These all seek to ensure an aesthetically pleasing urban environment with a high level of pedestrian orientation.

- S-DT-40.** Create a pedestrian environment with a sense of activity, enclosure, and protection.
- S-DT-41.** Utilize development standards for building bulk, heights, setbacks, landscaping requirements, stepbacks, floor area ratios, open space requirements, and development incentives.
- S-DT-42.** Link building intensity to design guidelines relating to building appearance, amenities, pedestrian orientation and connections, impact on adjacent properties, and maintenance of view corridors. These guidelines will seek to enhance the appearance, image, and design character of the Downtown.
- S-DT-43.** Minimize the adverse impact of Downtown development on residential neighborhoods with consideration of through-traffic, views, scale, and land use relationships.

Downtown Streets

The streets in Downtown Bellevue are designed and managed based on their connectivity, cross-section, and current and future traffic and transit volumes. The pedestrian priority streets of NE 6th Street and the portion of Main Street in Old Bellevue are unique in Downtown Bellevue. The NE 6th Street Pedestrian Corridor morphs through a series of “rooms” from west to east from a limited auto-access street (street as plaza), to no auto access (garden hill climb), to a transit mall (transit central), and extends to the eastern edge of Downtown with a mix of modes in a new “civic center” segment. The Pedestrian Corridor is now a segment of the larger “Grand Connection” which will extend across I-405 and link Downtown and into

Wilburton to Eastrail (Map S-DT-2). Old Bellevue has a two-lane Main Street with on-street parking, small retail shops, and high levels of pedestrian activity that create the signature look and feel. Auto priority streets provide a pleasant pedestrian environment, but are designed and intended to accommodate large numbers of vehicles. Bellevue Way, NE 4th Street, NE 8th Street, and 112th Ave NE are the auto priority streets. Transit priority streets--108th Ave NE, Main Street, NE 6th Street, NE 10th Street--are essential components of the frequent transit network and they carry large numbers of passengers on buses, especially during the peak commute hours. Other Downtown streets are said to be mode neutral. These streets serve pedestrians, bicycles, transit and automobiles in a manner that reinforces the adjacent land uses, urban design character, and travel demands (Figure S-DT-2).

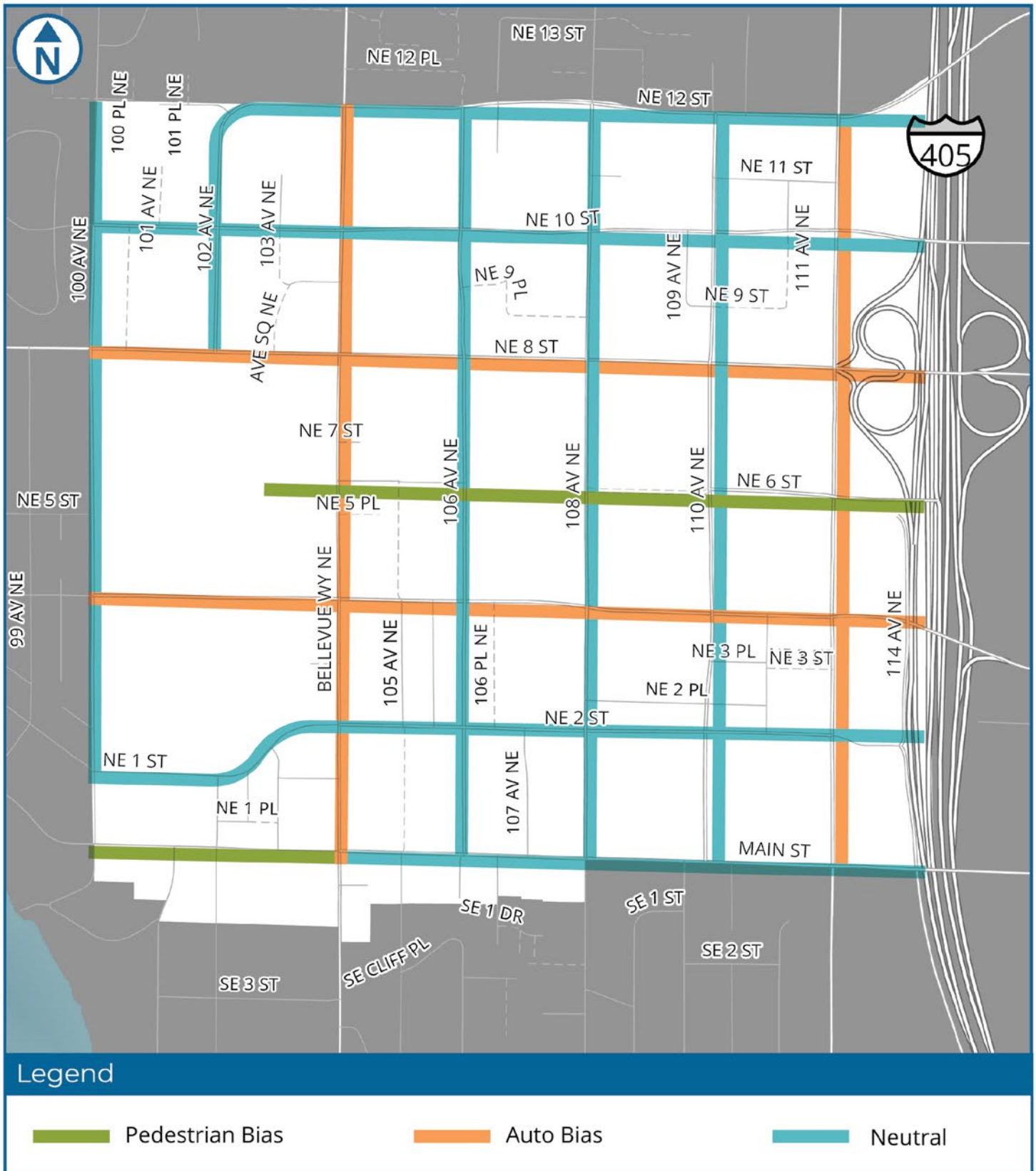


Throughout the city, and especially in the Downtown setting, streets are valuable public places. Streets provide mobility, enabling people to travel throughout the city, for whatever purpose, at whatever time of day, and in whatever mode they choose. Downtown streets therefore are dynamic, and often busy places.

Streets are also public spaces where community members gather--to play, to talk, to explore, and more. They are shared spaces that express the character of the community in their design. Streets must be functional and welcoming, safe and beautiful, and enhance community livability.

- S-DT-44.** Design and manage the Downtown streets to provide mobility and to promote a safe, attractive environment.
- S-DT-45.** Blend engineering standards, traffic operations techniques and urban design components to enhance mobility and foster livability on Downtown streets.
- S-DT-46.** Enhance the appearance and function of all types of streets and adjoining sidewalks with street trees, landscaping, water features, pedestrian-scaled lighting, street furniture, bicycle parking, paving treatments, medians, or other softening and design treatments as appropriate.
- S-DT-47.** Prioritize vehicular flow in the design and management of auto priority streets.
- S-DT-48.** Prioritize pedestrian activity, access, comfort and safety in the design and management of pedestrian priority streets.
- S-DT-49.** Prioritize the movement of people on buses, especially during peak commuting periods, in the design and management of transit priority streets.

