



Grand Connection Audit Report

Wilburton-Grand Connection Land Use and Transportation Project

Department of Planning and Community Development

City of Bellevue

Spring 2016

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“The Grand Connection is envisioned as a unique and defining urban design experience establishing a signature placemaking element for the City of Bellevue. It will create new opportunities for public space, connectivity, and placemaking.”

Introduction

This report was created to assess and document the existing conditions of the Grand Connection route, in support of the consultant visioning work. The information in this report is generally accurate as of March 1, 2016 and reflects existing conditions as well as proposed public and private improvements, both short and long term. The report will provide a framework to guide and assist in the Grand Connection visioning process.

The entire route and details for each segment have been evaluated and the following information has been provided:

- Description of the route
- Adjacent land uses
- Projects under construction
- Potential redevelopment opportunities
- Existing urban amenities, including art, public space, parks, and landscaped areas
- Existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure
- Important or significant uses and landmarks in the immediate area
- Recently completed or proposed urban improvement projects
- Property ownership structure
- Pictures of the route, including the aforementioned elements
- A qualitative summary of each segment related to design, aesthetics, noise, and other factors that impact the quality of the route or public space.

In addition to an analysis of existing conditions, prior reports and drawings for proposed projects have been included with this report.

This report was assembled by the City of Bellevue Department of Planning and Community Development, with assistance and coordination from Development Services, Transportation, and Parks & Community Services.

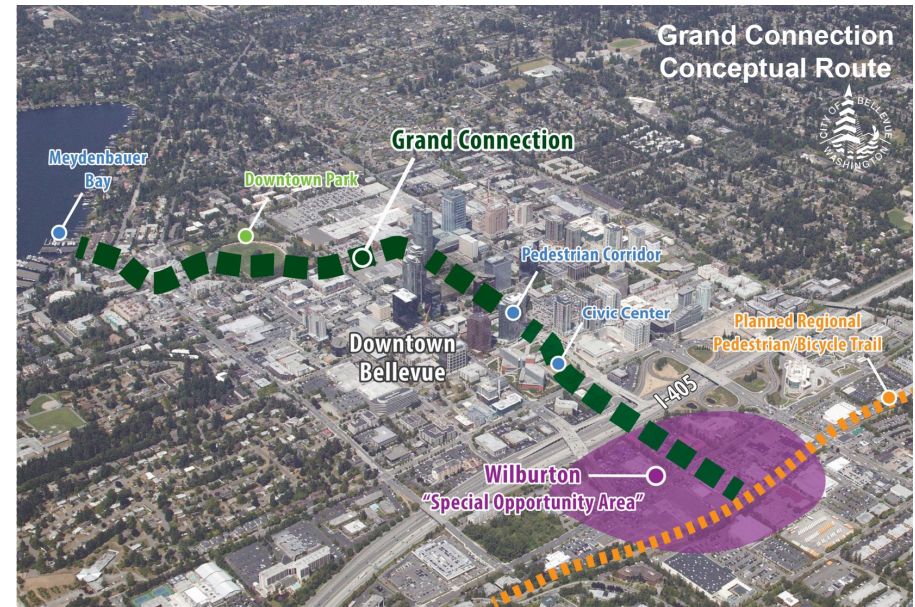


Figure 1.1- Grand Connection Conceptual Route



Figure 1.2- Grand Connection Route

Overview

The Grand Connection is a pedestrian-oriented, non-motorized corridor that begins at the waterfront of Lake Washington at Meydenbauer Bay Park. The route passes through Old Bellevue, the Downtown Park, the Bellevue Way grand shopping street, Pedestrian Corridor, the transit center, convention center, and ultimately spanning across I-405 and interfacing with Wilburton and the Eastside Rail Corridor. It is envisioned as a unique and defining urban design experience. The Grand Connection will create new opportunities for public space, connectivity, and placemaking while promoting social engagement, the arts, and recreation.

The segment of the Grand Connection that extends from Meydenbauer Bay to the Civic Center District is more well refined. Some of the existing infrastructure is in place, needing theming, urban design, and improvements to further define the route and enhance placemaking. Some areas need further definition, such as the portion that extends through Old Bellevue. The element that would span across I-405 from the Convention

Center to the Eastside Rail Corridor is an entirely new element with no existing infrastructure. There are opportunities to adjoin this piece with other infrastructure improvements, or to create an entirely independent connection.

The Grand Connection represents a unique opportunity to connect some of Bellevue's most important civic and entertainment functions and create a new means of connectivity and an urban attraction from the Wilburton Commercial Area to Downtown. It will serve as a signature element that will help define Bellevue while creating a new identity for the Wilburton Commercial Area.

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview and assessment of existing conditions. Each identified segment has been assessed for potential routes, existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, amenities, adjacent uses and buildings, and its quality in relationship to other modes of transportation interaction.

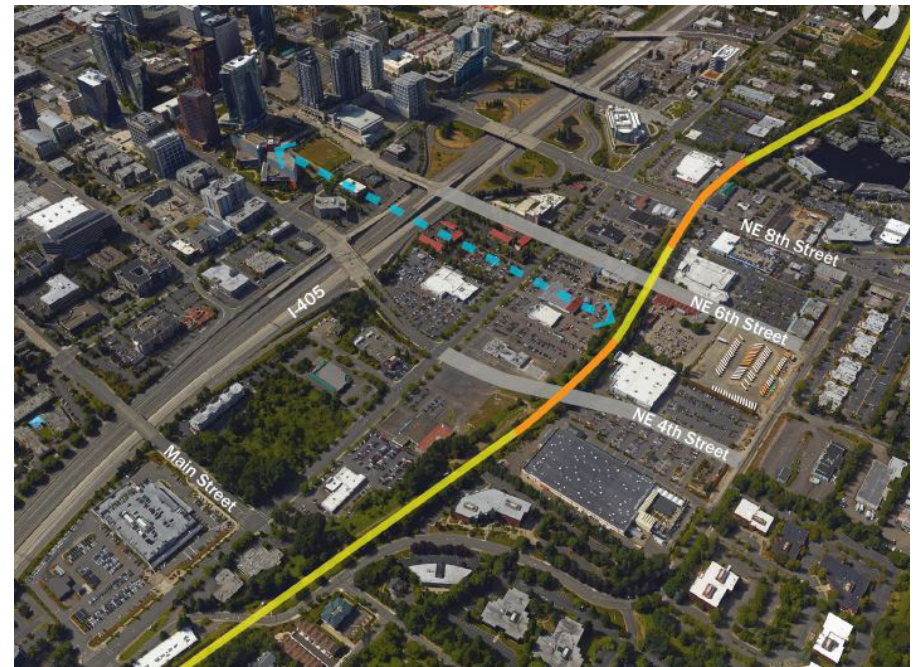


Figure 1.3- Grand Connection Interface with the Eastside Rail Corridor

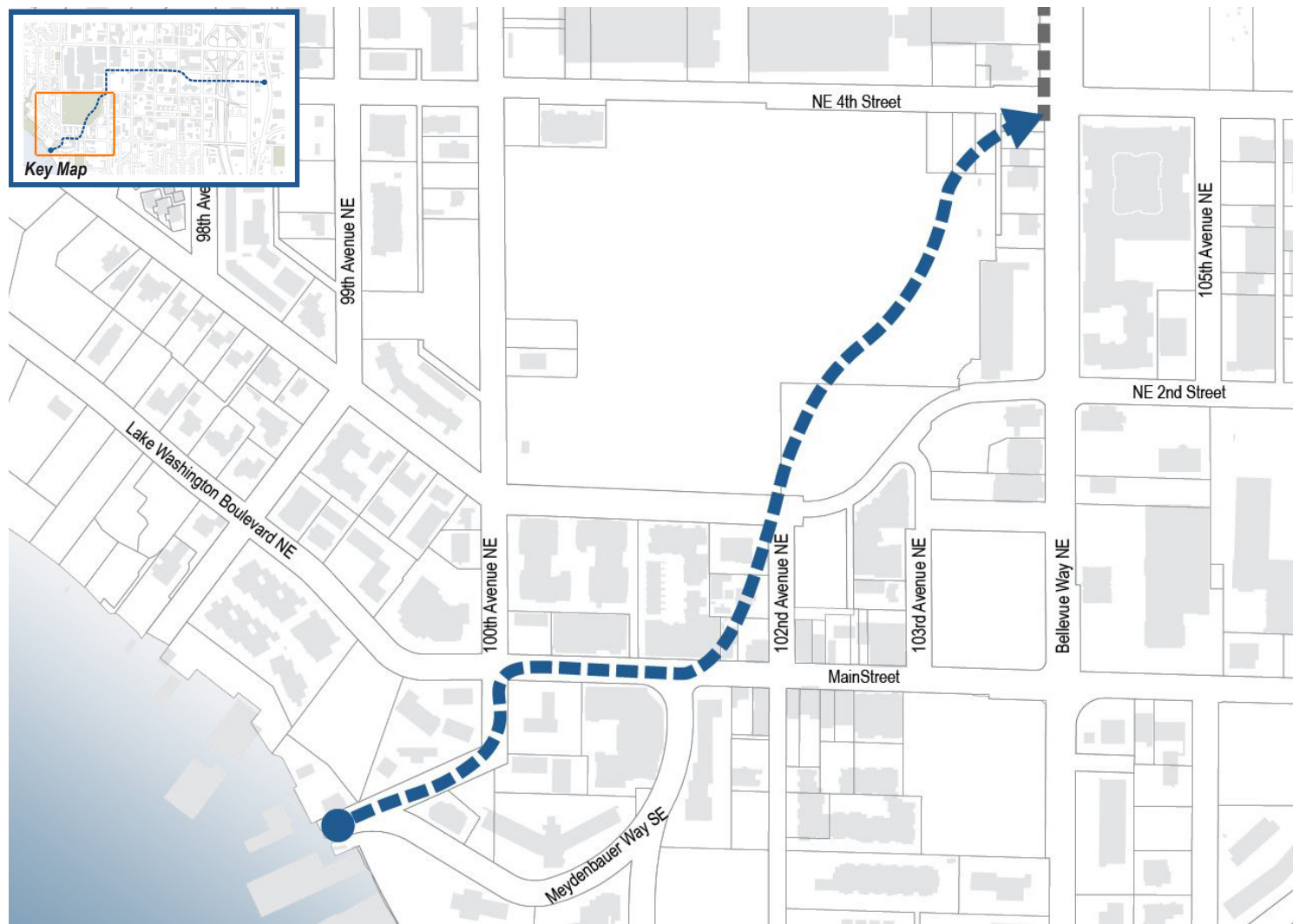


Figure 2.1 - Conceptual Route Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park

Grand Connection - **Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park**

Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park

Conceptual Route

The Grand Connection begins at Meydenbauer Bay Park, southwest of Downtown Bellevue. With an expansion planned for the park, and the first phase already planned and underway, few if any improvements or modifications will be required to the physical park through the Grand Connection process. The intersection of Main Street and 100th Avenue could be considered the start of the route on its surface streets and sidewalks. The route is to continue to the Downtown Park and could do so via 102nd, or 103rd Avenues NE. Both streets would allow the Grand Connection to pass through Old Bellevue via Main Street and enter the park at the southeast corner by crossing NE 1st Street. The route would continue through the park and exit park at the northeast corner at Bellevue Way NE and NE 4th Street or at the entrance midblock at NE 4th Street.

Expansion of Meydenbauer Bay Park

In December of 2010 City Council adopted Resolution Number 8182 for the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan. In 1987 the City identified connecting Downtown to the waterfront as a priority to Bellevue's livability. In the following decade the City began acquiring property as it became available with the intent of creating an expanded park.

The proposed expansion would significantly increase the size of the park to the south and the southeast. It would connect the park in several locations to Lake Washington Boulevard and extend the park all the way to Meydenbauer Way SE. With this plan, any proposed improvements in relationship to the Grand Connection should take into account the park expansion as referred to in the *Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan*. Improvements for the Grand Connection should consider connecting to the expanded park at key locations such as Meydenbauer Bay SE, 100th Avenue NE, and 99th Avenue NE. The park will provide new walking paths that better connect the surrounding urban fabric, enhanced vegetation and a pier that will allow for greater connection to the water. Consideration for changes to the park should be minimal and not of significant focus to the project. A copy of the adopted park and land use plan will accompany this report.

Completion of Downtown Park

In 2008 Bellevue citizens passed the Parks & Natural Areas Levy that approved funding to complete additional phases of the original Downtown Park Master Plan, including completion of the circular promenade and water feature. The scope of work for this contract includes the design, public outreach, permit assistance, and construction assistance to complete the circle. The work to be completed includes the following:



Figure 2.2 - Existing Meydenbauer Bay Park



Figure 2.3 - Proposed Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan



Figure 2.4 - Proposed Downtown Park Plan

Southeast Entrance and Circle

- Completion of the canal promenade, water features and allee of trees;
- Formal connection between Downtown Park and Old Bellevue (termination of 102nd Avenue NE);
- Terraced seating and event space, including stairways and accessible paths.
- Construction of the “Imagination Playground.”

This work is expected to begin in the summer of 2016 and construction should be completed in the summer of 2017.

Adjacent Development

Main Street, within Old Bellevue, exists primarily of retail and residential mixed-use developments. Much of Main Street is lined with smaller local shops, restaurants and services. These buildings are of a more intimate scale than the remainder of Downtown Bellevue. Many of the businesses include outdoor seating and dining spaces that encourage activity to spill out onto the existing sidewalks. Existing residential units can be found along Main Street in many of the newer developments. Two parcels on the north and south sides of the Main Street and 100th Avenue NE intersection are less intensely developed. On the north side is a freestanding restaurant and the one on the south is a gas station. Both of these properties could be redeveloped in the future.

Both 102nd and 103rd Avenues NE are experiencing substantial change. New, and nearly complete, multi-family residential developments have joined existing residential developments, all with first level retail and commercial services. This has increased the density of the area and begun to fill in the less intensely developed properties. Other properties in the immediate area are also in consideration for development with increased density, likely to be mixed-use multifamily residential.

Just southeast of the where the Downtown Park will be expanded are a series of commercial buildings including a Chase retail bank branch, Gregg's Bellevue Cycle shop, and a building with restaurants and other services. The surface parking lots for these development face out onto the park with a vegetated buffer.

Along the eastern edge of the Downtown Park, and a potential path of travel for the Grand Connection, are several single story retail, restaurant, and commercial buildings. Currently none are planned to be redeveloped, but could present interesting opportunities for coordinating with a route that would lead to the northeast corner of the park upon redevelopment. Ideally, potential future redevelopment would create opportunities to engage and embrace the park rather than having back of house services and parking that are part of the existing development pattern.

Some stakeholders and residents have expressed concern over the loss of character of Old Bellevue from more recent developments and for



Figure 2.5 - Main Street - Looking West



Figure 2.6 - 102nd Avenue NE - Looking North



Figure 2.7 - Sidewalk 'Pinch Point' on Main Street

Grand Connection - **Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park**

the plan to expand Meydenbauer Bay Park. The increased density and modern design of new buildings have significantly transformed this area of Downtown. Proposed improvements or modifications should take into consideration the sensitivity that exists regarding the evolving character of the neighborhood. Additionally, the proposal to close and remove 100th Avenue SE south of Main Street, as part of the Meydenbauer Bay Park Expansion, has also resulted in some concern. Any modifications in this area should consider this context.

Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure

Main Street, 102nd, and 103rd Avenues NE are all highly walkable streets. The sidewalks along Main Street are primarily brick pavers, with some concrete on the southeast side of Main Street. The width of the sidewalks vary greatly depending on a number of local circumstances. The south side of Main Street tends to be wider with less intrusion from outdoor seating. The north side of Main Street has several pinch points where outdoor dining substantially diminishes the width of the sidewalk, particularly at the corners of 102nd and 103rd Avenues NE at Main Street. This can be an obstacle in some cases for those needing mobility assistance or with strollers. Simultaneously, it creates a more intimate environment and affords greater opportunities for social engagement and interaction as elements of the businesses tend to spill out onto the sidewalk.

Signaled pedestrian crossings exist at Main and 100th Avenue NE and at

Main and 102nd Avenue NE. A non-signalized pedestrian crossing exists at 103rd Avenue NE and Main Street as well as the eastern side of 101st Avenue SE and Main Street. A non-signalized mid-block crossing exists between 102nd and 103rd Avenues NE across Main Street. No bike lanes exist along Main Street or 102nd and 103rd Avenues NE.

The intersection of 102nd Avenue and NE 1st Street is an enhanced intersection that leads to the future Downtown Park completion. The intersection is signalized and includes special paving for the pedestrian crossing. This intersection is expected to be tabled in the near future to enhance the sense of priority for pedestrians. This will elevate the intersection, creating greater visibility of pedestrians and serve as a traffic calming measure. A midblock crossing exists at 103rd Avenue NE and NE 2nd Street. This does not include a pedestrian signal but does include a crosswalk and median island for pedestrians. This route would also lead to the expanded area of the Downtown Park. There is a north-south through block connection that exists between 102nd and 103rd Avenues NE and another between 100th and 102nd Avenues. Currently the through block connection between 102nd and 103rd Avenues is incomplete as it terminates two thirds of the way into the block prior to reaching NE 1st Place, and does not continue all the way to Main Street. The through block connection between 100th and 102nd Avenues connects to NE 1st Street but is not accessible to users of all abilities.

