

The below includes the “Goals and Policies” section of the Recommended Northeast Bellevue Neighborhood Area Plan. It includes a strikedraft with the proposed amendments from the November 22 City Council Study Session on the topic.

Northeast Bellevue’s vision is built out by themes, each with opportunities and challenges around them. These inform both aspirational goals and associated policies and those focused on preserving the area’s strengths.

SENSE OF PLACE

Northeast Bellevue’s varied natural environment, key institutions, and older housing stock all create unique contexts for each sub-neighborhood. The neighborhood area’s predominance of single-family homes contrasts the surrounding mixed-use commercial and multifamily development in Overlake, Crossroads, and BelRed. Most homes in Northeast Bellevue were constructed during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, with similar architectural styles that blend together to create a cohesive neighborhood character.

Having a unique sense of place and identity builds unity and pride among residents, but they also hope to welcome a diversity of households to the area. With a large scale of similar land uses, it can be a challenge for Northeast Bellevue to provide diverse opportunities that attract residents with varied backgrounds.

Sense of Place Goals and Policies

To enhance a sense of place within each sub-neighborhood in Northeast Bellevue.

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| POLICY S-NE-1 | Preserve Northeast Bellevue’s existing neighborhood identity by supporting efforts to maintain and renovate existing mid-century homes and later styles, and to preserve trees. |
| POLICY S-NE-2 | Minimize impacts from any new housing typology to the environment and to the existing residential character of the street experience. |
| POLICY S-NE-3 | Support sub-neighborhood area events that seek to celebrate and enhance each area’s unique identity. |
| POLICY S-NE-4 | Encourage a graceful transition between the neighborhood scale of Northeast Bellevue and the scale of higher intensity uses in surrounding neighborhoods. |
| POLICY S-NE-5 | Encourage design features such as landscape buffers along public right of way where appropriate to separate Northeast Bellevue’s single-family areas from adjacent higher intensity uses. |
| POLICY S-NE-6 | Maintain a treelined buffer along Bel-Red Road to buffer adjacent homes from adverse impacts. |
| POLICY S-NE-7 | Multifamily development is not allowed within Northeast Bellevue Districts 1 and 2. Existing multifamily uses within Districts 1 and 2 can be converted to senior citizen housing, senior congregate care housing, assisted living and nursing homes. |
| POLICY S-NE-8 | Retail uses are not allowed in Northeast Bellevue District 1. |

POLICY S-NE-9 Office use is appropriate for Northeast Bellevue District 2.

To maintain and enhance the livability of Northeast Bellevue.

- POLICY S-NE-10 Encourage the undergrounding of utility distribution lines where feasible, particularly when new development occurs.
- POLICY S-NE-11 Collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions to promote a welcoming experience when crossing jurisdictional boundaries and work with neighboring jurisdictions to ensure that development impacts are mitigated.
- POLICY S-NE-12 Encourage clustering of essential services such as schools, libraries, community and recreation centers to make access to public services and amenities more convenient and accessible by all travel modes.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Since the turn of the millennium and as Northeast Bellevue’s population has diversified, community members have yearned for closer connections with their neighbors. Some of the traditional avenues of getting to know one’s neighbors through school and/or faith-based organizations have not been as effective given the neighborhoods’ greater diversity in terms of age and cultural background. Traditionally, Northeast Bellevue has had few places for gathering informally with one’s neighbors within the neighborhood. New ways and places for meeting and connecting with one’s neighbors are needed.

Northeast Bellevue residents value living in a safe and inclusive community. They value having safety in their homes, on their streets, and in places where people shop, work, and gather. Northeast Bellevue residents also value having a clean and healthy environment. The policies below seek to expand opportunities for strengthening community connections and safety in Northeast Bellevue.

Sense of Community Goals and Policies

To strengthen and sustain a strong sense of community within Northeast Bellevue where all residents feel they belong.

- POLICY S-NE-13 Support the continuation of existing gathering places in Northeast Bellevue such as playgrounds, picnic areas, and sports fields and explore opportunities to restore, preserve, and enhance these locations.
- POLICY S-NE-14 Create new gathering places for community members to meet, mingle, and get to know one another.
- POLICY S-NE-15 Connect communities to their past by preserving valued sites that reflect Northeast Bellevue’s history.
- POLICY S-NE-16 Build neighborhood connections by celebrating the diverse cultural backgrounds of Northeast Bellevue’s residents and supporting community events and avenues of communication.
- POLICY S-NE-17 Build community resilience and cohesion by fostering supportive programs such as Day of Caring, support for older adults and emergency preparedness.
- POLICY S-NE-18 Create opportunities for residents to learn about city government and ways to engage in policy and investment decisions.

POLICY S-NE-19 Support community organizations that allow residents to connect with one another and with the City.