Figure S-DT-2: Street Hierarchy



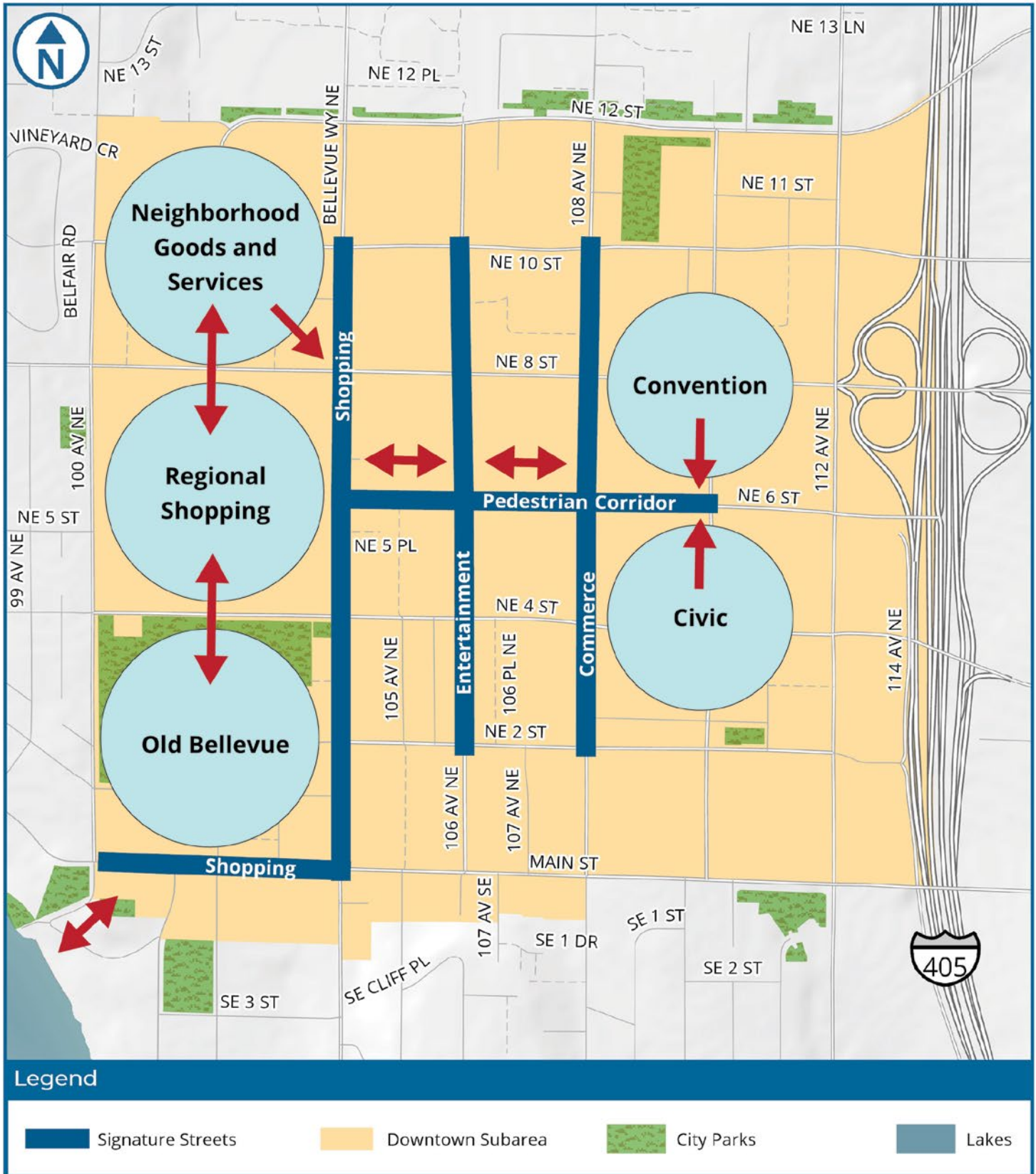
Signature Streets

The functional aspect of Downtown Bellevue's streets can be refined around a set of signature themes. Figure S-DT.1 shows three types of signature streets. Bellevue Way, Main Street in Old Bellevue, and the NE 6th Street portion of the Grand Connection are identified as Shopping Streets. The others are 106th Avenue NE as Entertainment Avenue, and 108th Avenue NE as Downtown's Commerce Avenue. These streets help tie Downtown together with complementary uses and design elements. All these streets will continue to support multiple uses and modes of travel, with evolving functions and identities.



- S-DT-50.** Reinforce the emerging identity of 108th Avenue NE as the Eastside's business address. Provide incentives for private development and utilize public funds to create a dense office environment with supporting transit service and retail uses.
- S-DT-51.** Encourage new development on Main Street in Old Bellevue to embrace the character of the small-scale, pedestrian-friendly street frontage that has developed there over time.
- S-DT-52.** Provide incentives for 106th Avenue NE to develop as Downtown's Entertainment Avenue. This area will include a concentration of shops, cafés, restaurants, and clubs that provide for an active pedestrian environment during the day and after-hours venues for residents and workers by night.
- S-DT-53.** Continue to develop and implement the Grand Connection vision as a major unifying feature for Downtown Bellevue through public- and private-sector investments.
- S-DT-54.** Implement design components and wayfinding along the Grand Connection to create an accessible and intuitive multimodal connection for users of all abilities.
- S-DT-55.** Provide incentives for Bellevue Way to realize its vision as a Grand Shopping Street, with an exciting mix of retail shops, restaurants, hotels, offices and residential units.
- S-DT-56.** Implement a series of signalized, unsignalized and grade-separated mid-block crossings, the unique design of each crafted in consideration of adjacent superblocks, traffic flow, and the intended quality of the pedestrian environment.

Figure S-DT-3: Signature Streets



Date: 6/24/2025

File Name: V:\Planning\ArcGISPro\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025a\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025d.aprx

Gateways and Wayfinding

There are a number of ways to express a gateway into Downtown Bellevue. They could incorporate architectural elements, a variety of vegetation, water features, decorative paving, and interpretive or directional signage. Wayfinding is a key element in a maturing, complex Downtown. Wayfinding not only helps people navigate from point A to point B on foot, bicycle or car, but also contributes to the design character of the public realm.

The graphic (Figure S-DT-4) shows gateway and identity opportunities for the Downtown Subarea.

Major gateway locations for Downtown are on Bellevue Way from the north and south, and on NE 8th Street from the east and west. Major identity opportunities are shown at Meydenbauer Bay, the Grand Connection, the ridge along 108th Avenue NE (the highest point in Downtown, with some of the tallest buildings), and the properties directly visible from I-405.



- S-DT-57.** Provide for a sense of approach to Downtown at key entry points through the use of gateways and identity treatments that convey a sense of quality and permanence.
- S-DT-58.** Enhance the attractiveness of I-405 right-of-way in accordance with its role as a gateway to the City of Bellevue and the Downtown Subarea.
- S-DT-59.** Develop a comprehensive wayfinding system geared for a range of users (i.e. pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles). This system should be built around a set of common design elements, but also includes unique components that vary by Downtown neighborhood as appropriate.
- S-DT-60.** Aggressively pursue the Grand Connection vision for a multimodal crossing of I-405 between Downtown and the Wilburton Commercial Area.

Figure S-DT-4: Gateway and Identity Opportunities



Date: 6/24/2025

File Name: V:\Planning\ArcGISPro\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025a\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025d.aprx

Unifying Urban Design Feature

Unifying urban design features are an important element to create a cohesive civic identity in Downtown Bellevue. These unifying features may include streetlights, street furnishings, plantings, pole banners, wayfinding, distinct colors, water elements, and distinct paving. Moving forward, the Grand Connection is the primary unifying urban design concept in Downtown Bellevue. Similarly the Downtown Park has its distinct light posts, waterfalls, canals, and architectural elements that tie the park together into an iconic coherent landmark for the city. There are additional opportunities to implement new unifying features throughout other parts of Downtown Bellevue to add to Downtown livability and memorability in private development and in public spaces.

- S-DT-61.** Develop a strategy on how to link Downtown together through the use of literal and/or symbolic major design features that vary by district.
- S-DT-62.** Provide incentives to assist developers in implementing a major unifying design feature.
- S-DT-63.** Incorporate the unifying design feature in public projects wherever possible.

Downtown Districts

A key piece of the Great Place Strategy that guides this Subarea Plan is the development of a series of distinct, mixed-use neighborhoods (or districts within Downtown) that each capitalize on their locations and unique identities. Downtown was originally laid out in a manner that is defined by its large street grid and system of 600-foot long superblocks. Within the singular downtown, there are nine unique sub-districts; three in length by three in width (Map S-DT-3). The sub-districts are generally separated by the east-west streets of NE 4th and NE 8th and by the north-south streets of Bellevue Way NE and 108th Ave NE. Each sub-district has a distinct character defined largely by its built form, land use focus and topography.



Some of the districts such as Ashwood and Old Bellevue already have clear identities. The identity of others is not as clear and will evolve over time.

- S-DT-64.** Provide incentives to reinforce unique characteristics of Downtown Districts to create pedestrian-scaled, diverse, and unique urban lifestyle experiences and options.
- S-DT-65.** Utilize design guidelines to help differentiate development within each of the Downtown Districts as they evolve over time.
- S-DT-66.** Differentiate Downtown Districts through streetscape improvements such as wayfinding elements, gateways, mid-block pedestrian crossings, public art, landscaping and street trees, lighting, and street furniture.
- S-DT-67.** Create pedestrian linkages within and between Downtown Districts as well as to surrounding residential and commercial areas outside Downtown.