Two pedestrian routes exist along the eastern edge of the Downtown Park, and the expansion will provide additional connections and routes.



Figure 2.8 - Sidewalk and Storefronts



Figure 2.9 - Midblock Crossing



Figure 2.10 - Intersection of NE 1st Street and 102nd Avenue NE

Pedestrians can connect to the circular promenade from the parking lot at the southeast corner of the park near 102nd Avenue NE and NE 1st Street. Pedestrians can continue on the circular promenade or divert to a more linear path that runs north south and then east, exiting onto Bellevue Way. Leading to the northeast corner of the park, there currently exists no dedicated pedestrian route from the circular promenade within the park and connecting to the corner of NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way NE. Rather pedestrians can take the path to the center north axis of the park and exit mid-block on NE 4th Street. The northeast corner entrance to the park is underwhelming for such a prominent intersection. There is one route, mid-block of Bellevue Way between NE 2nd and NE 4th Streets that passes between two retail developments. This entrance into the park is currently underwhelming and a bit ambiguous, devoid of vegetation and only marked by different paving. It is also flanked by surface parking areas for the adjacent retail.

Wayfinding panels can also be found in Old Bellevue that show key points of interest in Downtown including cultural resources, transportation, civic resources, and significant areas of commercial activity.

Existing Automobile Infrastructure

The existing streets within this route are typically far narrower than the rest of Downtown Bellevue. Main Street and 102nd and 103rd Avenues NE have one travel lane in each direction. On-street parallel parking can be found on Main Street and 102nd Avenue NE. Diagonal on street parking

can be found on 103rd Avenue NE. As part of the on street parking along Main Street, bulbed curbs can be found intermittently and at intersections and mid block crossings. Due to the narrower streets the impact on the sound quality for pedestrians is significantly less than some of the larger and busier streets of Downtown. Parking has historically been a contentious matter with local property owners, perceiving it as insufficient. Any changes that would affect existing parking should be carefully considered.

Existing Urban Amenities

There are some public urban amenities along this route. One development on the corner of 103rd Avenue NE and NE 1st provides a publicly accessible courtyard with water feature and seating. The through block connection between 100th and 102nd Avenues NE provides access to multiple courtyards that exists between the residential developments. There is the potential for more urban amenities through the city's FAR Amenity Incentive System if the properties at the northwest corner of 102nd Avenue NE and NE 1st Street are redeveloped.

Landscaping, Vegetation, and Other Natural Elements

Street trees can be irregularly found on Main Street, as well as unique moveable plantings at the intersection of 102nd Avenue NE and Main Street. Street trees are mostly absent from 102nd Avenue NE and are irregular on 103rd Avenue NE. NE 1st Street is well vegetated with dense street trees lining the north side along the park and with slightly more



Figure 2.11 - On Street Parking and Special Paving



Figure 2.12 - Publicly Accessible Courtyard on 103rd Avenue NE



Figure 2.13 - Street Trees on NE 1st

Grand Connection - **Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park**

regularity and consistency than most streets along the southern side. This makes for an aesthetically pleasing streetscape. Additionally, planted medians can be found on NE 1st Street between 100th and 102nd Avenues NE and at the mid block crossing. As expected, the Downtown Park is heavily vegetated with mature trees and intimately scaled garden areas. The route that exits mid-block onto Bellevue Way is currently devoid of vegetation.



Figure 2.14 - Art at the Existing Meydenbauer Bay Beach Park



Figure 2.15 - Old Bellevue Streetscape



Figure 2.16 - Newer Development in Old Bellevue



Figure 2.17 - Older Development in Old Bellevue



Figure 2.18 - Through-Block Connection and Wayfinding



Figure 2.19 - Gas Station at the Corner of 100th Avenue SE and Main Street



Figure 2.20 - Planters at Bulb Outs



Figure 2.21 - Typical Wayfinding Kiosk



Figure 2.22 - Example of Tree Grates

Grand Connection - **Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park**



Figure 2.23 - New Multifamily Development in Old Bellevue



Figure 2.24 - Park 99 Restaurant



Figure 2.25 - Outdoor Seating on Main Street



Figure 2.26 - Pedestrian Crossing at NE 1st and 103rd Avenue NE



Figure 2.27 - Surface Parking for Chase Retail Bank and Gregg's Cycle Shop



Figure 2.28 - Downtown Park Entrance Sign on Bellevue Way



Figure 2.29 - Entrance to Downtown Park From Bellevue Way



Figure 2.30 - Park Row Development



Figure 2.31 - Downtown Park Exit to Bellevue Way



Figure 2.32 - View of Circular Promenade and Easternmost Paths of Downtown Park



Figure 2.33 - View of Northeast Segment of Downtown Park



Figure 2.34 - Easternmost Route of Downtown Park



Figure 2.35 - NE 4th Street Streetscape North of Downtown Park



Figure 2.36 - North Entrance to Downtown Park



Figure 2.37 - Future Whole Foods 365 Store North of Park in Bellevue Square



Figure 2.38 - Park Panorama From North Entrance



Figure 2.39 - Northeast Entrance to Park

Grand Connection - **Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park**

Major Points of Interest

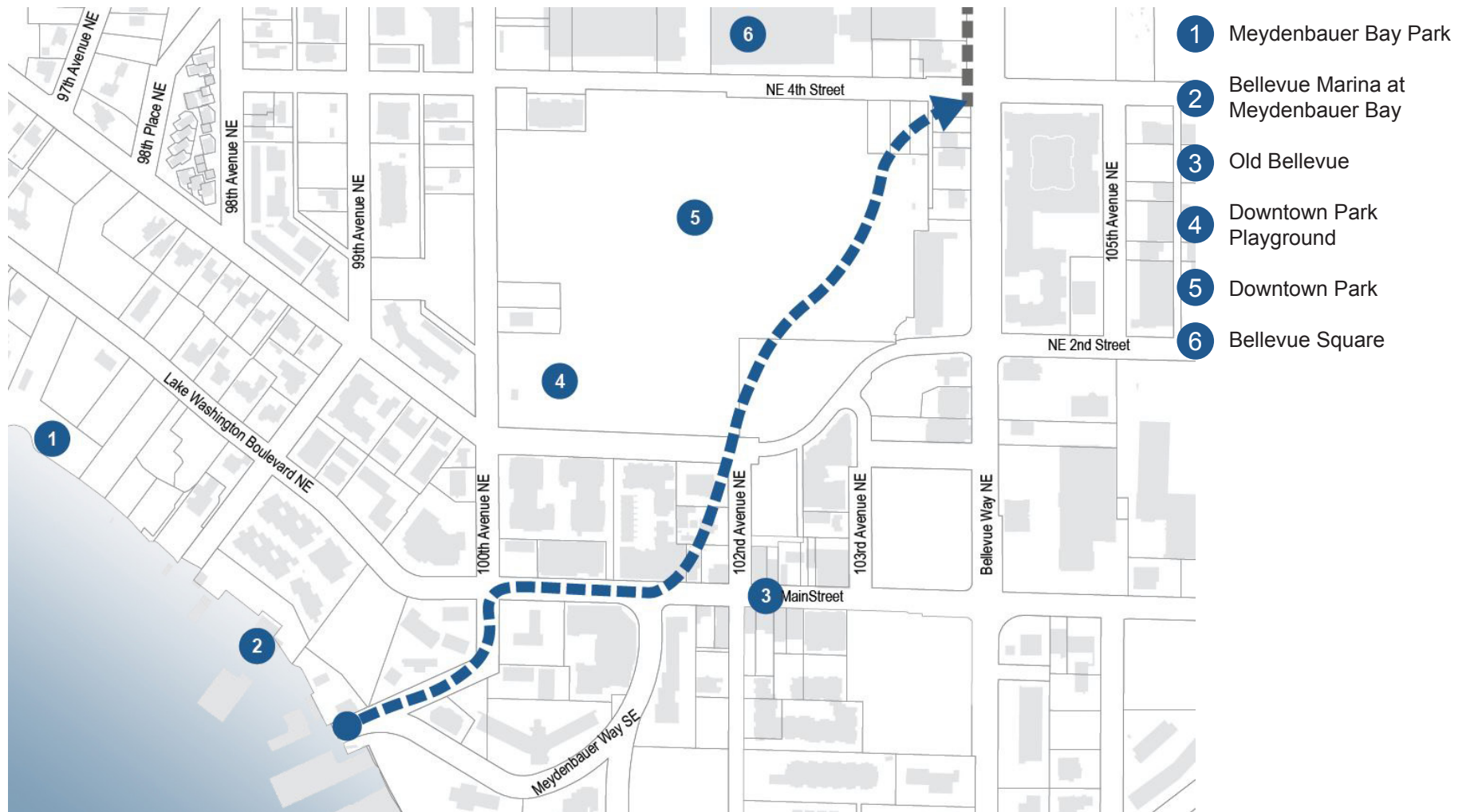


Figure 2.40 - Key Points of Interest

Property Ownership



Figure 2.41 - Property Owner Map

Grand Connection - **Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park**

Sidewalk Designations and Public Spaces

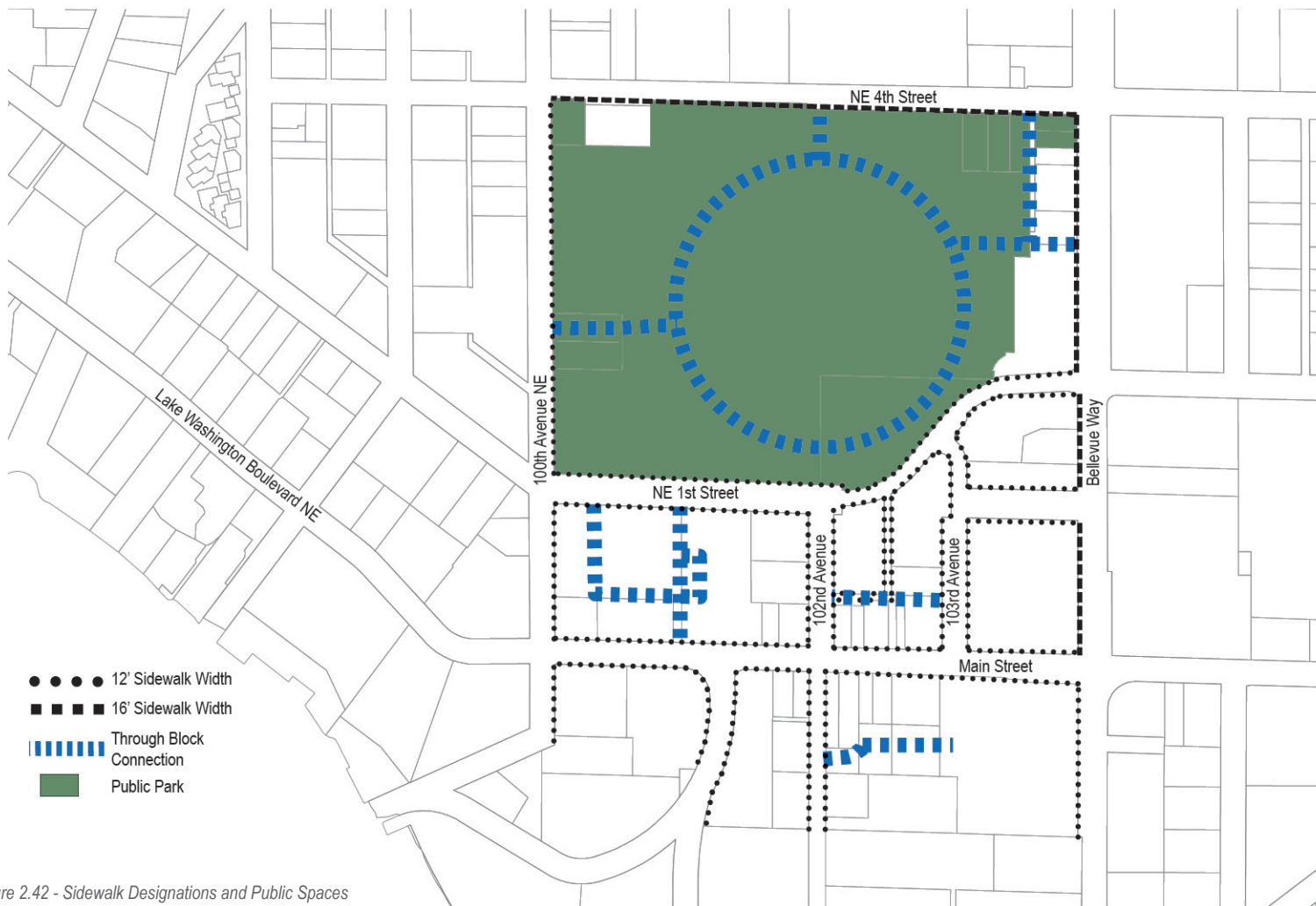


Figure 2.42 - Sidewalk Designations and Public Spaces
Note - Sidewalk designated widths are planned changes that are a part of the Downtown Livability Initiative.

Planned & Under Construction Public & Private Projects

- 1 Meydenbauer Bay Park Expansion
- 2 Imagination Playground
- 3 Tabled intersection at NE 1st Street and 102nd Avenue
- 4 Completion of the Downtown Park and Promenade