NEW POLICY Create a safe community, including safe places to gather, walk, and play.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The variety in size and age of homes in Northeast Bellevue provides a range of price points for living in the neighborhood area. However, the price range is constrained due to homes being mostly owner occupied single-family houses. High housing costs can make living in Northeast Bellevue a challenge for both young and older householders.

By allowing for a greater mix of housing types, Northeast Bellevue can expand opportunities for a greater diversity of households to call Northeast Bellevue home, enabling them to gain similar access to opportunities.

Housing Affordability Goals and Policies

To expand opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes to call Northeast Bellevue home throughout their lifetime.

POLICY S-NE-20 Explore introducing a mix of new housing typologies such as ~~detached accessory dwelling units~~, duplexes and triplexes to allow options for a range of households.

Alternative Amendment: Replace above policy with “Encourage a mix of housing typologies to allow for a range of affordability options with a variety of sizes of housing units, ease of movement for the physically disabled, and visual styles.”

~~POLICY S-NE-20~~POLICY S-NE-21 Ensure new housing typologies in single-family areas maintain adequate separation from adjacent properties to reduce potential impacts to neighbors.

~~POLICY S-NE-21~~POLICY S-NE-22 Ensure adequate infrastructure exists for new housing typologies (e.g. transportation, utilities and parks), and work with Bellevue School District to address additional educational facility needs.

~~POLICY S-NE-22~~POLICY S-NE-23 Build awareness of programs that support and enable older adults to stay in their home as they age.

NEW GOAL: To support seniors staying in the neighborhood as they age.

NEW POLICY: Support the creation of a physical, economic, and social variety of living space types for seniors to remain in the neighborhood.

NEW POLICY: Encourage co-habitation and multi-generational living opportunities for seniors.

NEW POLICY: Encourage housing for the elderly in areas designated for multifamily development.

MOBILITY AND ACCESS

Northeast Bellevue residents desire safe, convenient, and reliable access between their homes and where they work, learn, shop, and play. Northeast Bellevue is situated near major employment and commercial centers and near SR 520, yet getting to these locations in a private vehicle can be time consuming during certain times of day due to congestion along its four primary arterials. With several trails linking neighborhoods together, facilities for walking and bicycling provide alternatives to driving for some residents. However, many people live too far away to walk, and bicycling can often be challenging due to steep slopes. Also, the size of major arterials and the speed people drive can impede pedestrian access to surrounding areas and create safety hazards.

Opportunities to improve safe, convenient and reliable access for Northeast Bellevue residents include upgrading and completing pedestrian and bicycle connections such as mid-block crossings and multi-purpose paths connecting to other major facilities in Bellevue and neighboring jurisdictions, as well as supporting innovative approaches to providing first and last-mile public transportation services. Pedestrian improvements are the priority for Northeast Bellevue residents followed by improvements for public transportation, biking and driving. Monitoring and evaluating needs will be key to identifying when to adjust strategies. Regardless of what mode a transportation improvement project serves, Northeast Bellevue residents will be engaged to provide feedback and consultation.

Mobility and Access Goals and Policies

To have zero traffic deaths and serious injuries on Northeast Bellevue streets.

- ~~POLICY S-NE-23~~POLICY S-NE-24 Design and prioritize street improvements to encourage safe travel behaviors, especially where arterials intersect one another.
- ~~POLICY S-NE-24~~POLICY S-NE-25 Design or retrofit residential streets to discourage cut-through traffic, while providing for connectivity.
- ~~POLICY S-NE-25~~POLICY S-NE-26 Employ traffic calming measures to reduce vehicular travel speeds along residential streets and discourage cut-through traffic.
- ~~POLICY S-NE-26~~POLICY S-NE-27 Maintain and improve the existing transportation system to ensure safety and connectivity for users of all modes.
- ~~POLICY S-NE-27~~POLICY S-NE-28 Continue to monitor the safety performance of streets and refine and adjust strategies to improve the safety for vulnerable users of the streets.

To reduce congestion by expanding transportation choices making it safe, comfortable, and convenient to walk, bike, roll and/or take public transportation.

- ~~POLICY S-NE-28~~POLICY S-NE-29 Fill gaps in the non-motorized system especially along arterials by completing sidewalks, trails, and paths, as identified in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.
- ~~POLICY S-NE-29~~POLICY S-NE-30 Provide separation between motorized vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists, as feasible, reasonable, and appropriate to the neighborhood context to improve safety.
- ~~POLICY S-NE-30~~POLICY S-NE-31 Explore opportunities to create/extend bicycle routes to local and regional major bicycle facilities.

~~POLICY S-NE-31~~POLICY S-NE-32 Support increased public transportation service including first and last-mile on-demand transit services and connections to and from light rail stations, major transit centers and other key destinations.