Northwest Village

The Northwest Village District currently provides a wide array of primarily neighborhood-oriented retail and service uses. It is a neighborhood shopping area for both Bellevue and the Points communities of Medina, Clyde Hill, Yarrow Point, and Hunts Point. This district is somewhat isolated from the rest of Downtown. No large-scale development has occurred in this district during the growth cycles of the 1980s and 1990s. The district will evolve over time as it has a significant amount of growth potential. There will need to be public investments for parks and open space. Additional housing will add to the village feel that currently exists in and around the pedestrian-scaled 102nd Avenue NE area. The development of “alleys with addresses” will add to the village feel of the area. With both infill development and large-scale redevelopment this area will evolve into a vibrant urban neighborhood.



- S-DT-68.** Create intimacy for the pedestrian through the development of “alleys with addresses.” These are small-scale pedestrian frontages accessed off of through-block connections.
- S-DT-69.** Continue to provide neighborhood-oriented retail and service uses for the Northwest Village District as well as for the surrounding neighborhoods both within and outside Downtown.
- S-DT-70.** Develop a neighborhood park in the Northwest Village District.
- S-DT-71.** Emphasize the intersection of 102nd Avenue Northeast and NE 10th Street as a central gathering place for the district.

City Center North

The City Center North District is home to the Bellevue Place mixed-use development. It currently provides the defining character for the district. As it expands with additional uses, such as a large performing arts center, more activity will be centered around the intersection of 106th Avenue NE and NE 10th Street. North of NE 10th Street, multifamily development has recently occurred, and more is planned. There is a great opportunity to develop a high-rise housing row in this district.

- S-DT-72.** Encourage the development of high-rise housing along NE 10th Street within this district.
- S-DT-73.** Develop a soft or hard open space amenity in the vicinity of 106th Avenue NE and NE 10th Street.

Ashwood

The Ashwood District is defined by the King County Regional Library, Ashwood Park, and the concentration of dense urban housing. The area currently lacks some of the neighborhood-serving uses that are desirable for a Downtown neighborhood such as small grocery and drug stores, but they are likely to emerge over time. Planned improvements to Ashwood Park will also play a large role in the maturation process for this district.

- S-DT-74.** Explore opportunities to unite the district by bridging a perceived gap formed by NE 10th Street.
- S-DT-75.** Encourage other civic uses to locate in this district, using the King County Library as an anchor.
- S-DT-76.** Encourage uses that will bring additional pedestrian activity to the area.
- S-DT-77.** Encourage expansion of the King County Library to the north. Explore a potential partnership to develop appropriate community center facilities as part of the expansion.
- S-DT-78.** Encourage ground-level residential units on 109th Avenue NE, 111th Avenue NE, and NE 11th Street.
- S-DT-79.** Encourage a unified, high density urban residential community with supporting neighborhood retail and service areas.
- S-DT-80.** Limit the amount of office and retail development in the area to take into account the predominantly residential character of the area.
- S-DT-81.** Use of Ashwood Park site as an urban park or community facility should work in conjunction with residential uses in the area.

Eastside Center District

The Eastside Center District is comprised of three smaller districts: Bellevue Square, City Center, and the Civic/Convention District (Map S-DT-3). The Eastside Center is within walking distance to all of Downtown's key features. The key to the Eastside Center District is tying it together from east to west along the NE 6th Street portion of the Grand Connection, and having it become the symbolic and functional heart of the Eastside Region.

- S-DT-82.** Capitalize on the relocation of City Hall to Downtown to help nurture a strong civic and convention center presence on the eastern portion of the Eastside Center District.
- S-DT-83.** Provide incentives to develop the intersection of 106th Avenue NE and NE 6th Street as a central location for public gatherings, and to increase the role of Compass Plaza as an important node along the Grand Connection.
- S-DT-84.** Pedestrian bridges may be appropriate over the public right-of-way on Bellevue Way between NE 4th Street and NE 10th Street, NE 4th Street between Bellevue Way and 110th Ave NE, NE 6th Street between 110th Avenue NE and 112th Avenue NE, and NE 8th Street between Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue NE, provided that there is a clear demonstration of public benefit, and design criteria are fully met.
- S-DT-85.** Develop the Grand Connection as a unifying feature for Downtown Bellevue by siting buildings and encouraging uses that activate the corridor, and by incorporating design components that ensure accessibility.
- S-DT-86.** A range of activities shall be permitted, including office, urban residential, hotel, retail, civic, and entertainment uses.

- S-DT-87.** Day-time and night-time activities should be encouraged.
- S-DT-88.** Encourage pedestrian-oriented post office facilities to be located in this area.
- S-DT-89.** Allow uses and development intensity that is supportive of transit and day/night activity.

Old Bellevue

The Old Bellevue District sits above Meydenbauer Bay and proudly displays the roots of Downtown. This area is home to many small shops and Downtown's oldest buildings. This district is also home to the 20-acre Downtown Park. Main Street functions like the traditional "Main Street USA", with low traffic speeds, comfortable sidewalks, and on-street parking — elements that together make this a very safe and enjoyable place to walk.

- S-DT-90.** Provide a graceful multimodal connection through the unifying design features of the Grand Connection between Downtown Park, Old Bellevue and Meydenbauer Bay Park.
- S-DT-91.** Encourage redevelopment to maintain some of the historic facade treatments of older buildings in this district.
- S-DT-92.** Explore opportunities for shared parking, or a park-once district concept, to improve utilization of the short-term off-street parking supply.
- S-DT-93.** Establish a heightened presence of Downtown Park as seen from Bellevue Way.
- S-DT-94.** Reinforce the unique character of the Old Bellevue area by encouraging residential development, specialty retail, and other development with an emphasis on pedestrian activity.



City Center South

The City Center South District is emerging as a true mixed-use neighborhood. New and exciting restaurant, retail, and residential uses are adding a greater level of activity in this area. The proximity to the Surrey Downs and 108th Avenue Neighborhoods provides an opportunity to have appropriately scaled transitional uses along the edge of Downtown.

- S-DT-95.** Encourage development of neighborhood-serving retail uses.
- S-DT-96.** Explore opportunities for “live/work” spaces in this district.
- S-DT-97.** Encourage new development to provide open space amenities that are accessible to the public and function as neighborhood gathering places on the south side of Main Street, between 108th Avenue SE and Bellevue Way SE.
- S-DT-98.** Consider studying a complementary route to the Grand Connection along Main Street to establish better multimodal connections between Downtown and the Wilburton Commercial Area, as well as community resources, and amenities.

East Main

The East Main District experienced a significant amount of office and residential development in the 1990s, but still lacks a single defining feature. The district has a great deal of potential especially with the East Main Link light rail station which provides a focal point and could serve to catalyze additional high-quality development.

- S-DT-99.** Develop a linear neighborhood park in the vicinity of NE 2nd Place that acts as a defining feature for the district.
- S-DT-100.** Take advantage of the topography of the area for views as well as for visibility from I-405.
- S-DT-101.** Enhance the transition from this district (South Main) to the adjacent neighborhoods by providing a lineal green open space buffer in the vicinity of the southeast corner of Downtown.
- S-DT-102.** Explore opportunities to showcase the historic Sacred Heart Catholic Church on Main Street.





Parks, recreation and open space

Open space provided by both the public and the private sectors is a key component of being a livable city. Throughout Bellevue, open space punctuates, accents, and highlights the fabric of a city. Parks, recreation, and open space amenities within Downtown will function as a system that reinforces the notion of Bellevue as a “city in a park” (Figure S-DT-5).” Some pieces, like the 20-acre Downtown Park, serve a regional need, while others are oriented to a particular neighborhood or district. The character of Downtown’s amenities will vary from quiet, contemplative and green, to crowded, high energy and more architectural. The system will be tied together in a planned and deliberate way by creating connections along Downtown’s sidewalks and mid-block pedestrian connections.

Downtown Park will continue to be one of Bellevue’s finest public assets. It is an important gathering place for people, a venue for special events and a key factor in the developing identity of Downtown. The Park plays a pivotal role in making Downtown an appealing place to live, work and play.

Major new features of the system will be neighborhood parks in the northwest and southeast quadrants of Downtown as well as a visual and physical connection from Downtown Park to Meydenbauer Bay. People naturally gravitate to areas with water to enjoy the aesthetics and unique recreational opportunities. This connection is imperative if Bellevue intends to identify itself as a waterfront city and provides an opportunity to recognize the Meydenbauer Bay’s historical significance in the region’s development.

Parks, recreation and open space goal

To provide urban parks, recreation opportunities, and open space within Downtown.