Figure 2.43 - Planned and Under Construction Public & Private Projects

Grand Connection - **Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park**

Photo Legend

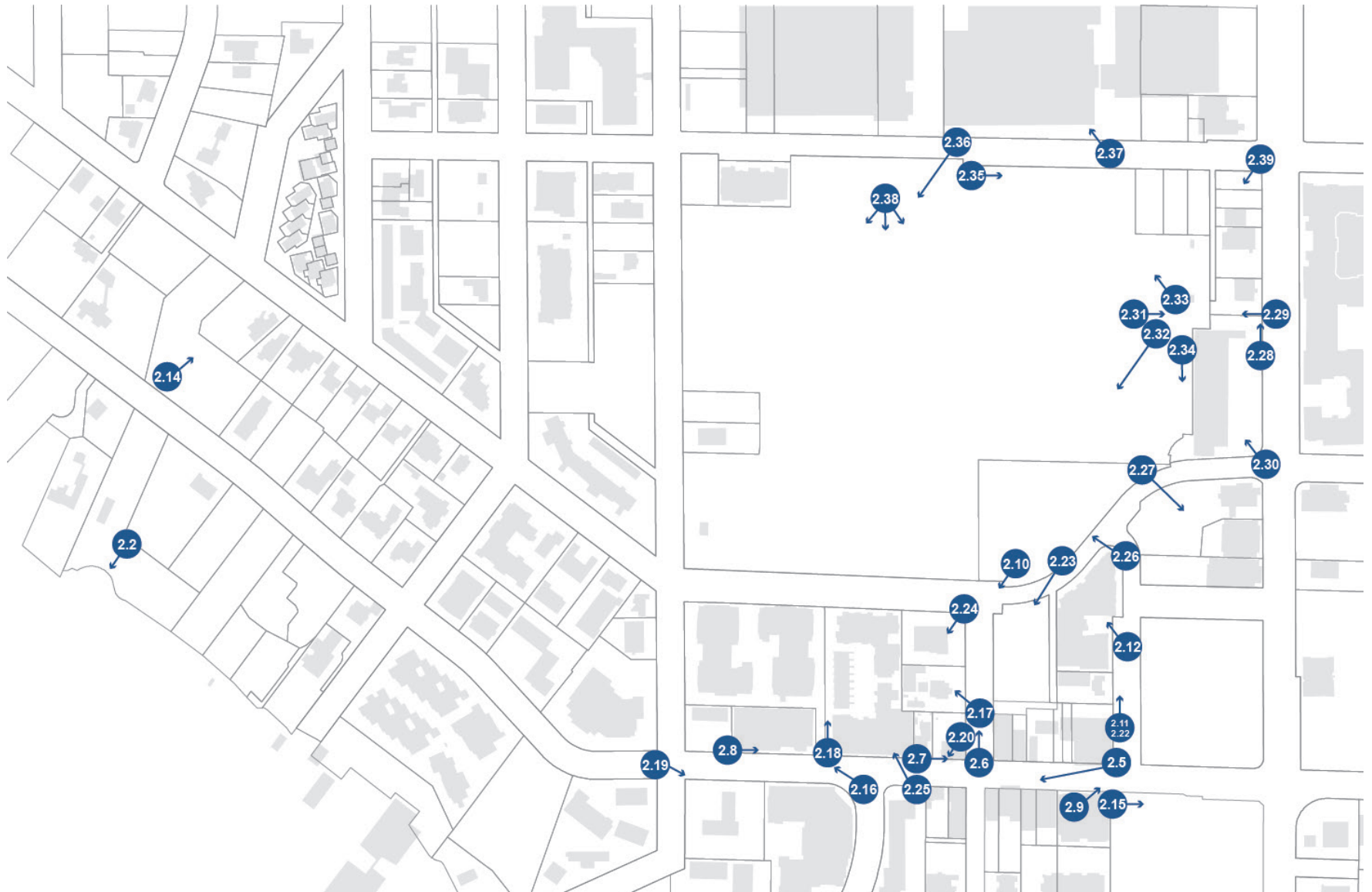


Figure 2.44 - Photo Legend

Topography

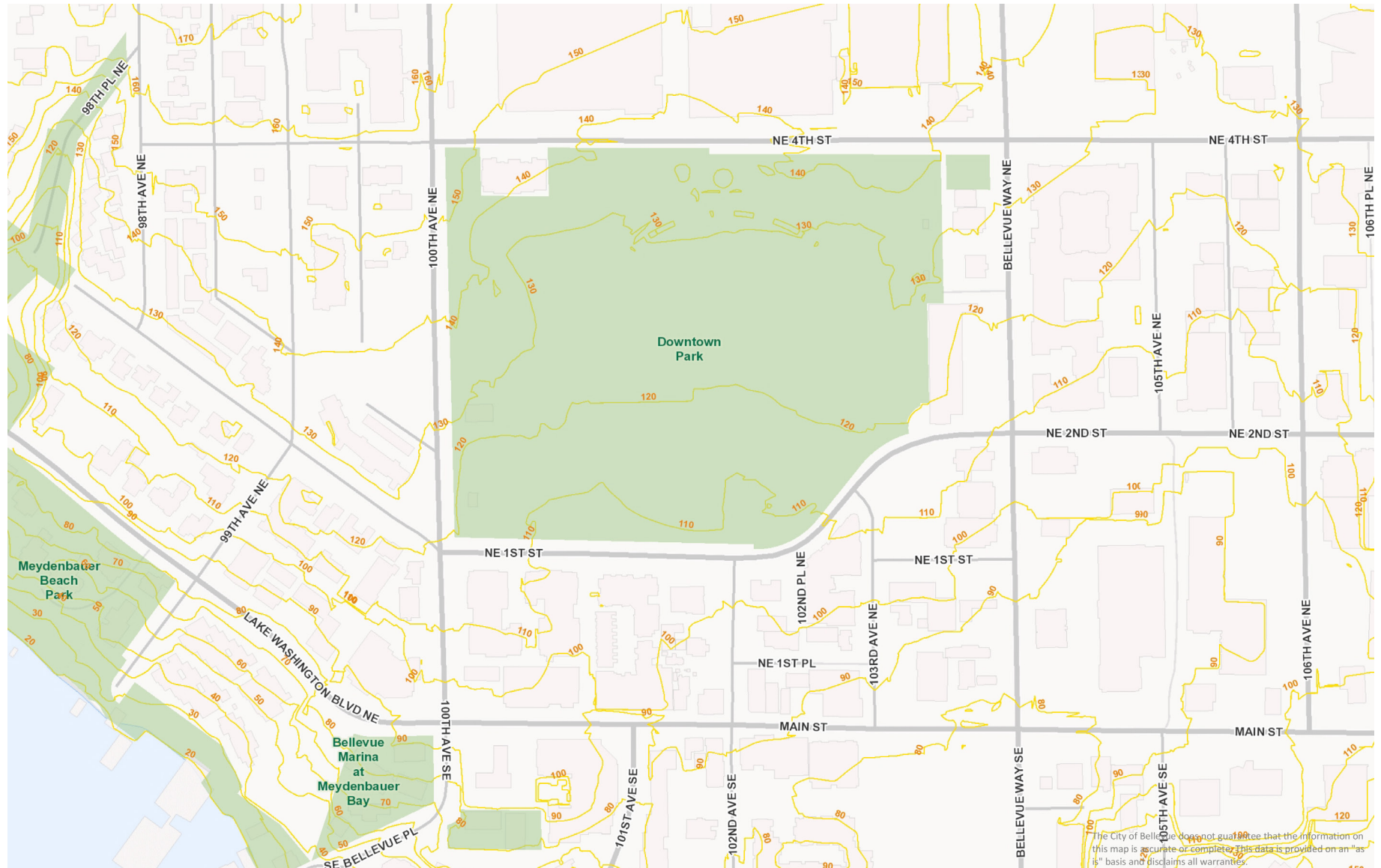


Figure 2.45 - Topography

Grand Connection - Meydenbauer Bay to Downtown Park

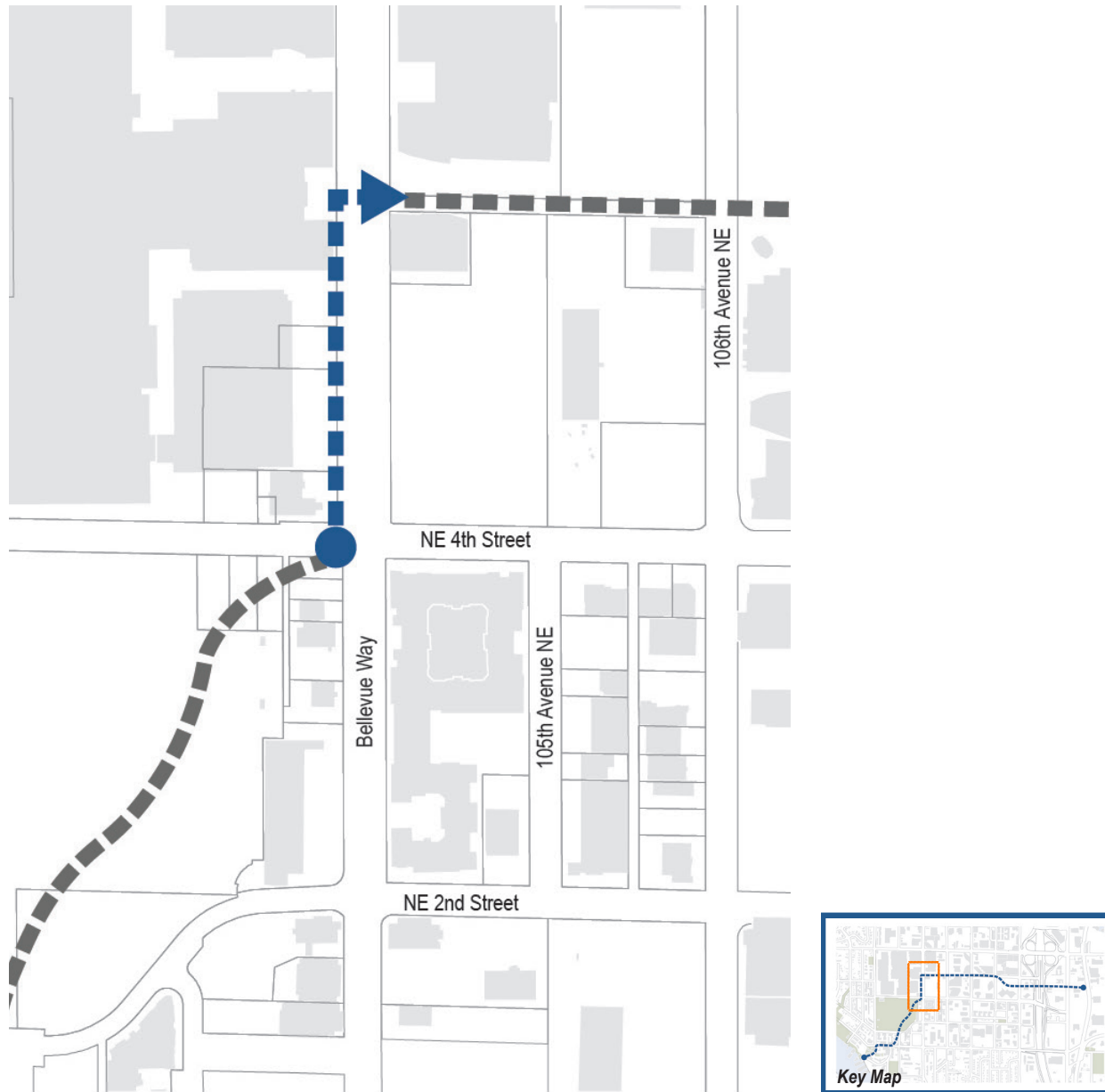


Figure 3.1 - Downtown Park to Pedestrian Corridor Route

Grand Connection - **Downtown Park to Pedestrian Corridor**

Downtown Park to the Pedestrian Corridor

Route

This route begins at the northeast corner of the Downtown Park and travels north along Bellevue Way NE until reaching NE 6th Street. NE 6th Street is also known as the Pedestrian Corridor. The route would then continue eastward on the Pedestrian Corridor.

Adjacent Development

At the northwest corner of NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way, north of the Downtown Park, is an existing single story retail building and parking deck. The parking deck is part of the regional shopping center Bellevue Square. The site, both the retail building and parking deck are currently being considered for redevelopment into two mixed use high rises. The retail building on the Bellevue Square property is currently being used as a construction office for the Lincoln Square Expansion project directly east across Bellevue Way. This potential development is referred to as Lincoln Square Expansion II (LSEII). Directly north of this property is the remainder of Bellevue Square which serves as a major shopping destination, drawing from six states. Bellevue Square continues north the full length of the super block, terminating at NE 8th Street.

Directly east, across Bellevue Way NE, is Lincoln Square Expansion

(LSE) which is currently under construction. Similar to the proposal on the site directly west, the development is mixed use with a retail podium, office tower, and a residential and hotel tower. This project will add significantly to the retail inventory of Bellevue Way NE and is anticipated to be completed in 2017. Directly north of LSE is the Bellevue Arts Museum (BAM). This is the premier museum of Bellevue, designed by world-renowned architect Steven Holl. LSE and BAM both provide frontage to the Pedestrian Corridor and Bellevue Way. Across the Pedestrian Corridor is Lincoln Square which was developed similarly to LSE and LSEII with a retail podium, office high rise, and residential and hotel high rise. With the exception of the Bellevue Arts Museum all of the mentioned properties are owned by a single property owner, Kemper Development Corporation.

Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure

Sidewalks exist on both the east and west sides of Bellevue Way NE. Both sides will have a minimum width of 16 feet, the current maximum required by Bellevue's Land Use Code (LUC). The segment between NE 4th Street and Bellevue Square, on the west side of Bellevue Way, will be 20 feet in width upon redevelopment. Ultimately the sidewalks on the eastern side of Bellevue Way will be improved with the forthcoming LSE development. At the T-intersection of Bellevue Way NE and NE 6th Street there is an enhanced pedestrian crossing. Special paving exists as well as a median. This creates a greater sense of arrival at the terminus of the western portion of the Pedestrian Corridor while also serving as a gateway to Bellevue



Figure 3.2 - Lincoln Square at NE 6th Street



Figure 3.3 - Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street Intersection

Square. There is no existing bicycle infrastructure.

Existing Automobile Infrastructure

Bellevue Way is a large arterial street for Downtown Bellevue, carrying much of the shopping mall traffic, along with NE 8th Street and NE 4th Street. This traffic can create a challenging pedestrian environment at times, particularly during rush hours. This negative impact is partially mitigated at the T-intersection of Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street with medians and the enhanced pedestrian crossing. The speed and volume of traffic can create excessive noise and affect the audible quality of the route.

Existing Urban Amenities

A major public open space exists at the T-intersection of Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street. This space serves as an entrance to the shopping mall, and a visual terminus when traveling west on the Pedestrian Corridor. The forthcoming LSE project will provide a minor publicly accessible space at the corner of Bellevue Way and NE 4th Street. This space will be smaller than that at Bellevue Square, but will provide outdoor seating, weather protection and a water feature. As part of the city's FAR Amenity Incentive System, both of these public spaces are required to remain in perpetuity. Modifications are possible but must meet the intent and value established for the amenity in the original Land Use Code approval. Additionally, LSE will provide an art piece midblock along the east side of Bellevue Way at the

building's primary entrance. The forthcoming LSE II project could present an opportunity to create enhancements that satisfy the city's FAR Amenity Incentive System while accomplishing goals of the Grand Connection.

During the holiday season Bellevue Way is transformed into a festival street during evening hours. This includes performances, parades, and other events to celebrate the holiday season, and is organized by Kemper Development Corporation. It is a highly celebrated event that typically draws several thousand spectators and results in the rerouting of traffic due to street closures. It is one of the few events that warrant street closures in Downtown Bellevue.

Landscaping, Vegetation, and Other Natural Elements

Street trees currently exist between Bellevue Way NE and the parking deck located at the northeast corner of Bellevue Way NE and NE 4th Street. These trees are unlikely to remain if the LSE II proposal moves forward as the streetscape will be updated to the City's most recent Land Use Code (LUC) standards. Currently this vegetation serves as a buffer between the parking and pedestrian route. This will require a regular rhythm of street trees that would establish some continuity with the street trees located along Bellevue Square. LSE, currently under construction, will also update the streetscape along Bellevue Way NE to the most current LUC requirements, completing a more contiguous streetscape. A median on Bellevue Way provides enhanced vegetation at the pedestrian crossing