~~POLICY S-NE-32~~POLICY S-NE-33 Discourage blocking sidewalks with moveable obstructions that represent a barrier for pedestrians and people with disabilities.

~~POLICY S-NE-33~~POLICY S-NE-34 Involve affected neighborhoods in the planning and design of transportation system improvements.

~~POLICY S-NE-34~~POLICY S-NE-35 Monitor traffic volumes on residential streets and establish appropriate traffic control measures with residents' input.

~~POLICY S-NE-35~~POLICY S-NE-36 Minimize new vehicular access points along major arterials to facilitate efficient traffic movement.

To expand convenient access to employment, goods and services.

~~POLICY S-NE-36~~POLICY S-NE-37 Prioritize improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities that connect residential areas with adjacent commercial shopping and job centers.

~~POLICY S-NE-37~~POLICY S-NE-38 Increase opportunities for pedestrians to safely cross arterials to enhance connections between neighborhoods.

~~POLICY S-NE-38~~POLICY S-NE-39 Coordinate with Bellevue School District to minimize spillover parking impacts on adjacent residential areas.

~~POLICY S-NE-39~~POLICY S-NE-40 Review private sector development projects in Redmond and recommend mitigation for transportation system impacts that may occur in Bellevue paying close attention to projects and their related impacts proximate to the boundary of the two cities.

ENVIRONMENT

Northeast Bellevue prides itself on its robust tree canopy. Large diameter Douglas firs planted at the turn of the 20th century reach high into the sky performing essential ecological functions including filtering air and water pollutants, stabilizing steep slopes, and providing habitat for an abundance of birds and wildlife. Yet, as new residential development and renovations have occurred, trees have been cut down, and residents have expressed concerns that the value of these significant trees has not been fully accounted for. Efforts to educate new property owners about the benefits of retaining trees prior to their removal is desired. Northeast Bellevue also supports the consideration of impacts to the tree canopy when new regulations are proposed.

Northeast Bellevue has large areas of open space and parks that provide recreational benefits to the community. Open space on private land is also valued for its trees, ability to let sunlight through, and general greening effect.

In addition to providing access to the natural environment, parks in Northeast Bellevue could be enhanced to supply a greater variety of active uses and places for the community to gather. Residents expressed desires for small exercise stations, picnic shelters, benches next to playgrounds, and temporary food carts to support community events. Residents also expressed a desire for an indoor community gathering place.

One of the largest environmental challenges Northeast Bellevue residents face is a lack of transportation choices making auto travel their largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Opportunities to expand transportation choices, increase convenient access to goods and services, and/or encourage use of electric vehicles are needed to reach citywide emission reduction targets.

Environment Goals and Policies

To preserve and enhance the tree canopy in Northeast Bellevue.

~~POLICY S-NE-40~~ POLICY S-NE-41 Support efforts to protect Northeast Bellevue's tree canopy, preserve its trees, and enhance the health of trees on both public and private property.

~~POLICY S-NE-41~~ POLICY S-NE-42 Support citywide efforts to introduce or amend requirements for tree preservation to support the City's tree canopy goal.

~~POLICY S-NE-42~~ POLICY S-NE-43 Pursue opportunities for increasing tree canopy through planting of new trees on public and private property throughout Northeast Bellevue.

~~POLICY S-NE-43~~ POLICY S-NE-44 Support community efforts to provide educational opportunities about the protection and care of trees, native plants and other environmental topics.

To protect the health of Bellevue's streams, lakes and other water bodies, such as Lake Sammamish.

~~POLICY S-NE-44~~ POLICY S-NE-45 Encourage natural stormwater best management practices and the reduction of water pollution.

~~POLICY S-NE-45~~ POLICY S-NE-46 Encourage low-impact development and the use of pervious surfaces in new public and private developments.

To preserve and enhance parks and open space in Northeast Bellevue and to build connections between them.

~~POLICY S-NE-46~~ POLICY S-NE-47 Ensure all people have safe and convenient access to parks and open space in Northeast Bellevue.

~~POLICY S-NE-47~~ POLICY S-NE-48 In collaboration with residents and community organizations, identify and address gaps in recreational programming for, and between, residents of all ages.

~~POLICY S-NE-48~~ POLICY S-NE-49 Prioritize park, open space, and trail acquisitions in Northeast Bellevue where:

- a. households currently lack walkable access to a park, open space or trail,
- b. gaps between parks, open space, and trails exist,
- c. high density neighborhoods are adjacent, and
- d. stands of significant trees or other natural features perform important ecological functions.

~~POLICY S-NE-49~~ POLICY S-NE-50 Support park enhancements in Northeast Bellevue that encourage social interactions between diverse ages, abilities, and cultures.

~~POLICY S-NE-50~~ POLICY S-NE-51 Coordinate with Bellevue School District and other organizations to expand opportunities for community gathering throughout the year.