Policies

General

- S-DT-103.** Emphasize the street environment as a key component of the Downtown open space network.
- S-DT-104.** Encourage active and passive recreational activities to locate throughout Downtown.
- S-DT-105.** Provide appropriately scaled parks and open spaces throughout Downtown.
- S-DT-106.** Analyze alternative locations and explore potential partnerships to provide community center space and functions for the Downtown Subarea and surrounding neighborhoods.
- S-DT-107.** Encourage developers to provide open space amenities accessible to the public such as mini-parks, plazas, rooftop gardens, and courtyards in private developments. Such amenities must be clearly identified and maintained for public use.
- S-DT-108.** Require developer contributions for a coordinated system of major and minor public open spaces along the Grand Connection and at designated intersections. These could include areas for seating, fountains, courtyards, gardens, places to eat, public art, and green space.
- S-DT-109.** Provide a visual and physical connection from Downtown to Meydenbauer Bay that terminates in a significant waterfront presence. The connection will provide unique recreation, retail, and tourism opportunities.
- S-DT-110.** Encourage new residential development to include open space and recreation amenities targeted to growing Downtown population.
- S-DT-111.** Create connections along public sidewalks and through-block connections that link key parks and open spaces and include dispersed recreation opportunities and urban plazas where appropriate.
- S-DT-112.** Provide a lineal green space buffer in the vicinity of the southeast corner of Downtown to transition from single family residential uses to higher density residential and commercial uses north of Main Street within Downtown.
- S-DT-113.** Continue to preserve significant older trees within the Downtown Subarea.

Downtown Park

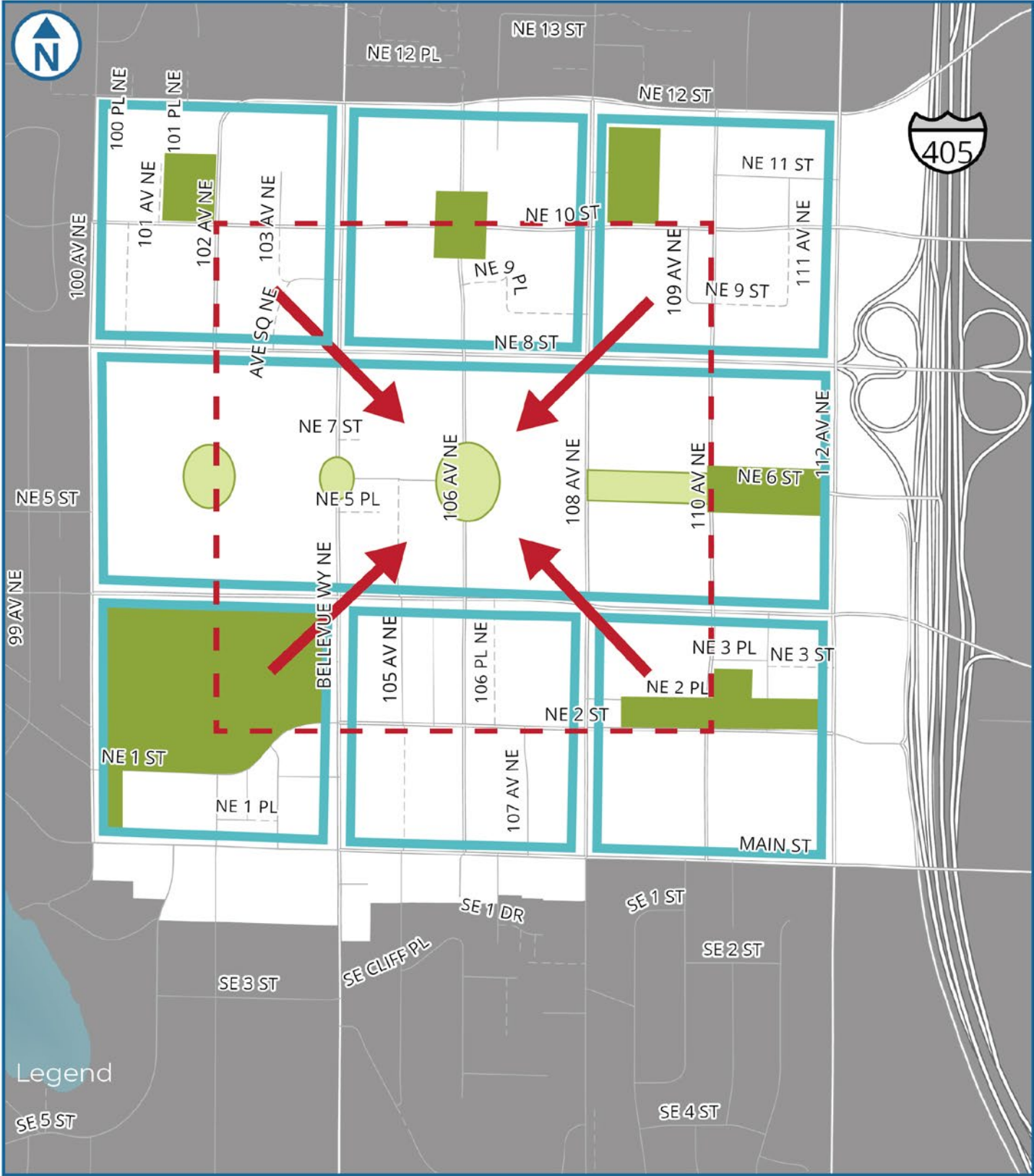
- S-DT-114.** Develop and operate Downtown Park within the framework of the Council approved Downtown Park master plan.
- S-DT-115.** Complete the phased development of Downtown Park, and enhance its visual and functional presence on Bellevue Way.

- S-DT-116.** Utilize Downtown Park as the prime location for special events and gatherings throughout the year.
- S-DT-117.** Strengthen pedestrian connections between the Downtown Park and Meydenbauer Beach Park, Bellevue Square, the NE 6th Street Pedestrian Corridor, Bellevue Way, and Old Bellevue.
- S-DT-118.** Within density and height limits permitted in the Land Use Code, work with adjoining property owners through the Design Review process to ensure a graceful transition between the Park and future development. The ground level of buildings facing Downtown Park should include pedestrian oriented uses, be visually accessible, and where appropriate, provide pedestrian connections for the general public and for commercial uses that complement the Park. A continuous north-south pathway on private properties separating adjoining development from the Park shall not be required.

Neighborhood Parks

- S-DT-119.** Provide an equitable distribution of neighborhood-serving parks and open spaces throughout Downtown. These amenities should address the needs of a wide variety of park users, including people who live, work and visit Downtown, and those from underserved communities.
- S-DT-120.** Update the Ashwood Park master plan to reflect a contemporary vision for the site that considers some community center functions while retaining significant passive open space use. Explore partnerships for development consistent with the vision.

Figure S-DT-5: Concept for Downtown Parks and Open Spaces



Date: 6/24/2025

File Name: V:\Planning\ArcGISPro\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025a\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025d.aprx



Edges and transitions

Downtown Bellevue is unique to other urban centers in having low-density neighborhoods directly adjacent to the north, west and south. The city is committed to protecting these neighborhoods by utilizing traffic and parking management outside Downtown, and defining Perimeter Areas through zoning within Downtown to reduce potential spillover impacts.

Policies

Neighborhood Traffic and Parking Management

Programs to protect neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown Bellevue from significant adverse transportation impacts will be enhanced and expanded as the need arises. Such programs include a traffic management program to discourage cut-through traffic and a residential parking zone program to discourage commercial parking in residential areas. Traffic calming measures may be implemented to remedy specific situations.

Perimeter Areas

- S-DT-121.** Provide an equitable distribution of Perimeter Areas along the north, west, and south boundaries of Downtown, based on their potential for protecting surrounding residential neighborhoods
- S-DT-122.** Provide incentives for multifamily residential uses and neighborhood-serving retail and service uses within Perimeter Areas to participate in traffic mitigation measures to reduce impacts on surrounding residential neighborhoods.

S-DT-123. Establish development standards and design guidelines for Perimeter Areas that will break down the scale of new development and add activities and physical features that will be compatible both with the Downtown Subarea and surrounding residential areas.

S-DT-124. Utilize sidewalk, landscaping, and green space treatments within Perimeter Areas to provide a transition from Downtown to surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Linear Buffers

S-DT-125. Utilize lineal green open space buffers directly outside Downtown (north of NE 12th Street between 106th Place NE and 112th Avenue NE, and in the vicinity of the southeast corner of Downtown) to provide a graceful transition from Downtown to surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Downtown mobility goals

To provide a transportation network with options for people to get around on foot, on bicycle, riding transit, or in a private or shared vehicle.

To identify and implement multimodal transportation improvements to continue to support Downtown Bellevue as a dense, mixed-use urban center.