Figure 3.4 - Lincoln Square Expansion - Currently Under Construction



Figure 3.5 - Bellevue Way Median - Facing North



Figure 3.6 - Major Public Open Space at Bellevue Square

Grand Connection - **Downtown Park to Pedestrian Corridor**



Figure 3.7 - Lincoln Square Expansion II Site - Facing North



Figure 3.8 - Lincoln Square Expansion II Site - Facing Southwest



Figure 3.9 - West Side of Bellevue Way - Facing South



Figure 3.10 - West Side of Bellevue Way - Facing North



Figure 3.11 - Bellevue Way Streetscape at Bellevue Square



Figure 3.12 - Storefronts at Perimeter of Bellevue Square



Figure 3.13 - Pedestrian Corridor Entrance from Bellevue Square



Figure 3.14 - Bellevue Square



Figure 3.15 - Bellevue Way Median

Major Points of Interest

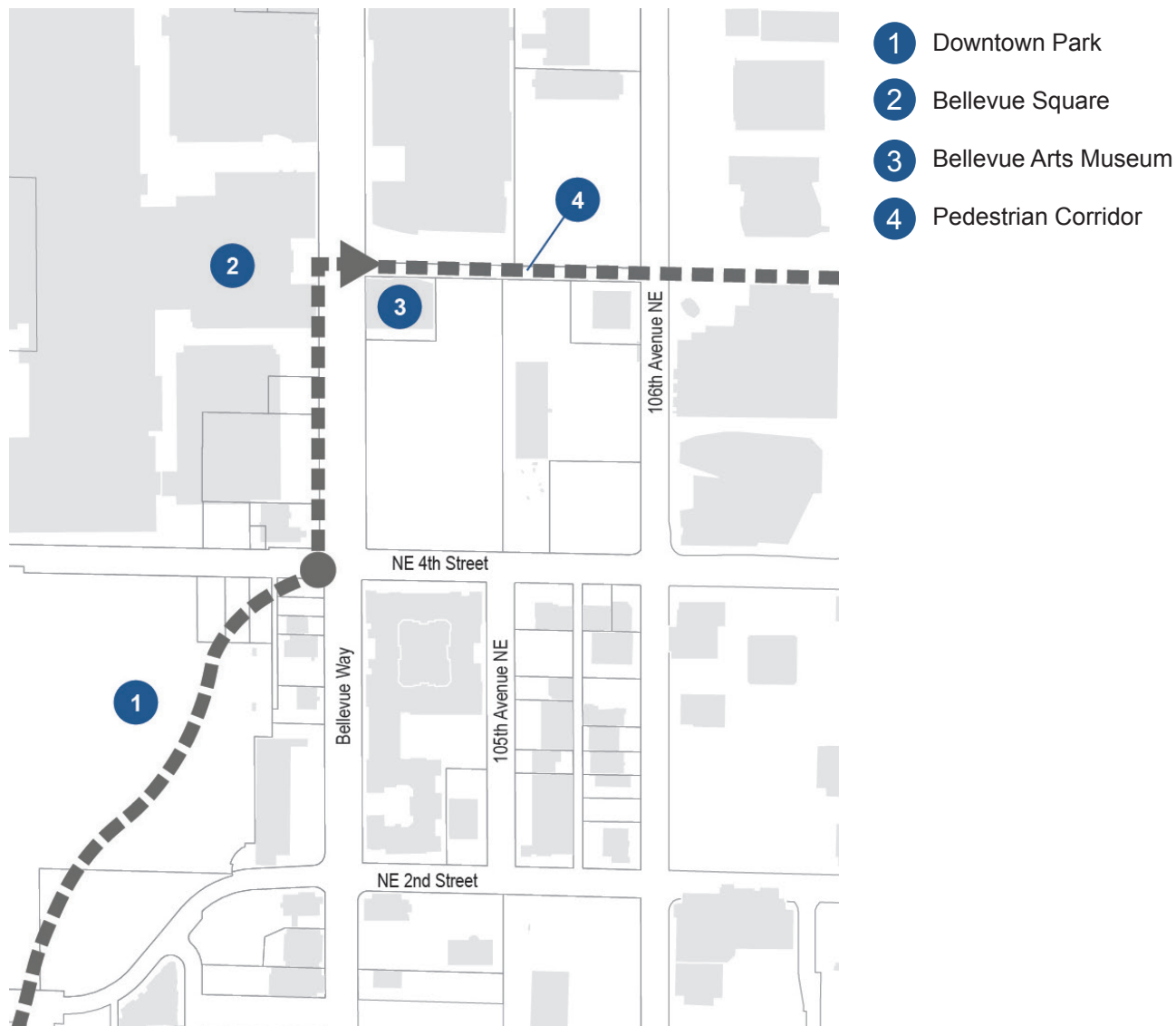


Figure 3.16 - Key Points of Interest

Grand Connection - **Downtown Park to Pedestrian Corridor**

Property Ownership

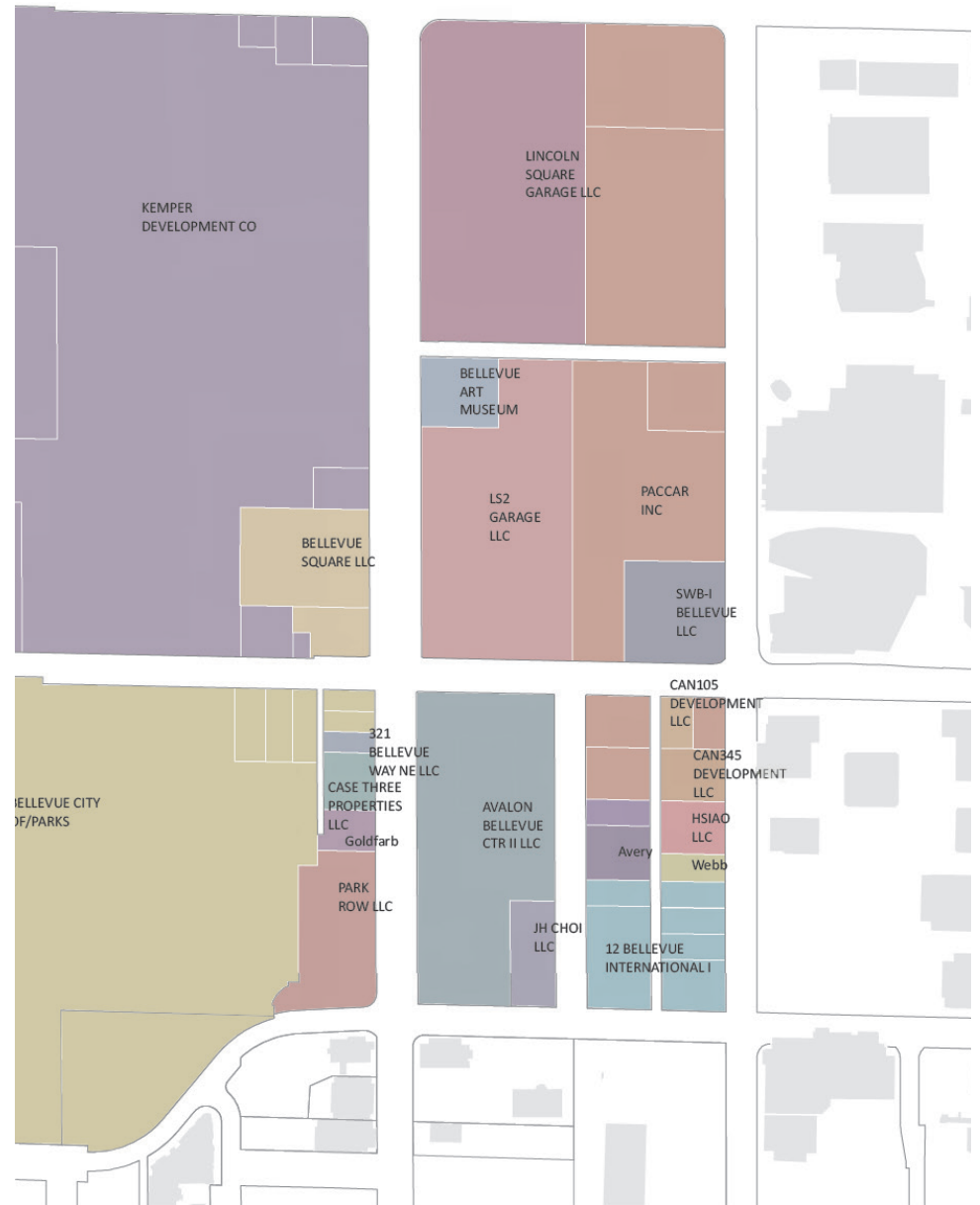


Figure 3.17 - Property Ownership

Sidewalk Designations and Public Spaces

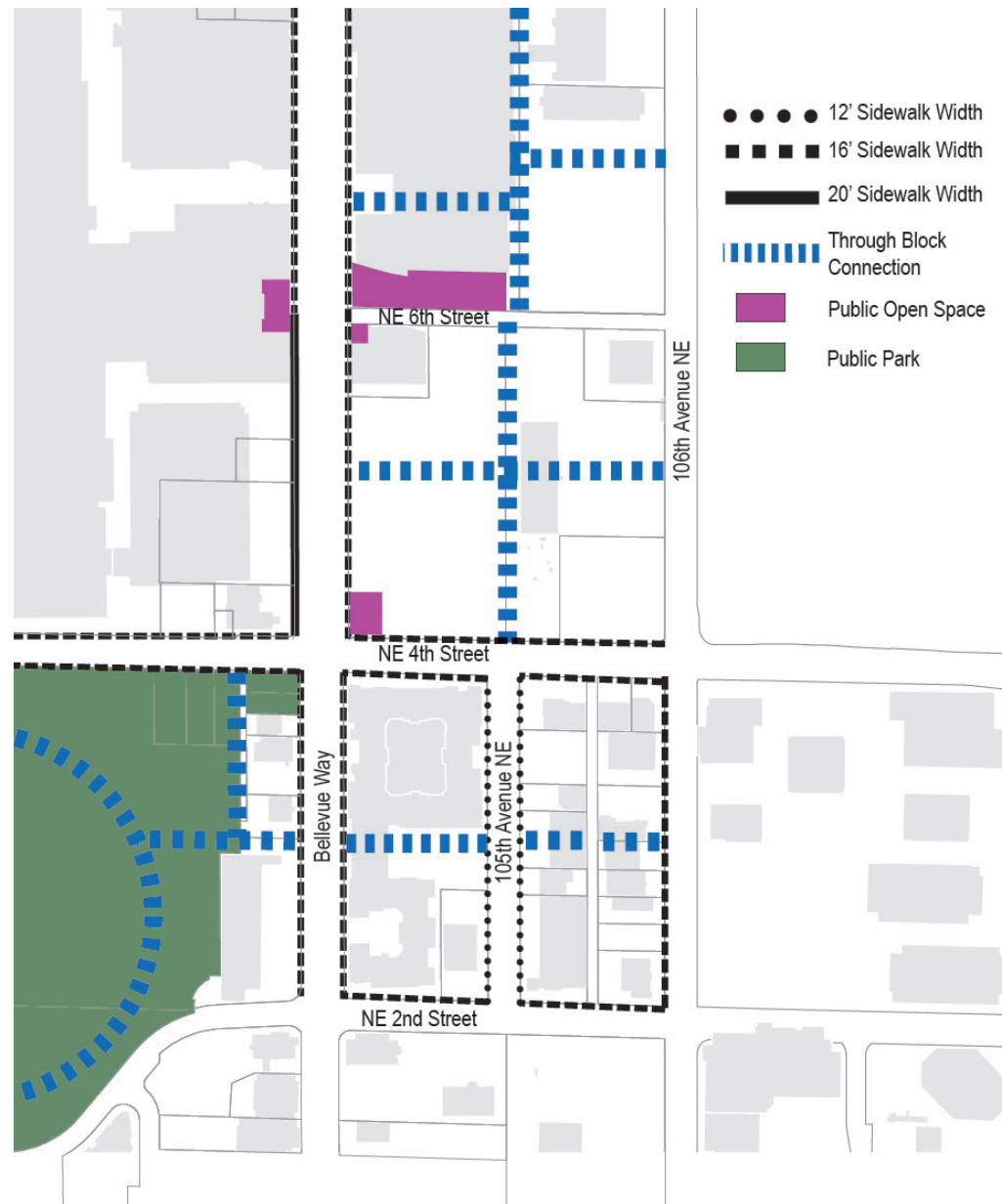


Figure 3.18 - Sidewalk Designations and Public Spaces

Note - The public space located as part of the Lincoln Square Expansion project at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way NE is under construction.

Note - Sidewalk designated widths are planned changes that are a part of the Downtown Livability Initiative.

Grand Connection - **Downtown Park to Pedestrian Corridor**

Planned & Under Construction Public & Private Projects

- 1 Lincoln Square Development
- Estimated Completion 2017
- 2 Centre 425 Office
Development
- 3 Lincoln Square Plaza and
Pedestrian Bridge