Policies

Downtown Land Use and Transportation Implementation

Downtown Bellevue is forecast to have approximately 94,600 jobs and 24,500 housing units in 2044. Attractive Downtown mobility options make it easy for people to get around Downtown. Within Downtown, the planned expansions of 110th Avenue NE provides additional vehicular capacity. Roadway projects outside of Downtown improve overall circulation for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. Regional projects provide better access to points beyond Bellevue for both motorists and transit riders.

Attractive Downtown mobility options result in levels of transit use, walking and bicycling sufficient to reduce the need to expand vehicular capacity. The Mobility Implementation Plan provides metrics and performance targets that identify potential high-priority project concepts for each mode.

Downtown Roadway Access

Downtown Bellevue relies on regional access to prosper both from an economic and cultural standpoint. Implementation of regional roadway projects that support Downtown Bellevue requires coordination with local, state, and federal partners.

S-DT-126. Pursue and actively participate in local, state, and federal action to improve general purpose and high occupancy vehicle (HOV) access to and from Downtown.

S-DT-127. Minimize growth of traffic on arterial streets in residential areas north, west and south of Downtown by encouraging the use of freeway facilities for regional trips.



Regional and Local Downtown Transit Mobility

Essential components of Downtown transit service are found both on the bus and along the streets, as described below:

Transit Coverage: Well-distributed frequent transit service routes provide abundant access that is within a short walk of Downtown residents and employees.



Transit Capacity: While Bellevue does not provide transit service, the city advocates to the transit agencies for incremental enhancements to Downtown transit service to support the projected daily Downtown transit riders.

Transit Speed and Reliability: Using technology on transit priority streets will help to expeditiously move bus passengers to and through Downtown Bellevue. Speed and reliability improvements along designated transit priority streets and at intersections will benefit transit passengers and overall mobility.

Transit Passenger Access, Comfort and Information: Transit passengers are pedestrians or bicyclists before and after their ride on the bus or train. Context-appropriate components for transit stops are implemented by the city, the transit agencies, or incorporated into new projects through development review. Comfortable pedestrian and bicycle access to and from transit stops and light rail stations will enhance ridership.

- S-DT-128.** Provide space within or near Downtown for bus layovers and other bus transit facilities needed to support projected levels of transit service.
- S-DT-129.** Locate and develop bus layover space and other transit facilities in partnership with transit agencies to support Downtown transit service while minimizing impacts on residential areas, businesses and the pedestrian, bicycle and auto environment, complementing the Downtown district character.
- S-DT-130.** Support transit ridership by providing or encouraging others to provide passenger comfort, access and information as needed at each Downtown transit stop.
- S-DT-131.** Advocate to transit agencies to establish a Downtown frequent transit network in accord with the Transit Master Plan that provides transit service routing and stops proximate to Downtown employees and residents and to the Medical Institution District.
- S-DT-132.** Advocate to the transit agencies for incremental enhancements to Downtown Transit service to support the projected 2050 daily Downtown transit ridership.
- S-DT-133.** Implement transit speed and reliability improvements along Downtown transit priority corridors when there is a demonstrated benefit to transit passengers and overall mobility.
- S-DT-134.** Improve the pedestrian and bicycling environment for access to the two light rail stations that serve Downtown, particularly between the Bellevue Transit Center and the nearby Bellevue Downtown station.



Downtown Roadways

Downtown roadways will be increasingly required to accommodate walking, bicycling, and transit, as well as private vehicles. To achieve greater capacity to accommodate people will require constant adjustments and improvements to traffic operations because most roadways will not be widened. Substantial efficiency in traffic operations is achieved through investments in intelligent transportation system (ITS) infrastructure and technology that allow for demand-adaptive mobility management. Continued ITS improvements will help the city to manage traffic and transit operations, and enhance the pedestrian and bicycle environment. Improved connections to the regional transportation system and across I-405 can help Downtown traffic circulation.

On-street parking will be in increasingly high demand for short-term use. Opportunities exist to expand the supply, and parking management may be flexible depending on the time of day, transit use, character and function of the roadway, and nearby land uses.

- S-DT-135.** Retain the existing odd-numbered streets for vehicular and pedestrian circulation in Downtown. Consider vacating those streets only if such vacation would improve overall circulation in Downtown.
- S-DT-136.** Improve Downtown circulation and arterial continuity to points east of Downtown with roadway extensions and improvements across I-405, including envisioned extensions of NE 2nd Street and NE 6th Street.
- S-DT-137.** Enhance the city's intelligent transportation system to maximize the efficient use of the Downtown streets, and to improve transit speed and reliability.

Mid-Block Access Connections

Mid-block access connections function much like alleys in that they provide vehicular access to parking garages and loading/delivery areas without disrupting traffic flow, transit, walking or bicycling on the arterial streets. Design enhancements to mid-block access connections are part of the overall Downtown aesthetics, viability and multimodal mobility.

Mid-block access connections are developed under flexible design standards in keeping with the context and intended function. Development projects will incorporate mid-block access connections for vehicles and/or pedestrians and bicycles as determined through development review. Mid-block access connections are intended for portions of the alignments of 103rd, 105th, 107th, 109th and 111th Avenues NE, and NE 5th and NE 7th Streets.

- S-DT-138.** Provide mid-block access connections within Downtown superblocks designed in context to accommodate vehicle access to parking areas, loading/delivery access, and/or to augment pedestrian circulation.

Grand Connection

The Grand Connection is a high priority route for active transportation, including people walking, riding a bicycle or using other compatible mobility options. The focus on various modes will vary along the route, with the pedestrian experience and pedestrian safety being of primary importance. Incremental improvements through private developments and public investments will upgrade the Grand Connection to provide exceptional active transportation access to transit stations and across I-405.



- S-DT-139.** Develop and implement a concept design to better accommodate accessible travel through appropriate grades and the use of special paving treatments, wayfinding and widening.
- S-DT-140.** Apply the Grand Connection designation between Meydenbauer Bay Park and the Eastrail to improve multimodal access to parks, public spaces, transit stations, businesses, and residential uses.
- S-DT-141.** Periodically review the performance and use of the Grand Connection based on the stage of implementation and a set of established measures of success.

Downtown Transportation Demand Management

Transportation demand management (TDM) reduces the demand side of the mobility equation and provides opportunities to more efficiently use the capacity in the transportation system. TDM strategies focus on reducing drive-alone trips, especially at peak hours. Implementation requires coordination between the city, transit agencies and the private sector, and includes providing information and incentives to encourage commuters and other travelers to try one of the many available mobility options as an alternative to driving alone. The Bellevue Transportation Management Association (TMA) and the programs it manages promote the use of non-single-occupant vehicle (non-SOV) mobility options for commute trips. Refer to the Transportation Element for policies that address transportation demand management on a citywide basis. Table TR-2 designates targets for non-SOV commute trips.

- S-DT-142.** Minimize drive-alone trips in Downtown and take steps to increase the proportion of Downtown non-drive-alone commute trips to target levels in Figure TR-2 in the Transportation Element, by coordinating with the Bellevue Transportation Management Association, transit agencies, building managers, employers and the general public to provide incentives, subsidies, and promotional materials that encourage the use of transit, carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling, walking and alternative work schedules by Downtown employees and residents.

Downtown Off-Street Parking Demand and Utilization

Downtown Bellevue has an abundant supply of off-street parking, supplemented by a limited amount of on-street parking. This situation is dynamic and will change over time. Parking industry standards suggest that when parking supply exceeds 85 percent occupancy in the peak parking demand hour, the supply is constrained and does not provide visitors with convenient short-term parking. Visitors who arrive by car help ensure the economic vitality of the area. When peak hour parking occupancy routinely exceeds 85 percent, a variety of strategies may be implemented to reduce occupancy. Management of the on-street parking supply is addressed in the Curb Management Plan.



- S-DT-143.** Establish parking requirements specific to the range of uses intended for the Downtown Subarea.
- S-DT-144.** Develop Downtown parking facilities and systems that are coordinated with a public transportation system and an improved vehicular circulation system.
- S-DT-145.** Encourage the joint use of parking and permit the limitation of parking supply.
- S-DT-146.** Evaluate the parking requirements in the Land Use Code and regularly monitor the transportation management program, employee population, parking utilization, parking costs paid by commuters and the percentage of those who directly pay for parking. If monitoring indicates that the use of transit and carpool is not approaching the forecast level assumed for this Plan, revise existing parking and transportation management requirements as needed to achieve forecast mode split targets found in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- S-DT-147.** Initiate a public/private comprehensive examination of short-term parking problems Downtown, and develop a work program to implement solutions.
- S-DT-148.** Utilize quantitative measures to analyze the short-term parking supply for neighborhood-scale retail and services, and implement parking management strategies or increase the parking supply as appropriate, and as resources allow.

S-DT-149. Investigate allowing Downtown developers to pay a fee into an account in lieu of providing parking on-site. Parking account funds would be used to provide short-term public parking where it is in shortest supply. Land Use Code amendments would be required to provide for the collection and administration of a fee in lieu of parking program.

S-DT-150. Explore opportunities to implement a parking guidance system to more efficiently utilize the Downtown parking supply.

Downtown Curbside Uses: On-Street Parking; Taxi Stands; Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

On-Street Parking

On-street parking supports businesses and residents with convenient short-term parking opportunities for customers and visitors. This is particularly true in Ashwood, Northwest Bellevue, and Old Bellevue neighborhoods where handy off-street parking is limited. A parking evaluation conducted in 2013 determined that some permanent or off-peak parking spaces could be added to the inventory.



Pay-for-Parking

The Curb Management Plan supports studying a Downtown pay-for-parking program that would utilize electronic pay stations where drivers pay a fee for the short-term use of an on-street public parking space. Parking program revenue that exceeds enforcement and maintenance costs would be invested in Downtown streetscape improvements.

Curbside Parcel/Freight Loading/Unloading

Within Downtown, large-scale loading/unloading typically occurs within on-site locations that are designed and designated for that purpose. Smaller deliveries may occur randomly curbside or from the center turn lane. Through development review, the design and location of on-site loading docks and circulation and curbside loading zones can help ensure an expeditious loading process.

Curbside Passenger Pick-Up/Drop-Off

Part of the unscripted urbanism of a vibrant mixed-use urban center is the transfer of pedestrians between vehicles and the sidewalks. While there is no specific “best practice” guidance for managing this activity, active loading or unloading is typically accommodated in designated curbside areas. Through development review or repurposing curbside parking, pick-up/drop-off space may be designated.

Vehicle Queues for Taxis and other For-Hire Vehicles

Queues for taxis and other for-hire vehicles are typically established at major attractions such as hotels, convention venues, shopping/entertainment centers, and transit/light rail stations. These work as a first-come, first-served queue, with the vehicle at the front of the queue serving the first passenger to arrive, then each vehicle behind it moves ahead. Currently there are no designated on-street vehicle queues in Downtown Bellevue. Off-street vehicle queues may be incorporated at major hotels. Temporary use of the curbside for vehicle queues may be desirable during evenings and weekends to support nearby entertainment venues.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Transportation sources contribute significantly to the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Bellevue. Hybrid and electric vehicle technology can reduce GHG emissions. Electric vehicle charging stations are installed within Downtown Bellevue buildings for the use of tenants. Public curbside electric vehicle charging stations support the general use of electric vehicles and may be installed in a designated curbside space in a manner similar to an electronic pay station.



S-DT-151. Create curbside zones for on-street parking.

S-DT-152. Add on-street parking spaces in travel lanes for use during off-peak hours.

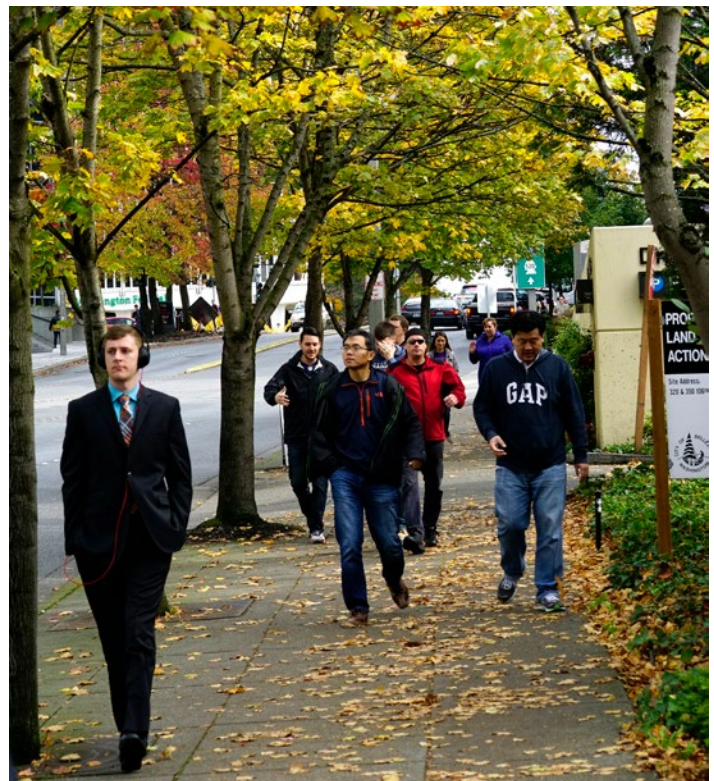
S-DT-153. Designate permanent or off-peak curbside queue areas for rideshare vehicles, taxis, and employer shuttles in strategic locations.

Downtown Pedestrian Facilities

Walking should be the easiest way to get around in Downtown Bellevue. Walking is an increasingly important element of economic vitality, Downtown livability, and personal health. Pedestrians need places to walk that are safe and accessible, comfortable and convenient. New pedestrian facilities will enhance decades of improvements to the pedestrian environment through public and private investments. In Downtown Bellevue, the 600-foot long superblocks present both challenges and opportunities for a safe, fine-grained and cohesive pedestrian environment. After decades of implementing through-block connection policies through new development, the pedestrian network within the downtown superblocks is now substantially built-out.

These transportation modes are addressed in detail in the Mobility Implementation Plan. In accordance with that Plan, private development and public capital investments will enhance the environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Breaking down the walk trip into its essential components defines the nature of specific enhancements to benefit walking; intersections and crosswalks designed to accommodate increasing numbers of pedestrians; mid-block crossings to facilitate pedestrian crossings of arterials between signalized intersections; sidewalks and curbside landscaping that form the fundamental pedestrian infrastructure; and through-block connections that provide walkable corridors through Downtown superblocks. The Downtown urban environment and the anticipated pedestrian demand dictate a context-sensitive design approach for each type of pedestrian facility.

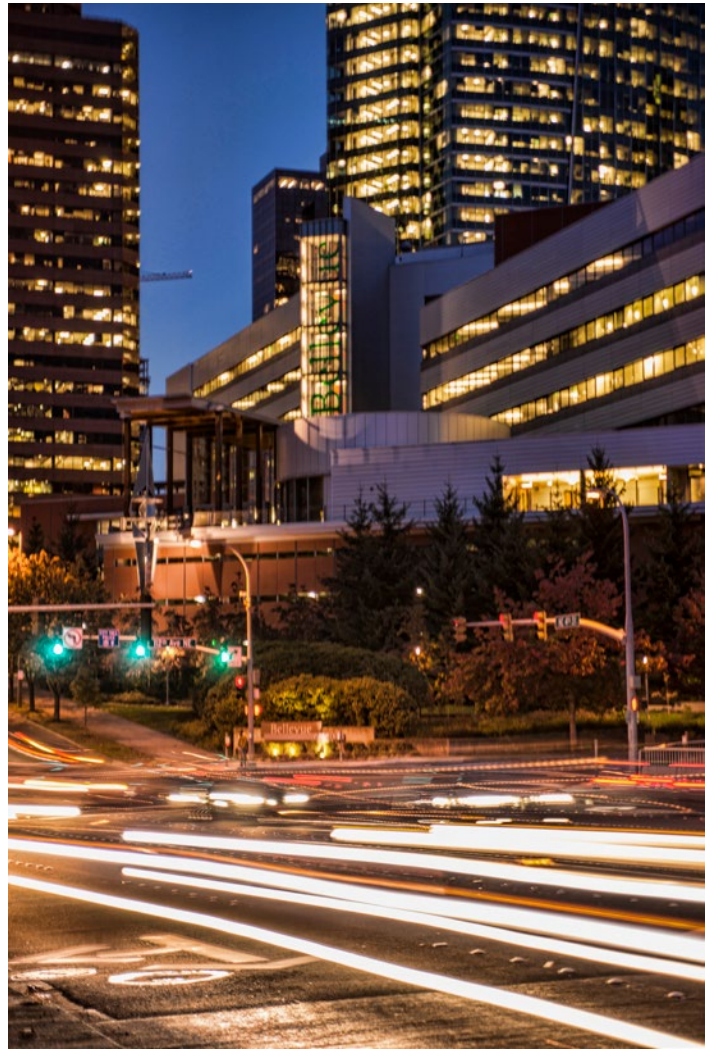


Intersections

Three types of Downtown intersections are intended to fit the needs of pedestrians: Standard Intersections; Enhanced Intersections; and Exceptional Intersections. Standard intersections have two parallel white bars that are spaced 8-feet apart and a pedestrian actuated signal that provides both audible and countdown indicators. The standard design may not be suitable at all intersections due to the high volume of pedestrians, the urban design character, or the traffic conditions. At such locations the features of either Enhanced or Exceptional intersections are integrated. Enhanced intersections are used where there are high numbers of pedestrians or vehicles, or both, and where streetscape improvements can be carried through the intersection. Enhanced intersections are wider than Standard with special paving or striping, include neighborhood wayfinding and weather protection at corners, and curb bump outs or tighter radius to shorten crossing distance, calm traffic and provide pedestrian queuing areas. Intersections that merit “exceptional” treatment are along the Grand Connection and in Old Bellevue. Exceptional intersections may include a pedestrian scramble signal phase, raised crossings, and significant landmark wayfinding such as the popular kiosks that are located throughout Downtown. Exceptional intersections design features incorporated in the crossing of 110th Avenue NE at NE 6th Street creates a near seamless connection between the Transit Center and the light rail station.