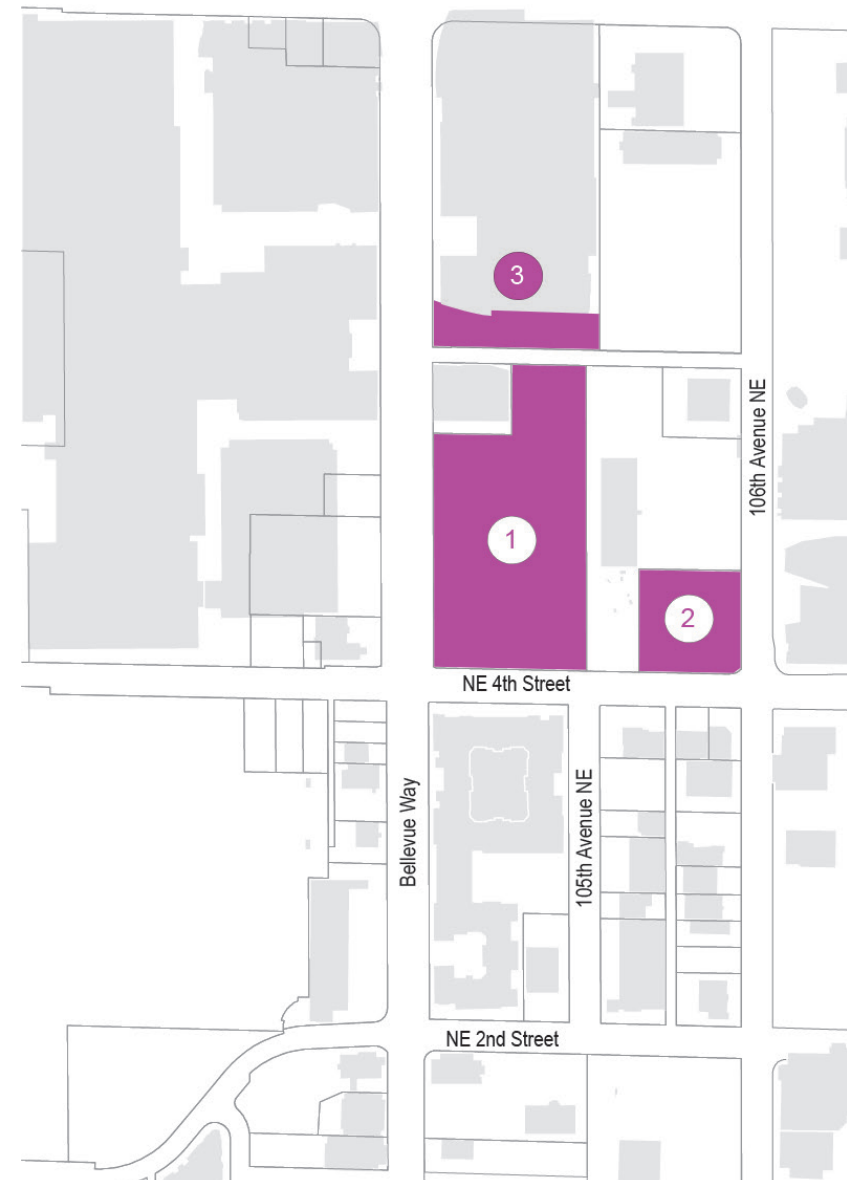


Figure 3.19- Planned and Under Construction Public and Private Projects

Photo Legend

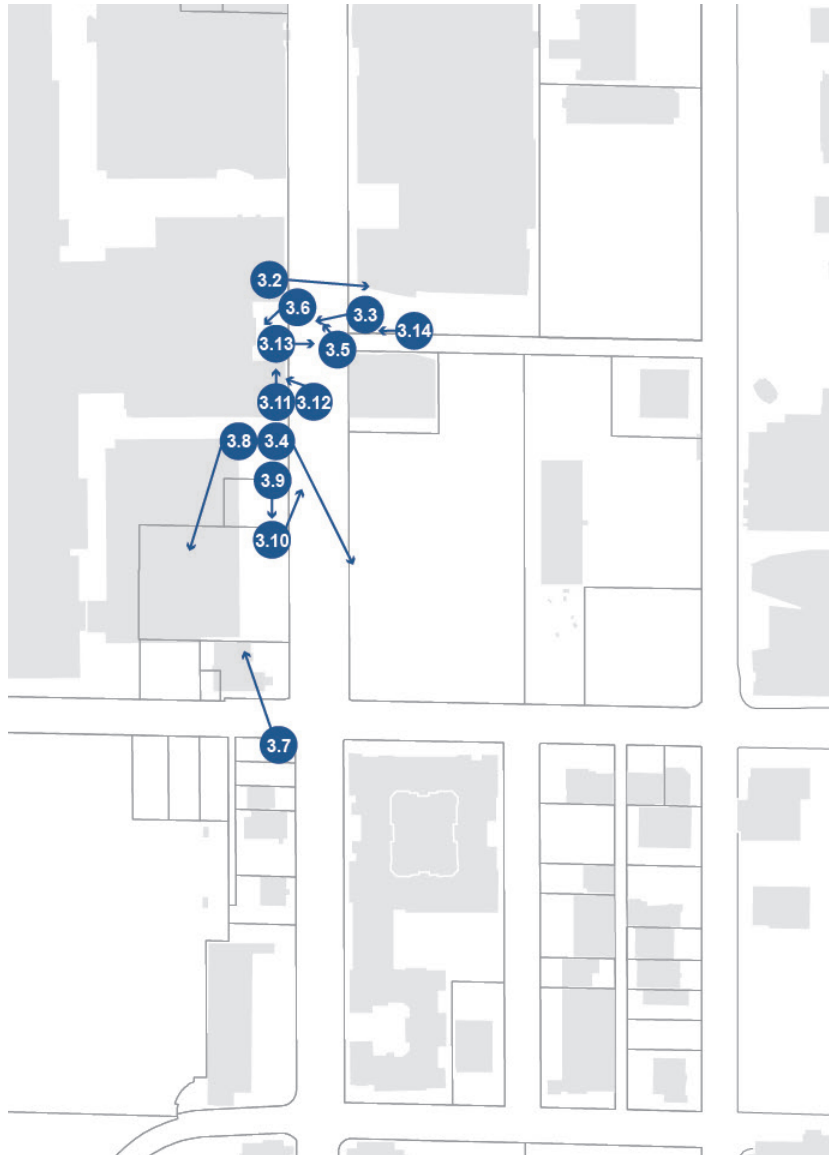


Figure 3.20- Photo Legend

Grand Connection - **Downtown Park to Pedestrian Corridor**

Topography

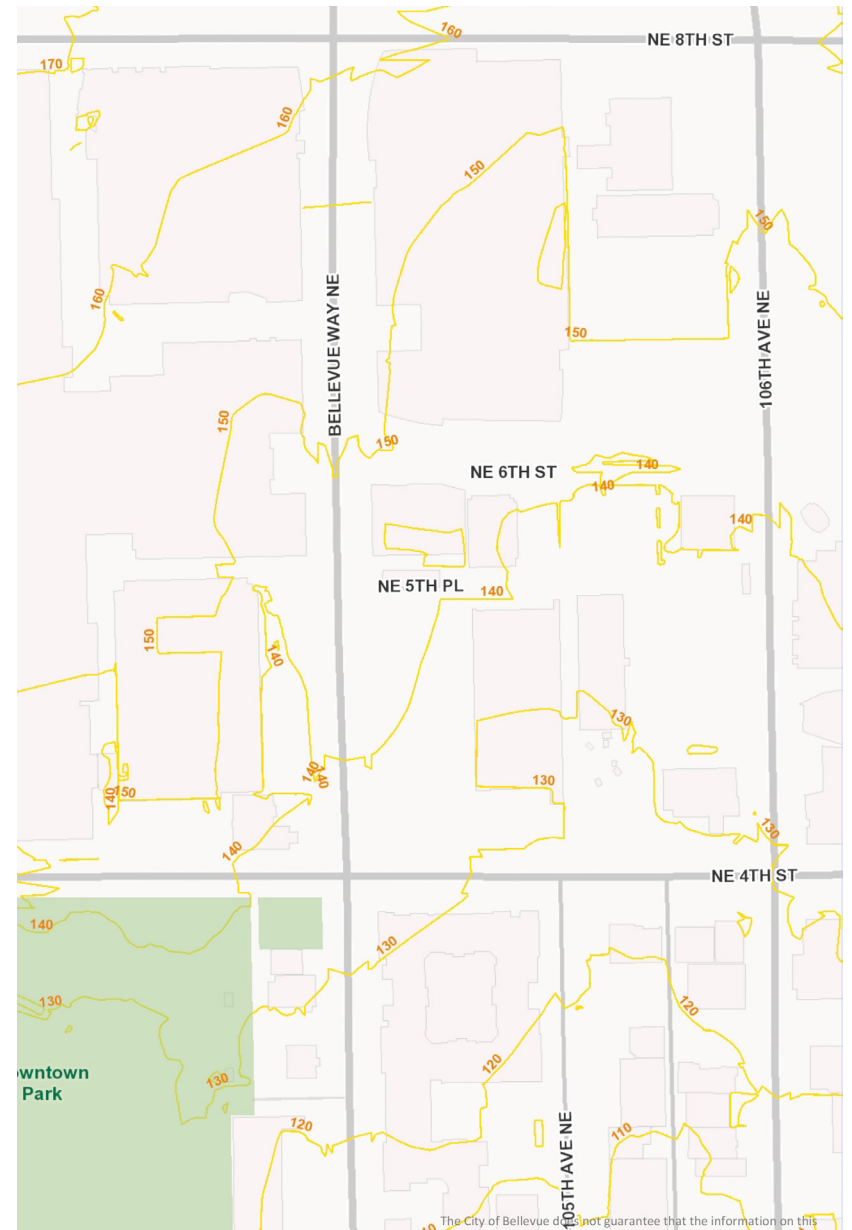


Figure 3.21- Topography

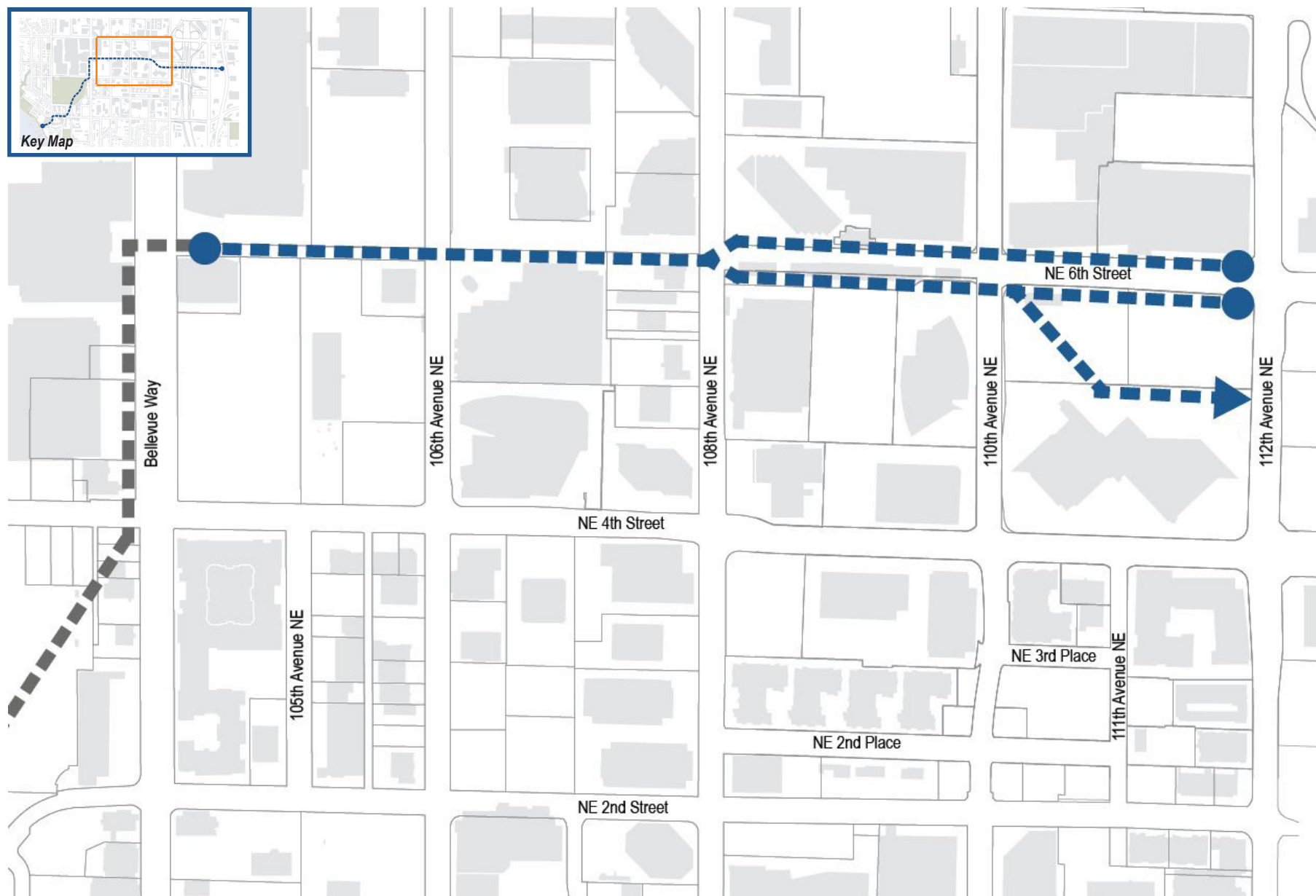


Figure 4.1 - Pedestrian Corridor Route

Grand Connection - **Pedestrian Corridor**

The Pedestrian Corridor

(Bellevue Way to the Convention/Civic District)

Route

This route travels east-west, beginning at Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street and terminating at 112th Avenue NE.

Overview of the Pedestrian Corridor

As part of the 1981 Land Use Code adoption, the City identified the Pedestrian Corridor as an important element to the growth and quality of the pedestrian environment. The original design guidelines restricts the Pedestrian Corridor to pedestrians only.

The Corridor is intended to function as a single unit, but with each block having its own unique character. Similar to the goals of the Grand Connection, there should be a unifying element to the Pedestrian Corridor while creating unique environments along the route.

The original design guidelines, including with this document identified the following objectives of the Pedestrian Corridor:

- Provide a safe, comfortable, lively, and attractive place for pedestrians.
- Achieve an identity and an image as a special place.
- Allow for modification and expansion over time as surrounding conditions change.
- Accommodate access to other major public facilities such as transit center, civic/convention center, and other public spaces.
- Reflect the qualities of a truly “urban” environment with its intensity, sophistication, and diversity.
- Reinforce and stimulate high quality future adjacent development.
- Reflect characteristics of this locale: climate, vegetation, and topography.
- Encourage evening and weekend use, as well as weekday use.
- Provide a focal point for Downtown Bellevue.

The original design guidelines call for a series of identities along the route including “Street as Plaza,” the “Garden Hill Climb,” and “Transit Central.” These identities were established based upon the surrounding uses and environmental conditions.

Several elements remain an important part of the design guidelines. While serving as a focal point for Downtown it is also important that it addresses the connections to secondary paths, perpendicular streets, and key intersections. These important elements were visioned to be achieved through the building and pedestrian realm interface, wayfinding, vegetation, and the treatment of the route at key intersections. Currently the route has



Figure 4.2 - Lincoln Square Development From Pedestrian Corridor



Figure 4.3 - Bellevue Arts Museum From Pedestrian Corridor



Figure 4.4 - Intersection of Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street (Pedestrian Corridor)

not met all of the goals of the original design guidelines for various reasons. Realizing much of this vision through the Grand Connection visioning process will be key in enhancing the Corridor to its original intentions as a focal point and key pedestrian route for Downtown.

Adjacent Development

The Bellevue Arts Museum, Lincoln Square and Lincoln Square Expansion developments create the gateway to the Pedestrian Corridor. The corner is anchored by open public spaces at Bellevue Arts Museum and Lincoln Square. The Lincoln Square development does not lend itself to a pedestrian scaled environment, as its large façade, columns, and other architectural features are larger than many of the other building elements found along the route. The facade of the tower has also created challenging wind conditions at the plaza level due to its scale. Additionally the plaza spaces lack a sense of public ownership. The raised seating areas and other seating areas that are divided from the plaza feel like private spaces. The plaza is therefore entirely dependent on two businesses to generate activation, which has largely not succeeded as outdoor dining does not serve as a year round activity. Ultimately this creates an environment that feels more privatized and not as public as the Pedestrian Corridor intends to be. The Bellevue Arts Museum retail shop entrance faces out onto NE 6th Street. This facade has a large blank wall that faces onto the Pedestrian Corridor, in addition to the storefront entrance. With the impacts from these developments, diminishing the

scale and making the space more intimate for pedestrians will be essential. The Lincoln Square Expansion will provide the primary entrance to the residential portion of the development along the Pedestrian Corridor. There will also be access points to the retail and hotel elements. The base of Lincoln Square, to the north, provides entrances to the Westin hotel and residential tower, as well as the outdoor seating areas for two restaurants.

Moving east are two underdeveloped parcels on the north and south sides of the Pedestrian Corridor. The north property, at the intersection of the pedestrian corridor and 106th Avenue NE, is a surface parking lot that is part of the Paccar development. To the south is a single story restaurant, California Pizza Kitchen surrounded by a surface parking lot. This building, as well as a two level commercial building further south, share this portion of the block.

The route crosses 106th Avenue NE and enters Compass Plaza. Facing the plaza, on the south side of the corridor, is the multi-story retail building Bellevue Connection. Several tenants have recently vacated their spaces including two restaurants and a home goods store. On the north side of the corridor is a large building used as a church, surrounded by surface parking. Still further north is a single story Barnes and Noble that is also surrounded by a parking lot. This entire parcel has also been under speculation for redevelopment, including a recent application for an office tower that was subsequently withdrawn. There is renewed interest in a mixed use development for this property, demonstrating



Figure 4.5 - The Bellevue Connection



Figure 4.6 - Restaurants on 108th Avenue NE



Figure 4.7- City Center I Art and Restaurants

Grand Connection - **Pedestrian Corridor**

the high desirability of this location. The southwest perimeter of the surface parking lot is typically used by several food trucks during weekday lunch hours and generates a significant amount of pedestrian traffic. If this property were to be redeveloped a new location would need to be considered for the popular food trucks. The location of the food trucks is distinctly separate from the pedestrian corridor and movement between the area is not as free flowing as possible. A single pedestrian access point, to the food trucks location is located at the northwest corner of Compass Plaza.

The Pedestrian Corridor narrows as it continues to move east to 108th Avenue NE. This segment is known as the “Garden Hill Climb” and the “Cattle Chute.” To the north, on 108th Avenue NE is an office high rise with commercial services and restaurants at the base. South along 108th Avenue NE are a cluster of single story freestanding restaurant buildings with limited surface parking. There is also a surface parking lot directly behind these buildings just east of the Bellevue Connection. While there is no current proposal for these parcels it is reasonable to believe that they will be redeveloped in the future.

Crossing 108th Avenue NE is the Bellevue Transit Center. The entire facility spans the block from 108th Avenue NE to 110th Avenue NE. The transit center is the primary node for all bus transportation in and out of Bellevue. To the north of the transit center is a mid rise office building on the northwest corner and a three story parking garage on the northeast

corner. There is current consideration to remove the existing parking garage and to redevelop the property. Between these two buildings on the north side of the transit center is a customer service facility. The facility was added in support of the transit center but has remained underutilized.

To the south of the transit center are the City Center I and City Center II developments. City Center I is an older high rise that occupies the southwest corner with restaurants and other commercial services at the podium. The west, north and east facades all have an arcade that spans the entire length of the façade. Two smaller structures sit on the north side of the building just beyond the arcade and house a Starbucks and a Quizno's. City Center II occupies the southeast corner and is primarily occupied by Microsoft with a restaurant, coffee shop, and frozen yogurt business facing on the open space. Between City Center I and II is a large open space. Automobiles are allowed access for pick up and drop off only, with the exception of evenings where the restaurant at the base of City Center II, El Guacho, uses the area as a valet parking area. A large open landscaped area rests in the center with several planters forming seating opportunities on the north and south sides of the open green space. A walking path meanders to the southeast corner of the site, complete with landscaping and seating. This open space also serves as through block connection that runs the full north south length of the entire block connecting with NE 4th Street. The Skyline Tower, directly south of City Center II, also provides a plaza with outdoor seating and one to two food trucks during the lunch hour. A modest pedestrian connection is also



Figure 4.8- Bellevue Transit Center



Figure 4.9- Bellevue City Hall



Figure 4.10- Meydenbauer Convention Center and Bravern Development

made to the west, towards 108th Avenue NE, midblock at the through block connection.

Moving east and crossing 110th Avenue NE is the Bravern development on the north side of NE 6th Street. This development occupies a little less than three quarters of the super block. The street level is defined by high end retail along 110th Avenue, and the side facing NE 6th Street is currently occupied by a restaurant and a Bank of America. A second level accessibly public open space exists as well. The development consists of two residential high rises on the southeast corner of the site and two office developments on the north side of the site.

Further east on the north side of NE 6th Street is the Meydenbauer Convention Center. The convention center occupies less than ¼ of the entire super block and its primary entrance is located off of NE 6th Street. The convention center remains fairly active and provides a steady stream of pedestrians that move westward deeper into Downtown. For many visiting the City for convention purposes this could be their introduction to Bellevue. Just north of the convention center is a vacant parcel that is currently held by the City for potential convention center expansion and other complementary needs of the convention center and City.

On the south side of NE 6th Street is Bellevue City Hall. As part of the facility a pavilion exists on the corner NE 6th Street and 110th Avenue NE with a public green space directly south. Neither of these elements will remain following the construction of the East Link light rail Downtown

Station. Northeast of City Hall is a parcel referred to as the Metro Site. This is a City held property that is currently being used for staging for the City Hall garage and green roof expansion and will be partially occupied by the Sound Transit light rail line, with construction beginning in 2016 and anticipated opening in 2023.

Across 112th Avenue NE are several commercial office properties and a restaurant. Engaging these stakeholders will be critical to the Grand Connection crossing at I-405.

Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure

The corners of NE 6th Street and Bellevue Way are anchored by public spaces and sidewalks at both Lincoln Square and the Bellevue Arts Museum. This intersection could arguably be considered the busiest in the city with the proximity and importance of office, residential, hotels, and Bellevue Square.

A Pedestrian Corridor Bridge has been proposed that will connect the second levels of Lincoln Square One to Lincoln Square Expansion. The bridge is intended to be facilitate access to upper level shopping and entertainment as well as activate the Pedestrian Corridor by providing improvements to the existing plaza level improvements.

To ensure that a public benefit is being served by the bridge a Development



Figure 4.11 - Proposed Pedestrian Bridge Over Pedestrian Corridor



Figure 4.12 - Pedestrian Corridor North of the Galleria



Figure 4.13 - Route North of Busway at Transit Center

Grand Connection - **Pedestrian Corridor**

Agreement between the City of Bellevue and the property owner/developer is required. The agreement will call for improvements including but not limited to additional public seating, landscaping, art features, weather protection, and event space.

The Land Use Code and Pedestrian Corridor Design Guidelines does not allow skybridges across the Corridor therefore a Code Amendment is required permit the proposal. The Land Use Code Amendment, edestrian bridge design and Development Agreement must be approved by City Council prior to commencement of any construction.

Sidewalks continue east to 105th Avenue NE on both the north and south sides of the street. The sidewalk at the north side terminates at 105th Avenue NE where the parking lot for Paccar's headquarters abuts the property line. The sidewalk on the south side of NE 6th Street continues to 106th Avenue NE.

The intersection of 106th Avenue NE and NE 6th Street is an enhanced intersection for pedestrians with a signal and all way stop similar to that found at Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street. There are currently considerations being given to tabling this intersection similarly to that of NE 1st Street and 102nd Avenue NE. Crossing this intersection leads pedestrians to Compass Plaza where series of stepped public spaces exist. An accessible route is provided on the north side of the plaza and ultimately connects with the sidewalk that runs along the north side of

The Galleria. This path continues east before diverging into two routes again. The route to the north provides an accessible path and directly to the south is a stepped route. There are two large landings, one in front of an existing restaurant and another to the lobby of the office tower. Several large planters from the route and the open space. Directly to the south is a narrower route, often referred to as the "Cattle Chute." The area is part of an easement that the City holds and serves as a non accessible pedestrian route. The name "Cattle Chute" was given due to the route's narrow path and the guardrails that frame a portion of the route. The City is currently planning improvements to this portion of the route. The proposed improvements call for a decorative guardrail with LED lighting installed under the grab bars, widening of the route, improved ADA accessibility, and decorative paving. Both the north and south routes terminate at the intersection of 108th Avenue NE.

The intersection of the Pedestrian Corridor and 108th Avenue NE is another all way pedestrian signaled crossing. When activated, the signal allows for all pedestrian movement, accompanied by an audible announcement. Pedestrians can walk three east-west routes. The transit center is an island between the two busways and sidewalks are located on both the north and south sides of the busways. Much of the sidewalk surface is made up of brick pavers, some of which have begun heaving on the north side of the transit center. Currently the City has plans to replace and repair the damaged pavers with a new paving design, as well as replace many of the street trees. The design is considered an interim solution as ideas are



Figure 4.14 - Public Open Space at Bellevue Arts Museum



Figure 4.15 - Surface Parking Lot Screening



Figure 4.16 - Compass Plaza

generated through the Grand Connection visioning process. Continuing east on NE 6th Street passed the Bravern and towards the Convention Center sidewalks continue to 112th Avenue NE.

There is no defining or existing bicycle infrastructure along this route, with many changes in grade and stairs at locations such as Compass Plaza, that may preclude a bicycle route.

Existing Urban Amenities

Several public spaces and enhanced amenities can be found on the Pedestrian Corridor. At the corner of NE 6th Street and Bellevue Way are public plazas on the north and south sides. The plaza to the south is part of the Bellevue Arts Museum and the plaza to the north is part of the Lincoln Square development. At the corner of NE 6th Street and Bellevue Way a restaurant occupies the corner of the Lincoln Square development with a raised outdoor dining area. A second outdoor dining area exists on the eastern edge of the Lincoln Square development. The aforementioned outdoor dining areas may be removed or modified as part of the pedestrian bridge and plaza improvement project. Both sides of NE 6th Street include special artist glass pavers that illuminate, imbedded in the sidewalk. Many of these have since begun to break and are due for replacement or redesign. A clock tower anchors the western edge of this block at Bellevue Way, and a glass art installation anchors the eastern edge at the intersection of 105th Avenue NE and NE 6th Street.

Moving eastward, benches line the sidewalk against the one way street, with a low brick wall with vegetation providing visual relief from the existing surface parking lot to the south. Once across 106th Avenue NE, Compass Plaza opens up to provide a large public space as part of The Galleria development. This is one of the largest open spaces in the City and is used for a variety of activities. An art installation anchors the northwest corner of the plaza. As pedestrians ascend the first level of stairs to the initial landing an artistic and interactive water feature is located at the center with a restaurant kiosk to the immediate south. Movable tables and chairs dot the plaza on this first landing. The space is highly active during warmer months and during the lunch hour.

Moving further east, the terminating point of the Pedestrian Corridor and 108th Avenue NE is anchored by open space on the north side. Two large landing areas exist but are underutilized and not activated. There are several planters on the edges of the landings that are occasionally used for seating and impromptu lunch gathering in the warmer months given the proximity of the food trucks. This space is separated from the “Cattle Chute” physically and visually due to the change in grade and the existing planters.

Between City Center I and City Center II is a private, but publicly accessible open space. The space consists of unique paving, planters, seating, and an open green area. There is also a meandering path on the southeast



Figure 4.17 - City Center II Open Space (During Construction)



Figure 4.18 - City Center II Open Space



Figure 4.19 - Street Trees at Meydenbauer Convention Center

Grand Connection - **Pedestrian Corridor**

corner with pervious paving and vegetation. The space is owned by the City Center II property owner. The space is used regularly as a path of travel between blocks, both east-west, and north-south. In warmer months it is frequently populated at lunch as a gathering spot, and the lawn area has hosted small concert performances. It also functions as an automobile drop off, and valet parking area in the evenings. On the north side of the Transit Center is an underutilized seat wall as well as art installations.

The Bravern development provides a second level publicly accessible space. Following the removal of the existing pavilion and public green space at City Hall, a hardscaped public space will serve as a replacement upon the completion of the East Link light rail Downtown station. Additionally the City Hall facility offers a number of publicly accessible features and art. The parking garage expansion, a result of a partial loss of the existing parking garage from the light rail construction, will provide a publicly accessible green roof that will offer views of Mt. Rainer. Additionally there is an outdoor space, accessible internally from the City Hall concourse with a protected view corridor or Mt. Rainier. Several art and water features can also be found on the various entries to the City Hall concourse.

Landscaping, Vegetation, and Other Natural Elements

Vegetation is prominent on much of this path. Street trees exist on the north side of NE 6th Street at the Lincoln Square and Lincoln Square Expansion properties. Street trees will be installed on the south side upon

completion of the high rise that is currently under construction. Street trees continue along the south side of NE 6th to 106th Avenue NE. The low brick wall that provides visual relief of the surface parking lot to the south includes vegetated screening as well.

Trees and shrubbery exist from 106th Avenue NE to 108th Avenue NE. On the north side of The Galleria are a line of street trees and shrubbery that separate the accessible path from the non-accessible path. Shrubby also lines the northern perimeter between the Pedestrian Corridor and the Doxa Church property. On the east side of this block vegetation is absent from the south side of the corridor leading to 108th Avenue NE. The north side, which is grade separated, offers several planters of shrubbery and trees in the open space. Across 108th Avenue NE is the Transit Center where street trees line both sides of the busyways. On the north side of the Transit Center, both the west and east ends, double rows of trees exist creating a partial buffer between the pedestrian route and the neighboring developments. On the south side, mid block, are planters with shrubs and artwork that provide a gateway to the open space that exists between City Center I and II. The open space has several clusters and rows of trees dispersed throughout the space with an open green space at the center. Additionally there are raised planters on the south side of the transit center as the route approaches 110th Avenue NE.

Some street trees exist on the north and south sides of NE 6th Street at the Convention Center. The street trees are more irregularly spaced along



Figure 4.20 - Metro Site (Currently Used for Construction Staging)



Figure 4.21 - Proposed Redesign of City Hall Plaza



Figure 4.22 - Future East Link Light Rail Station

this route, providing a sense of less vegetation than other streets along the route. The south side of NE 6th Street will be redesigned as part of the East Link light rail station.

Impacts of East Link Light Rail

The Downtown East Link light rail station will bring several changes to the area immediately around the Convention Center. The station will be located north of City Hall and will occupy the portion of the City Hall superblock known as the “Metro Site.” This property is a City held property and the portion that will be dedicated for the station and track from 110th Avenue NE to 112th Avenue NE was acquired by fee by Sound Transit. Additionally, Sound Transit holds a construction easement on the site through as late as 2023. The City will retain sidewalk easement rights for the sidewalks abutting NE 6th Street just north of the future light rail station. The station will be a cut a cover station and will include a new City Hall plaza and streetscape improvements.

The remaining use of the “Metro Site” parcel is yet to be determined. The proximity to the Convention Center and the light rail station could make it highly desirable for transit oriented development. As owners of the parcel, as well as the likely take off point for the portion of the Grand Connection that will span I-405, there will be flexibility in how the parcel could be used and developed. The intersection of 110th Avenue NE and NE 6th Street will be highly active given the location of the Transit Center, light rail station,

Bravern development, City Hall, City Center II, and the Convention Center.

A package of the 100% design and engineering drawings for the station have been included with this document.

Grand Connection - **Pedestrian Corridor**



Figure 4.23 - Clock Tower at Pedestrian Corridor Entrance



Figure 4.24 - Street Trees at Lincoln Square



Figure 4.25 - Art Installation at Lincoln Square



Figure 4.26 - Night View of Proposed Pedestrian Bridge - Facing West



Figure 4.27 - Sidewalk Art Panels



Figure 4.28 - Typical Bench on Pedestrian Corridor



Figure 4.29 - Pedestrian Corridor East of Lincoln Square



Figure 4.30 - California Pizza Kitchen at NE 6th Street and 106th Avenue NE



Figure 4.31 - Paccar Surface Parking Lot



Figure 4.32 - Intersection of NE 6th Street and 106th Avenue NE



Figure 4.33 - Art at Compass Plaza



Figure 4.34 - Food Trucks

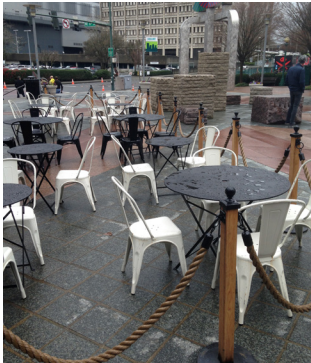


Figure 4.35 - Compass Plaza Seating



Figure 4.36 - Compass Plaza



Figure 4.37 - Accessible and Non Accessible Routes Ascending Compass Plaza



Figure 4.38 - Key Bank Building



Figure 4.39 - Rear Stairs to Second Level of The Galleria



Figure 4.40 - Garden Hill Climb

Grand Connection - **Pedestrian Corridor**



Figure 4.41 - Typical Light and Wayfinding



Figure 4.42 - Cattle Chute Entry From 108th Avenue NE



Figure 4.43 - Restaurants on 108th Avenue NE



Figure 4.44 - Bellevue Corporate Center Entrance and Seat Wall



Figure 4.45 - Art at Bellevue Transit Center



Figure 4.46 - Protective Barricades at Bellevue Transit Center



Figure 4.47 - Art at Bellevue Transit Center



Figure 4.48 - Transit Center Customer Service Building



Figure 4.49 - Bellevue Transit Center



Figure 4.50 - South Busway and Entrance to City Center Public Space



Figure 4.51 - Streetscape at NE 6th Street North of City Hall



Figure 4.52- Streetscape at NE 6th Street and Bravern Development



Figure 4.53 - Meydenbauer Bay Convention Center Stairs



Figure 4.54 - Streetscape at Meydenbauer Convention Center



Figure 4.55 - NE 6th Street Facing West from 112th Avenue NE



Figure 4.56 - Intersection of NE 6th Street and 112th Avenue NE



Figure 4.57 - Properties East of City Hall From City Hall Plaza



Figure 4.58 - Property South of Meydenbauer Convention Center

Grand Connection - **Pedestrian Corridor**

Major Points of Interest



Figure 4.59 - Key Points of Interest

- | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 Downtown Park | 4 Pedestrian Corridor | 7 Key Plaza | 10 City Center Plaza | 13 The Bravern |
| 2 Bellevue Square | 5 Food Trucks | 8 'Cattle Chute' | 11 City Hall | 14 Meydenbauer Convention Center |
| 3 Bellevue Arts Museum | 6 Compass Plaza | 9 Transit Center | 12 City Hall Plaza | |

Property Ownership

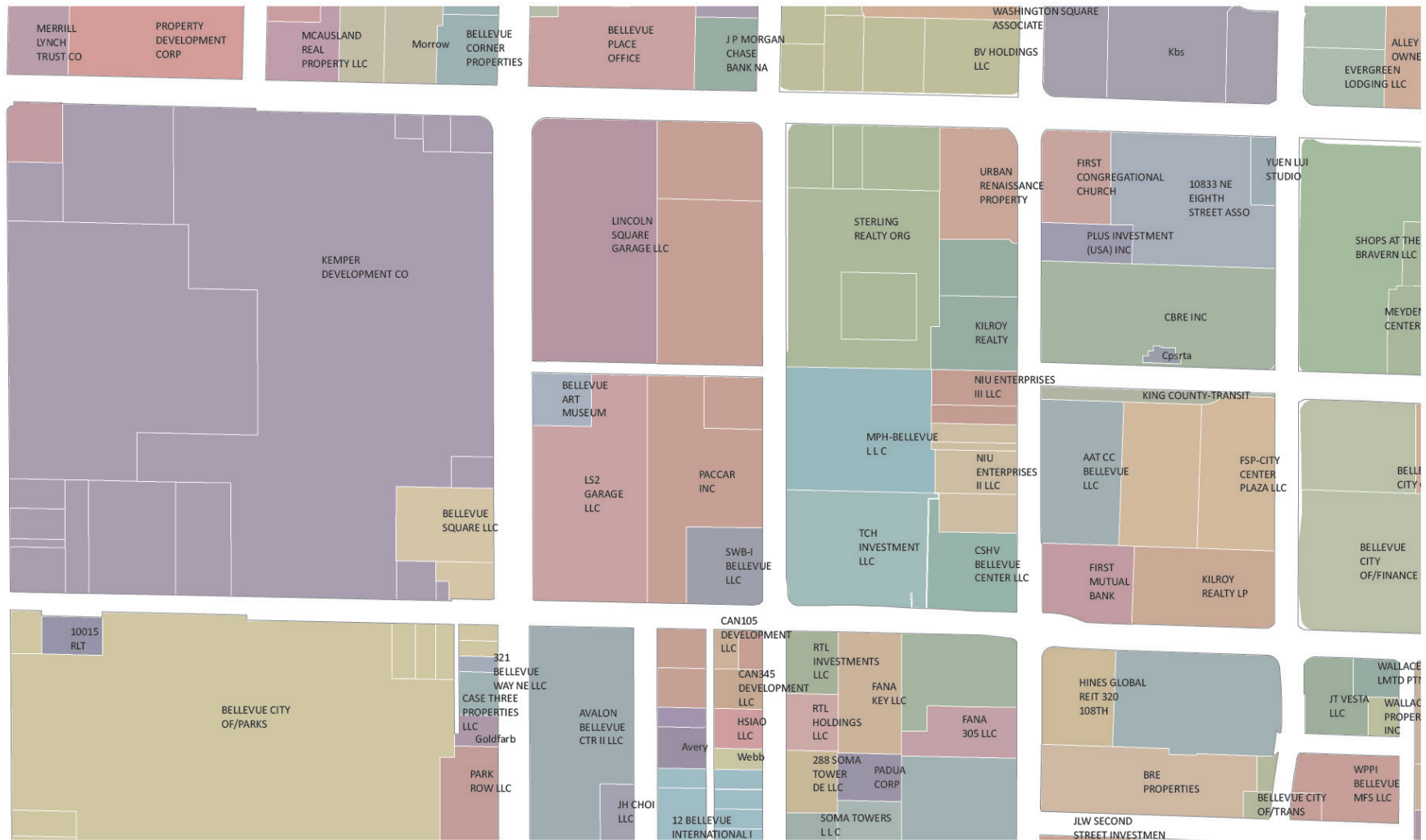


Figure 4.60 - Property Ownership

Grand Connection - Pedestrian Corridor

Sidewalk Designations and Public Spaces



Figure 4.61 - Sidewalk Designations and Public Spaces

Note - The public space located as part of the Lincoln Square Expansion project at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way NE is under construction.

Note - Sidewalk designated widths are planned changes that are a part of the Downtown Livability Initiative.

Planned & Under Construction Public & Private Projects



Figure 4.62- Planned and Under Construction Projects

Private Projects

- 1 Lincoln Square Development - Estimated Completion 2017
- 2 Centre 425 Office Development
- 3 Lincoln Square Plaza and Pedestrian Bridge

Private Projects

- 1 Tabletopping of NE 6th Street and 106th Avenue NE Intersection
- 2 Cattle Chute Improvements
- 3 Transit Center Sidewalk and Street Tree Improvements
- 4 East Link Transit Station and City Hall Plaza

Grand Connection - Pedestrian Corridor

Photo Legend

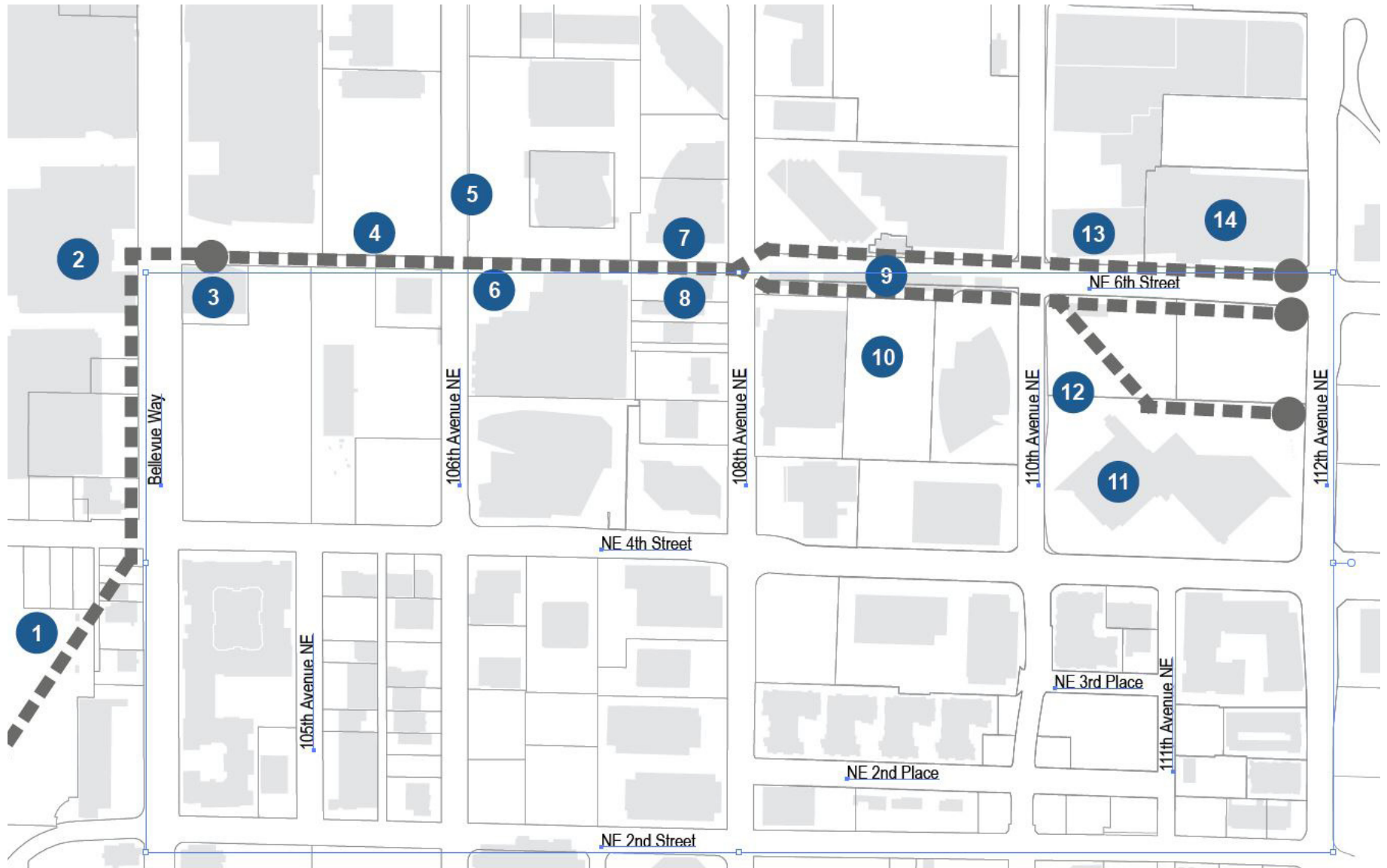


Figure 4.63- Photo Legend

Topography

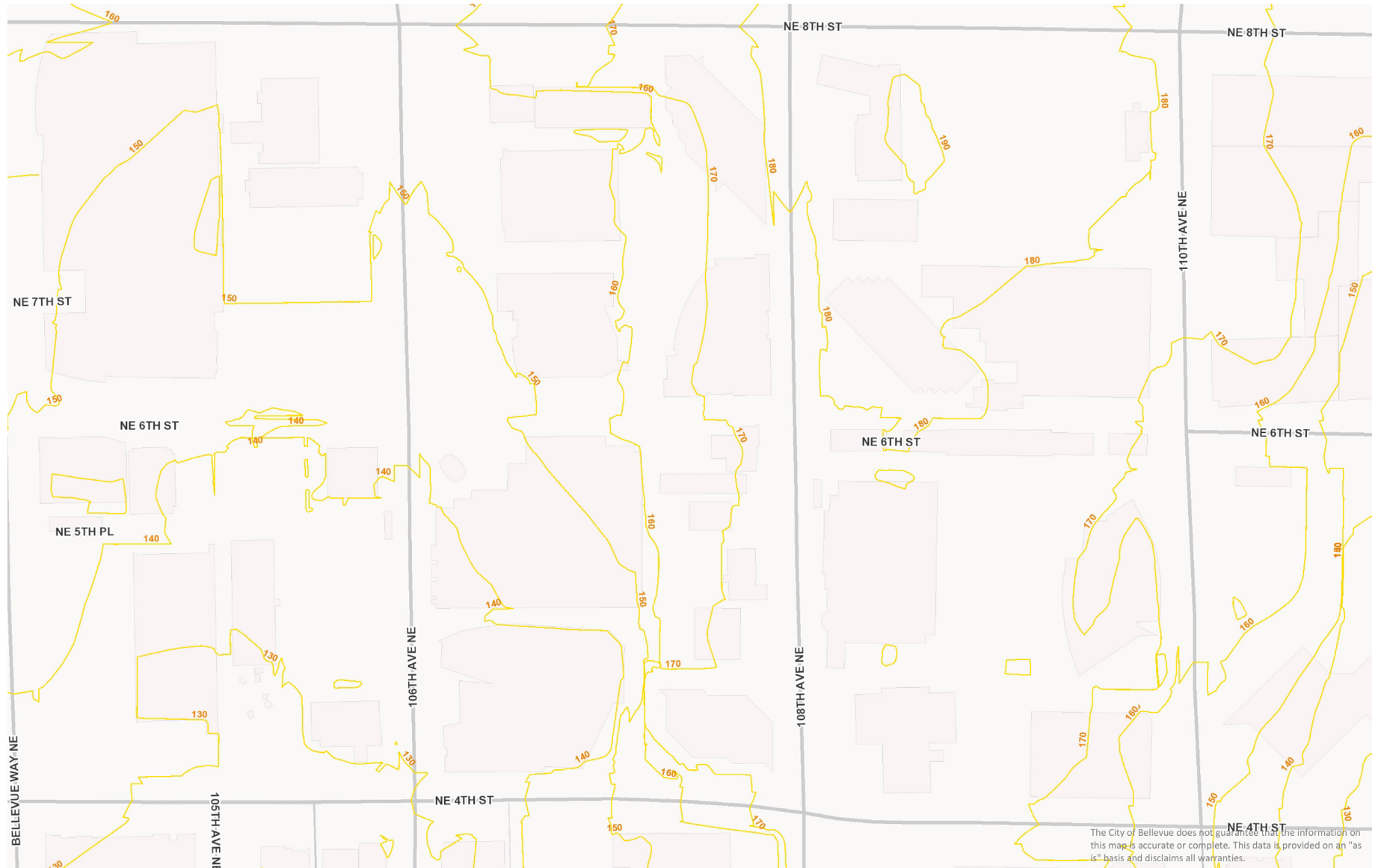


Figure 4.64- Topography

Grand Connection - **Pedestrian Corridor**

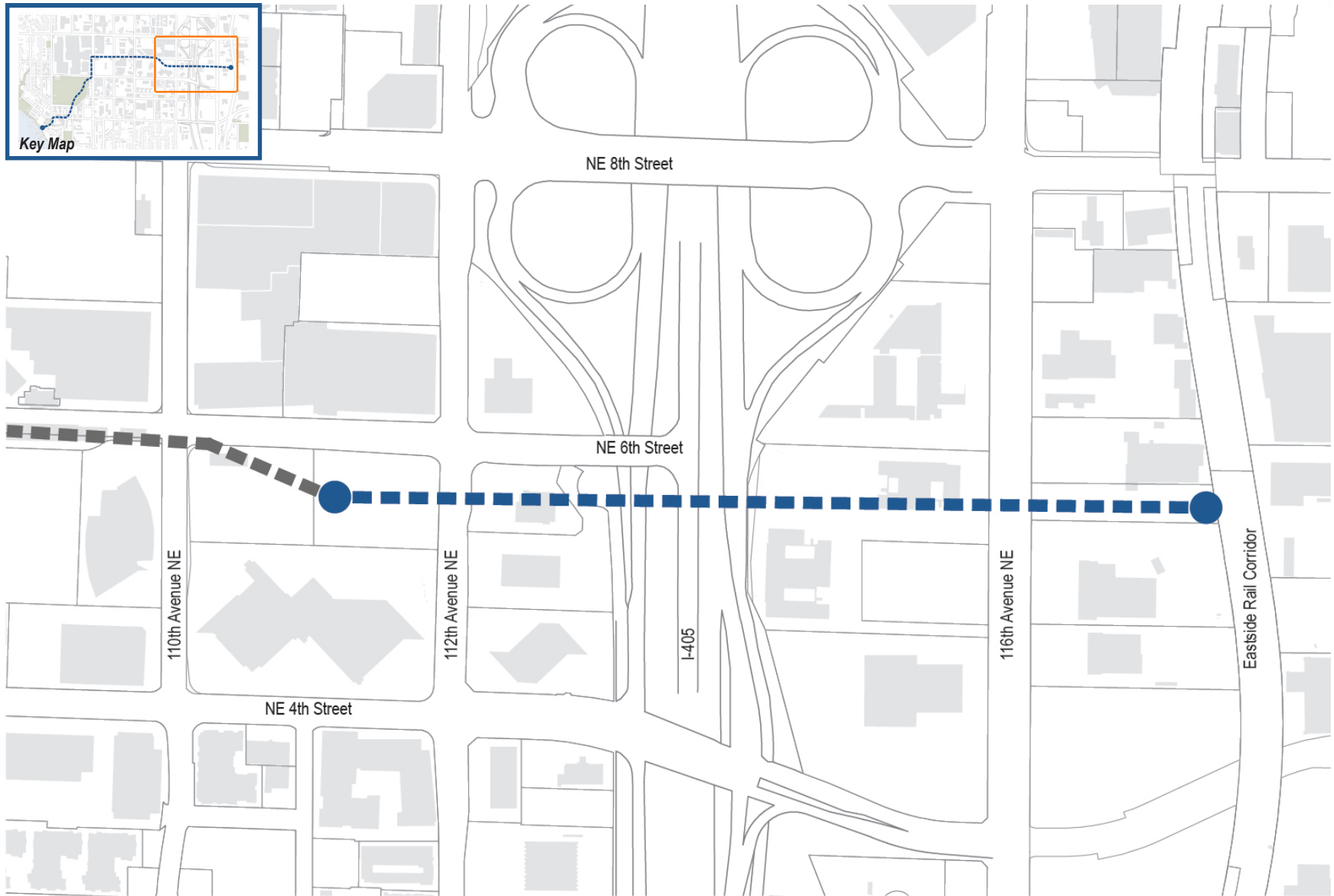


Figure 5.1 - Conceptual Route Across I-405

Grand Connection - Civic Center District to Eastside Rail Corridor

Civic Center District, Wilburton, and the Eastside Rail Corridor

Route

There is currently no infrastructure in place for this segment of the route. The anticipated route would spur southeast from NE 6th Street and travel east to the Eastside Rail Corridor. Simultaneously there may be several opportunities for multiple locations to interface with the street and new development prior to connecting with the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Adjacent Development

Between 112th Avenue NE and 114th Avenue NE and NE 6th Street and NE 4th Street are three parcels that will be integral to bringing the Grand Connection across I-405 and to the Eastside Rail Corridor. The three parcels consist of a restaurant on the northernmost parcel and two office buildings directly south. The northernmost property is owned by one entity and the two southern parcels are owned by separate. All three properties could undergo redevelopment pending changes in the Downtown Livability Initiative, and how the Grand Connection interfaces. Working with these property owners will be essential to ensuring that the project is viable and moves forward.

Once across I-405 the first property in the Wilburton Commercial area is the Lincoln Center office development. This property is held by the City and the northernmost building is currently used as the Impact Hub, a co-working space intended to assist in the formation of small businesses and start ups. It is anticipated that in December of 2016 this building will be demolished in preparation of construction of the light rail line. The south building will remain intact and may serve as construction offices for the light rail project. Sound Transit will hold a construction easement on the property until 2023. Following construction the remainder of the parcel will return to City ownership. This will provide flexibility and opportunity for the Grand Connection to connect with the Wilburton Commercial Area. A smaller parcel exists within the Lincoln Center office area and serves as a parking lot for a nearby auto dealership.

To the north of the Lincoln Center property is the Coast Hotel. This hotel has recently come under new ownership, and the current owner has a high level of interest in the Grand Connection and rebranding and designing the hotel to attract multi-modal guests with interests in technology. To the south of the Lincoln Center property is the Auto Nation Ford dealership, currently being rebuilt following a fire that destroyed the original building.

Across 116th Avenue NE is the Cadillac auto retailer. Many of the parcels along 116th Avenue NE are auto related uses, dating back many years and having earned the avenue the name “Auto Row.” Both to the north and south of the Cadillac dealership are other retail auto sales. As part



Figure 5.2 - Property at the Corner of NE 6th Street and 112th Avenue NE (North Side of NE 6th Street)



Figure 5.3 - Properties at the Corner of NE 6th Street and 112th Avenue NE (South Side of NE 6th Street)



Figure 5.4 - Lincoln Center Site

of the Wilburton-Grand Connection study, the City, with assistance from an external consultant and the Urban Land Institute will be evaluating the area for new land use and urban design alternatives to create a more urban and walkable community that will take advantage of improvements such as the Eastside Rail Corridor, the Grand Connection, and the nearby Wilburton light rail station. As such, these parcels should be considered for repositioning in the future. Directly east and abutting the Cadillac dealership is the Eastside Rail Corridor, the anticipated terminating point of the Grand Connection.

Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure

Sidewalks exist on the north-south route of 116th Avenue NE and present an opportunity for the Grand Connection to interface with future development opportunities prior to reaching the Eastside Rail Corridor. This street is auto-biased and there are currently no buffers that exist between the high-capacity roadway and the sidewalk. New street design guidelines were completed in 2015 that would propose new bike lanes and improved sidewalks and vegetation to create a more amenable pedestrian environment. Upon redevelopment of any property these design guidelines would become active. Opportunities should be pursued that allow the Grand Connection to interface with 116th Avenue NE as it progresses towards the Eastside Rail Corridor. Upon improvements, the proposed bike lanes would connect with those north of NE 8th and NE 12th Streets, enhancing the network of bicycle infrastructure for this area.



Figure 5.5 - Cadillac Dealership

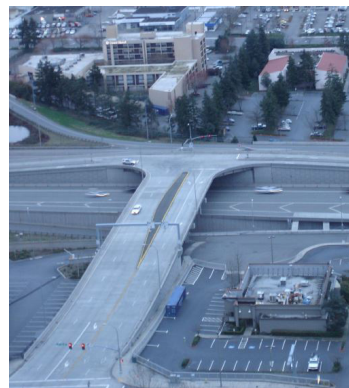


Figure 5.6 - Existing NE 6th Street



Figure 5.7 - 116th Avenue NE

There is a current plan to extend NE 6th Street into the Wilburton Commercial Area. Currently NE 6th Street terminates above the midpoint of I-405 and provides access to the HOV lanes. The proposed plan would extend NE 6th all the way to 120th Avenue NE and would be parallel to the East Link light rail aerial guideway. There may be opportunities to join any proposed improvements to this structure. Opportunities for bicyclist and pedestrian access were part of the proposal but diminish opportunities for creating a place as much as a connection. The design report for the NE 6th Street extension is included with this document.

It is possible for pedestrians to cross from Downtown to the Wilburton Commercial Area via the NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street overpasses. However, these overpasses are heavily automobile-biased, providing only sidewalks and no buffer between pedestrians and automobiles. This creates an uncomfortable pedestrian environment in regards to sound, aesthetics, and perceived safety. As such, the crossing from the Grand Connection is particularly important to create a comfortable and enjoyable dedicated non-motorized route.

Existing Urban Amenities

No urban amenities currently exist in this area. As part of the Wilburton Land Use and Urban Design analysis, the City and consultant will consider what amenities could best complement elements of the Grand Connection.

Grand Connection - Civic Center District to Eastside Rail Corridor

Landscaping, Vegetation, and Other Natural Elements

Street trees do exist on 116th Avenue NE but are placed at the back of sidewalk providing a buffer between the sidewalk and the surface parking lots. No vegetated buffer exists between the sidewalk and the street. Vegetation also exists on the perimeter of the Eastside Rail Corridor. Otherwise the area is largely made of impervious surface. As part of the Land Use and Urban Design analysis consideration will be given on how to improve that quality of the area upon redevelopment opportunities. The master plan for the Eastside Rail Corridor and the improvements planned for 116th Avenue NE are included with this document.

Interstate 405

Interstate 405 divides Downtown Bellevue from the Wilburton Commercial Area. The area between NE 8th Street and NE 4th Street is particularly complex. There are four travel lanes each for southbound and north bound traffic. Separating these lanes are a total of two HOV lanes accessed from the NE 6th Street overpass. These two lanes ultimately merge with I-405 into HOV lanes on the interstate.

A series of off-ramps exist on both the north and southbound sides of travel. The southbound ramp begins as one lane as it ascends and connects to NE 4th Street. Prior to reaching NE 4th Street it expands to three lanes. There is also a buried on-ramp between the off ramp and 114th Avenue NE.



Figure 5.8 - Panorama View of Downtown, Wilburton, and the Eastside Rail Corridor

The northbound side of I-405 includes an onramp from NE 4th Street which begins with three lanes; general purpose, HOV, and a transit lane. This ultimately narrows to one lane as it approaches the interstate. Parallel and to the on-ramp, to the east, is an offramp that provides access to NE 8th Street. There are two lanes, one of which provides access to eastbound NE 8th Street and the other providing access to westbound NE 8th Street, and also providing access to I-405 northbound.

Impacts of East Link Light Rail

The construction of the East Link light rail will significantly alter many of the properties in this area. The City held Lincoln Center site will be partially acquired by Sound Transit to construct the aerial guideway on the northern most part of the property. This will include the demolition of the Impact Hub, expected in December of 2016. Sound Transit will also hold a construction easement on the entire property until 2023. Upon completion of construction the remainder of the parcel will return to City possession and affords an opportunity for the City to have a greater influence on the route of the Grand Connection.

Across 116th Avenue NE Sound Transit will hold a guideway easement for the light rail line across the Cadillac Dealership site. This will leave an atypical shaped piece of the parcel to the south that could present an opportunity to align the Grand Connection with as it interfaces with the Eastside Rail Corridor.



Figure 5.9 - Eastside Rail Corridor at Approximate Grand Connection Interface Location

Eastside Rail Corridor

The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) is a former rail line being planned as a regional multi-use trail intended for pedestrians and bicyclists with opportunities for incorporating bus rapid transit (BRT) or light rail. The trail begins in Woodinville, WA and continues for 22 miles to Renton, WA. A portion of the Bellevue segment bisects the Wilburton Commercial Area and will serve as an important urban amenity for non-motorized transportation and potentially mass transit. It is anticipated that 3,000 to 4,000 people daily will use this segment of the trail. The Grand Connection creates an opportunity to connect the north-south ERC route with the east-west Grand Connection to create a network of non-motorized urban routes.

Connecting to the ERC would enhance the opportunities of the Grand Connection and improve mobility. Opportunities should be pursued to interface these two elements, working with the surrounding land use challenges and topographic changes that will exist. The ERC has strong political and community support, so interfacing with the route as well as engaging stakeholders will be a crucial issue to the Grand Connection. A copy of the Wilburton Segment from the recently released Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Trail: Draft Master Plan and Environmental Impact Statement has been included with this document.

Grand Connection - **Civic Center District to Eastside Rail Corridor**



Figure 5.10 - View of I-405 and NE 6th Street from NE 8th Street Overpass



Figure 5.11 - Future Location of Wilburton Light Rail Station



Figure 5.12 - Future Eastside Rail Corridor



Figure 5.13 - View of Downtown from Potential Eastside Rail Corridor and Grand Connection Interface



Figure 5.14 - Eastside Rail Corridor from NE 4th Street and 116th Avenue NE



Figure 5.15 - HOV Lanes from NE 6th Street to I-405 - View from NE 4th Street Overpass



Figure 5.16 - I-405 from NE 4th Street

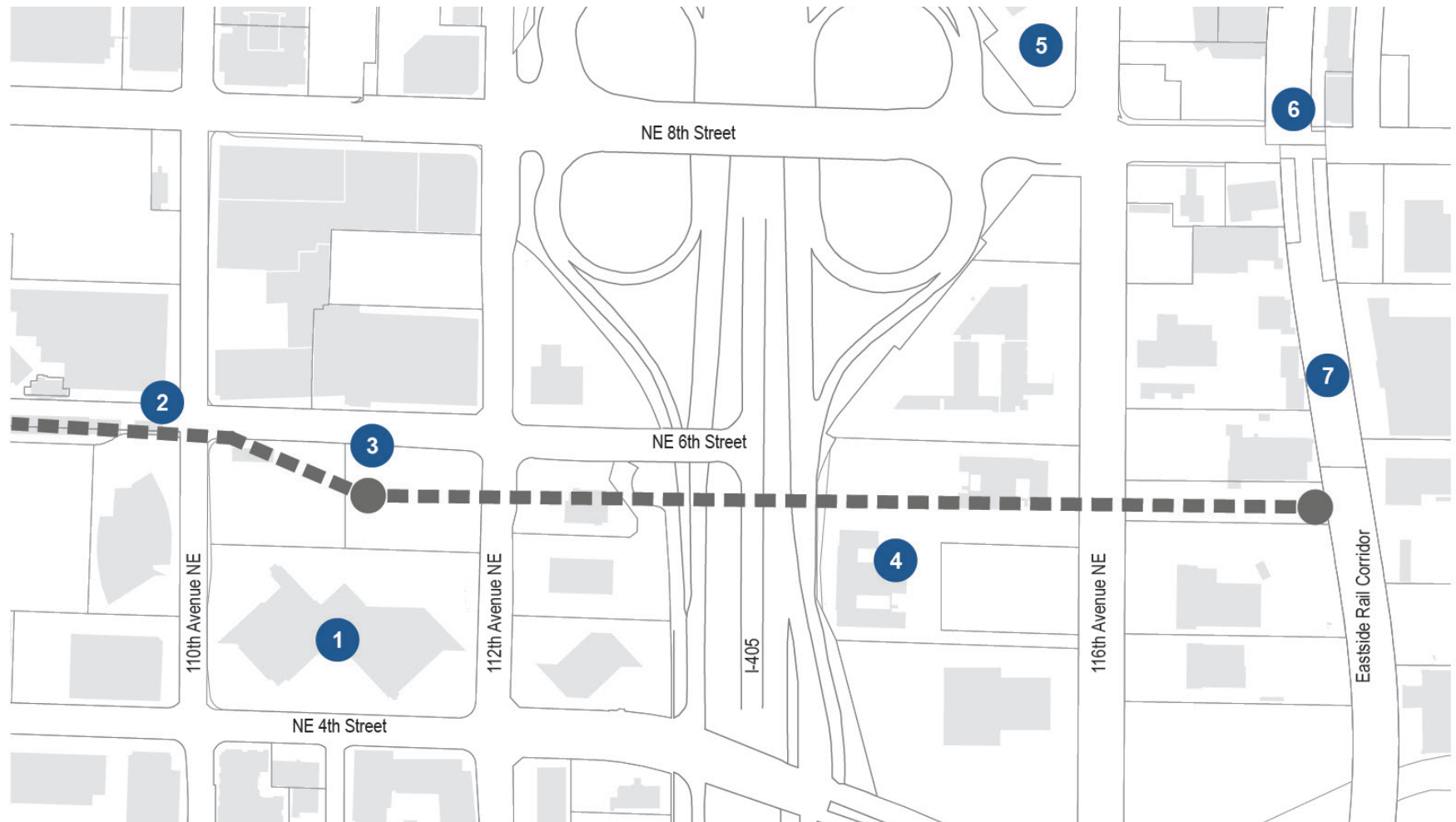


Figure 5.17 - Wilburton and Lincoln Center from NE 4th Street



Figure 5.18 - Properties on 112th Avenue NE - View from NE 4th Street

Major Points of Interest



- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 City Hall | 4 Lincoln Center Site | 7 Eastside Rail Corridor |
| 2 Transit Center | 5 Group Health Hospital | |
| 3 Future Downtown Light Rail Station | 6 Future Wilburton Light Rail Station | |

Figure 5.19 - Key Points of Interest

Grand Connection - **Civic Center District to Eastside Rail Corridor**

Property Ownership

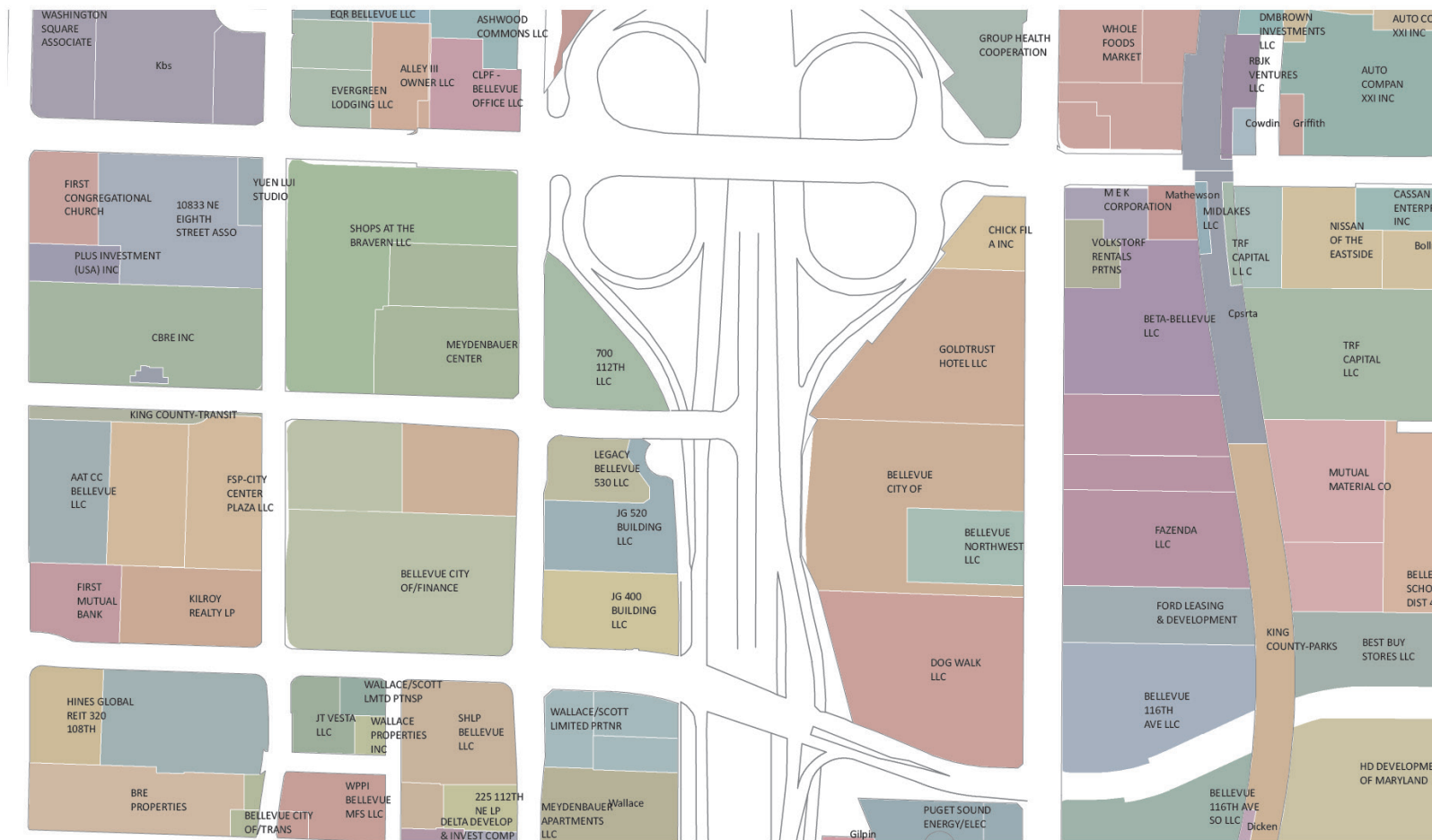


Figure 5.20 - Property Ownership

Planned & Under Construction Public and Private Projects



Figure 5.21 - Planned and Under Construction Public & Private Projects

Grand Connection - **Civic Center District to Eastside Rail Corridor**

Photo Legend

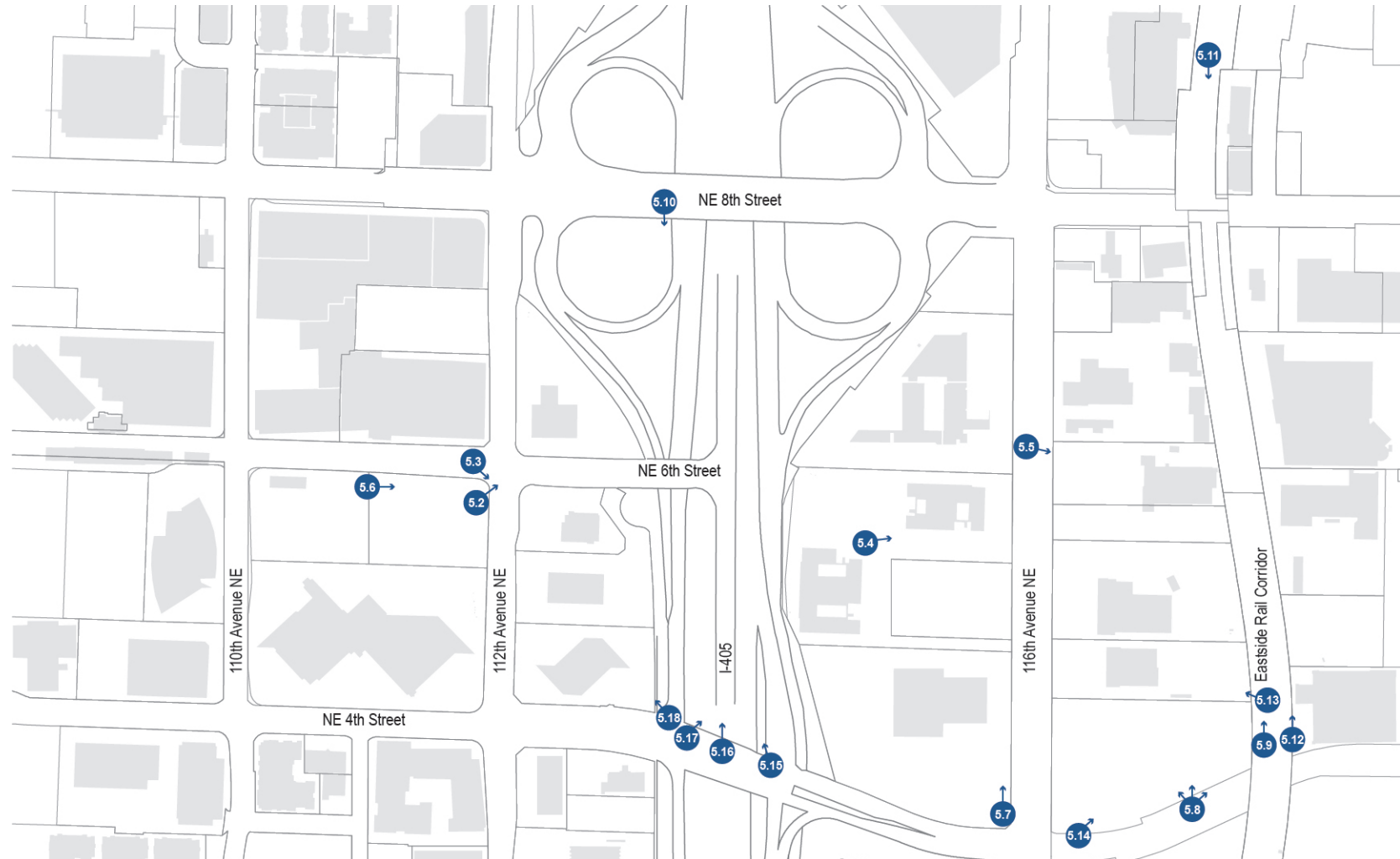


Figure 5.22 - Photo Legend

Topography

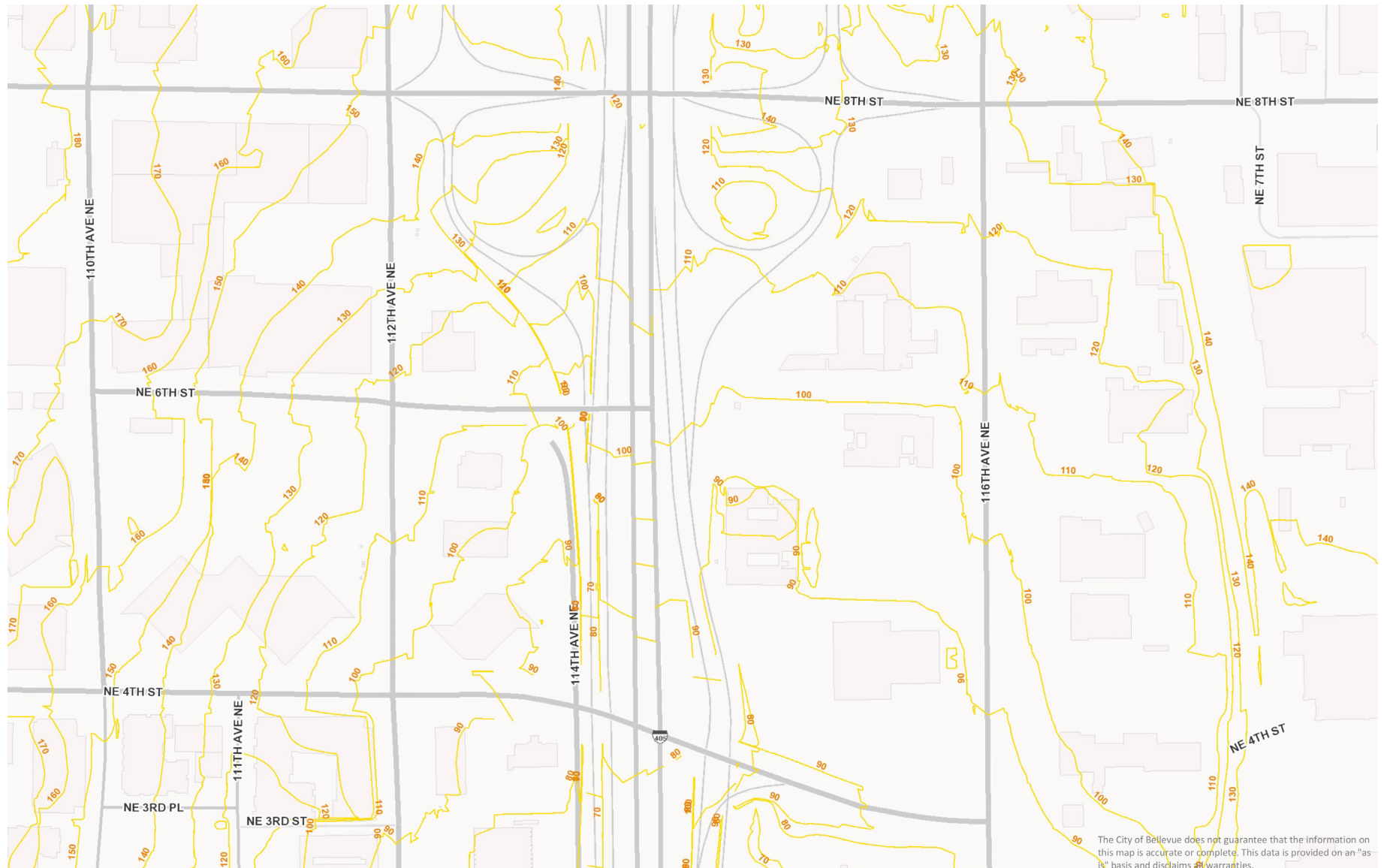


Figure 5.23 - Topography

Grand Connection - Civic Center District to Eastside Rail Corridor

Interstate 405



Figure 5.24 - Interstate 405

Grand Connection - **Attached Documents and Reports**

A - Pedestrian Corridor Audit

B - Vision for Downtown-OLB District (properties along 112th Avenue NE and I-405)C-

C - Downtown Park Master Plan

D - Downtown Park - Complete the Circle Construction Documents

E - Downtown Transit Center Interim Paving Improvements

F - Cattle Chute Improvements

G - Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan

H - NE 6th Street Extension Concept

I - Pedestrian Corridor and Major Public Open Space Design Guidelines

J - East Link Light Rail 100% Construction Documents



Department of Planning and Community Development