Mid-Block Crossings

Mid-block crossings may include signalization, median islands, and pedestrian bridges. While each mid-block location is a potential candidate for a crossing, a number of higher priority mid-block crossing locations are identified for near-term implementation subject to design and traffic analysis. Most mid-block crossings are intended to be “at-grade”. In consideration of traffic volume, street width, and potential impacts to vehicle travel time of an at-grade crossing, any new mid-block crossing on NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street between Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue NE, and on Bellevue Way between NE 4th Street and NE 10th Street may be designed as a grade-separated facility.



Sidewalks/Curbside Landscaping

Sidewalks provide the fundamental infrastructure for pedestrian mobility and incorporate streetscape features that enhance livability. The Downtown Land Use Code prescribes the width of sidewalks and the landscaping treatment adjacent to the street. Along some streets a continuous landscape planter with street trees along the curbside edge of the sidewalk is installed where pedestrians need a buffer from traffic. This type of treatment is popular with pedestrians and it is a healthier growing environment for street trees.

Through-Block Connections

Through-block connections break up the Downtown superblocks by providing walkways between or sometimes through buildings. The Land Use Code requires that new development provide through-block connections in each superblock, except as in Old Bellevue as noted. The design of through-block connections should include public access wayfinding, utilize commonly recognizable paving material or inlays, and incorporate accessibility according to ADA standards.

- S-DT-154.** Provide for sidewalks and landscaping in accordance with Land Use Code standards.
- S-DT-155.** Provide for intersections that incorporate “standard”, “enhanced” or “exceptional” design components.
- S-DT-156.** Provide safe and convenient pedestrian linkages to adjacent neighborhoods to the north, south and west of Downtown, as well to the east across I-405 on the Grand Connection.
- S-DT-157.** Provide for through-block pedestrian connections to create a well-connected and accessible pedestrian network.
- S-DT-158.** Provide mid-block crossings designed to meet the pedestrian needs and context at specified locations.

Downtown Bicycle Mobility

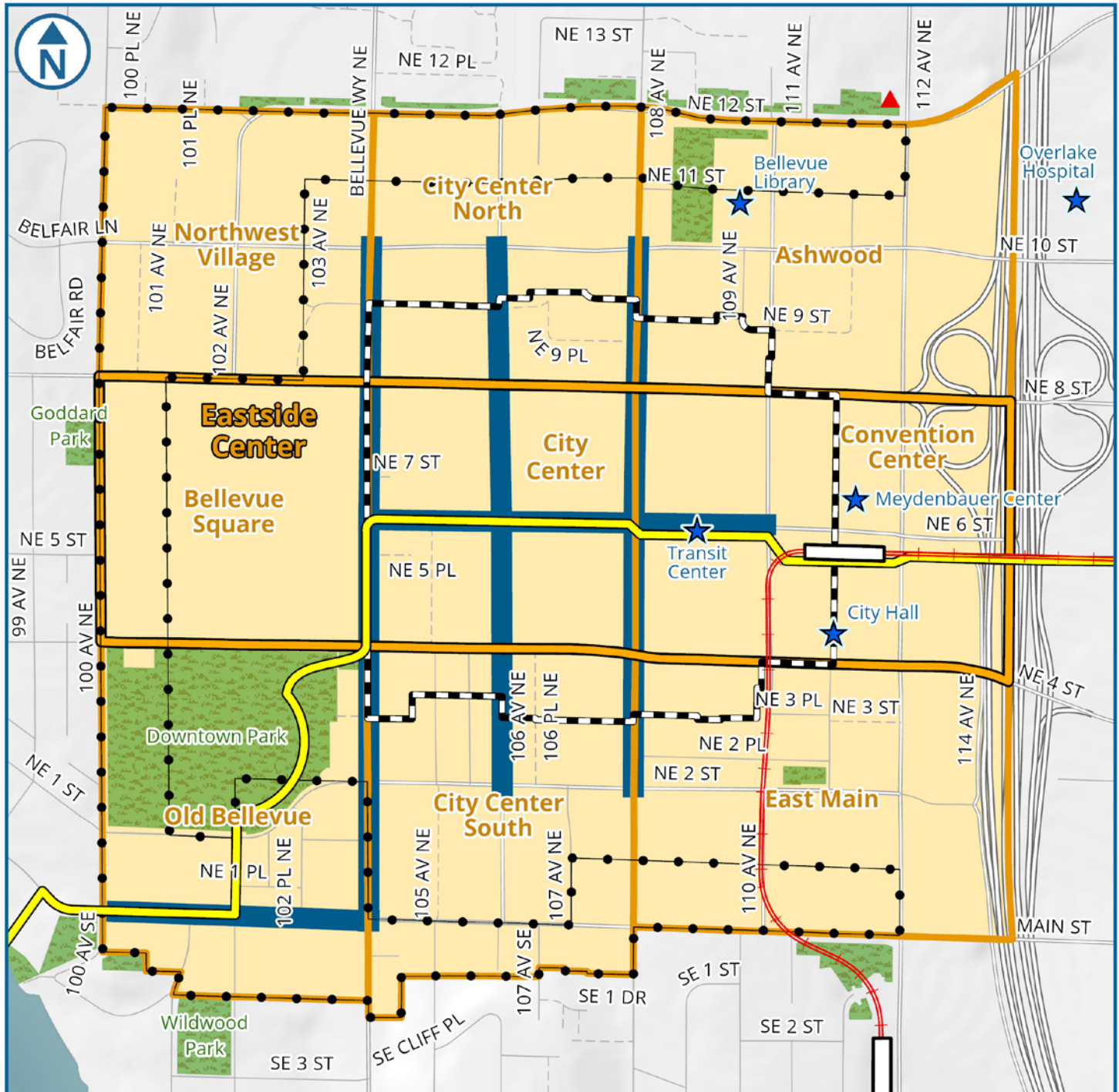
Bicycling as an attractive mobility option for all ages and abilities depends on a comprehensive network of on-street and off-street bicycle facilities, wayfinding, sidewalk bike racks, bike corrals and long-term, secured commuter parking. Bicycle facilities provide an important mobility option within Downtown and to neighborhoods and regional facilities such as the Mountains to Sound Greenway/I-90 Trail, the SR 520 Trail and the Eastrail.

Bicycle facilities are designed to accommodate the need and reflect the context. The Mobility Implementation Plan provides for performance targets that may be addressed through various facility types, depending on the roadway. Off-street bicycle facilities are separated from motorized use and are typically shared with pedestrians. Wayfinding may accompany any bicycle facility type. At signalized intersections, clearly marked detectors in the roadway advise bicyclists where to position their bicycles to trigger the signal.



- S-DT-159.** Design and enhance bicycle routes through Downtown to create a pleasant and safe environment for bicycling for people of all ages and abilities.
- S-DT-160.** Encourage the developers, owners and managers of Downtown buildings to provide secure end-of-ride facilities for bicycle commuters as well as short-term bicycle parking for visitors.
- S-DT-161.** Provide bicycle facility connections and wayfinding to neighborhoods and regional facilities such as the Mountains to Sound Greenway/I-90 Trail, the SR 520 Trail and the Eastside Corridor Trail.
- S-DT-162.** Install public end-of-ride bicycle facilities such as bike racks, bicycle corrals or bike share docking stations to meet the demonstrated or anticipated need for personal or shared bicycles.
- S-DT-163.** The Downtown Future Land Use Plan Map (Map S-DT-1) is intended to show the major land use and character elements outlined by the goals and policies contained in the Downtown Subarea Plan. It is not intended to show specific densities or dimensions of future development. The Bellevue Land Use Code should be referenced for specific development standards.

Map S-DT-1. Downtown Future Land Use Plan



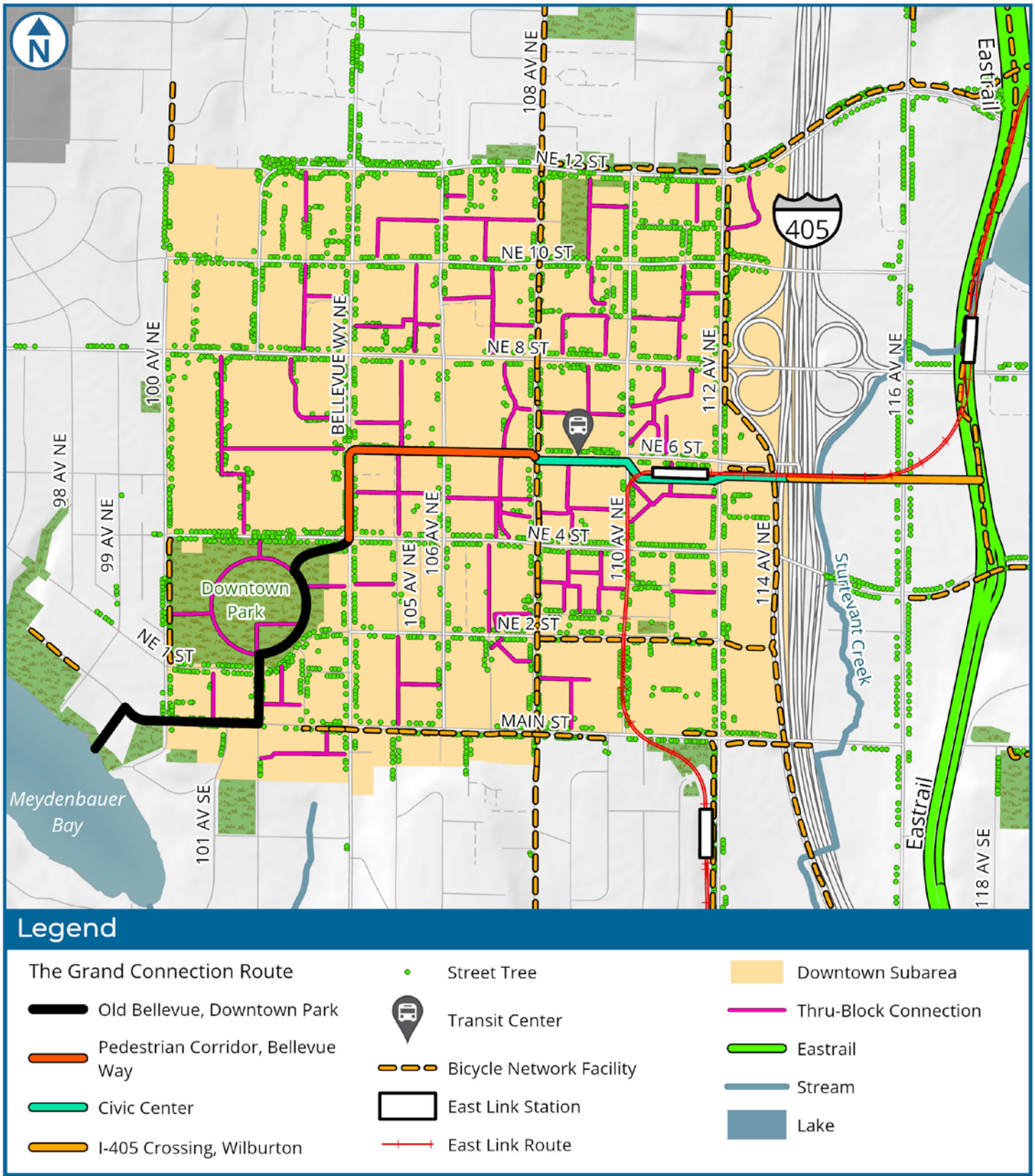
Legend

-  Public Facility
  Core Area
  Signature Street
  City Park
-  Fire Station
  Perimeter Area
  East Link Route
  Downtown Neighborhood
-  Grand Connection
  East Link Station
  Eastside Center

Date: 8/5/2025

File Name: V:\Planning\ArcGISPro\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025a\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025d.aprx

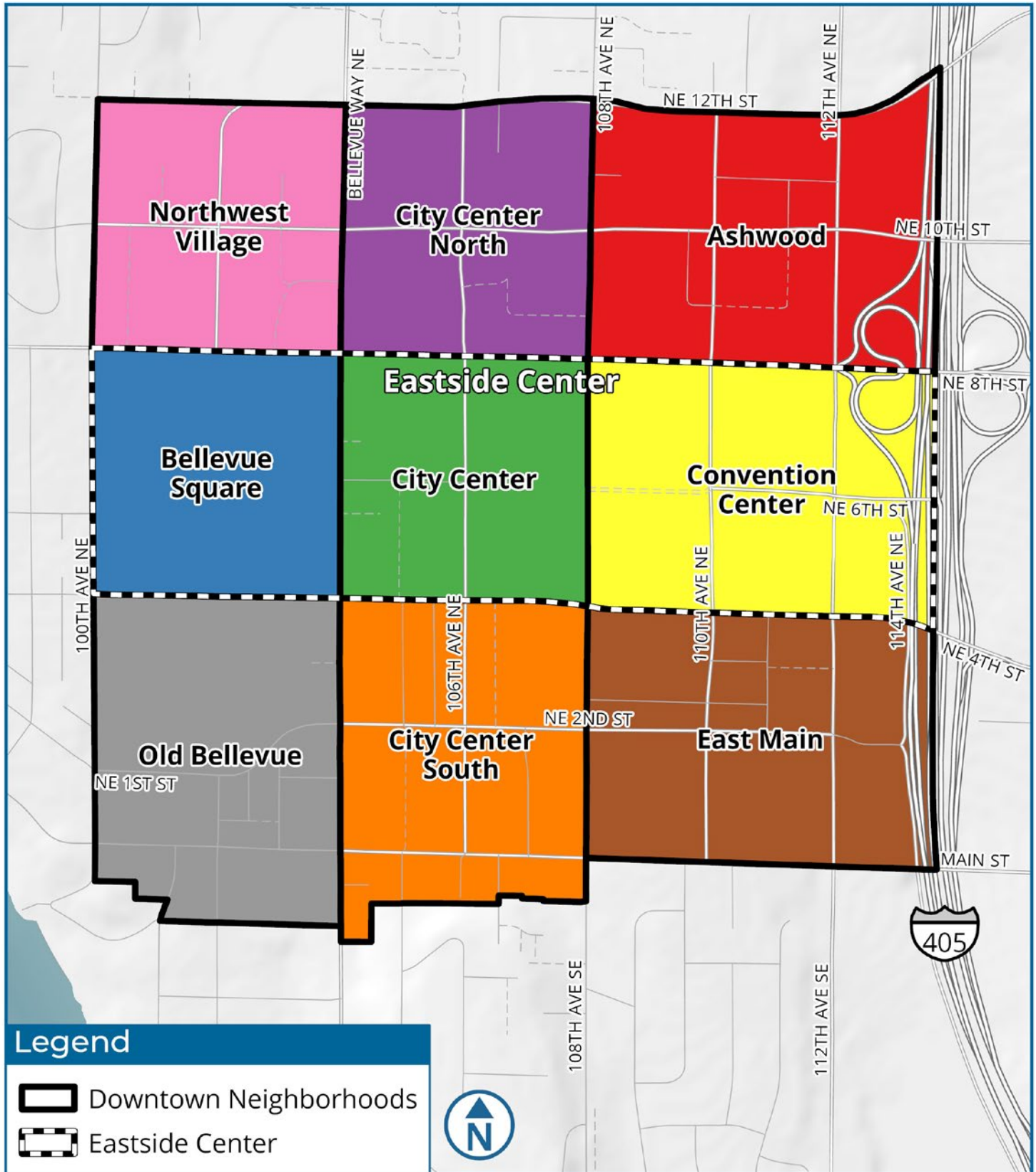
Map S-DT-2. Transportation and Environmental Infrastructure



Date: 8/5/2025

File Name: V:\Planning\ArcGISPro\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025a\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025d.aprx

Map S-DT-3. Downtown Districts: Nine Square Grid



Date: 6/24/2025

File Name: V:\Planning\ArcGISPro\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025a\DowntownSubareaPlan_2025d.aprx



For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable modification requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-2042 (voice) or email knesse@bellevuewa.gov. For complaints regarding modifications, contact the City of Bellevue ADA, Title VI, and Equal Opportunity Officer at ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov.