

Crossroads Subarea Plan

GOAL:

To promote positive aspects of Crossroads and to explore the possibilities of diversity within the community and with the entire population of Bellevue.

Discussion: Crossroads is a "city within a city" with unique problems and assets. The diversity of the community and the mix of uses distinguish Crossroads as a neighborhood. These components present special challenges and opportunities to the area(s) full development.

OVERVIEW

Crossroads is part of what originally was known as the Highland Community. The earliest settlers logged large tracts of timber on land purchased from the government. The first recorded settler in Crossroads built a seven-room house in 1873 on what is now the Unigard site. As the land was logged and cleared for small farms, agriculture became the predominant use in the 1920s. Farming and logging remained the predominant land uses until the influx of people to the Eastside during the 1950s and 1960s marked the end of the rural agricultural settlement pattern.

In the 1960s Sherwood Forest and other areas of Crossroads were annexed into the City of Bellevue. From then and throughout the 1970s, rapid growth dramatically changed the character of the Crossroads area.

During those years population density increased at a rate of twice that of the city as a whole. Most of the increase is attributed to the development of multifamily dwellings and offices.

The original Crossroads Subarea Plan was written in 1978. A focus on human service policies resulted in the construction of the Crossroads Center, a multipurpose community facility located behind the Crossroads Shopping Center. In fact, the ability to confront human service issues and to include policy direction precipitated the subsequent establishment of the city's Human Service Commission.

Crossroads is an area of 1,016 acres bounded by Bellevue-Redmond Road on the north, 148th Avenue NE on the west, Main Street on the south, and 164th Avenue NE on the east. It contains a mix of residential, office, and retail uses. Strong single family neighborhoods, an abundance of multifamily complexes, Crossroads Shopping Center, and office complexes mix together compatibly. Crossroads residents and merchants refer to their part of town as a "city within a city".

Fifty-nine acres of vacant land remain in Crossroads. Projections suggest that this land will be developed over the next decade. Little change is expected in the land use mix in Crossroads; however, there are pedestrian and vehicular circulation needs which must be met to make Crossroads an even more livable community.

There are 4,390 residential units in Crossroads. Of those, 1,183 (27 percent) are single family detached. The remaining 3,207 (73 percent), consist of a mix of attached units: condominiums, townhouses, and apartments. The housing mix in Crossroads suggests the presence of families, children, young adults, and older residents.

Crossroads is also known for its ethnic mix. The presence of the Asian Resettlement Center on NE 8th Street is a response to the needs of area Asians.

Crossroads contains some 460,000 gross square feet of retail use, 440,914 square feet of office space, 503,885 square feet of mixed use, as well as schools and facilities for area children.

The 28-acre city park known as Crossroads Center is a major feature. A youth and community center plus a par 3 golf course provide recreational opportunities for area residents. There are 5.9 additional acres of park land, 14.2 acres of open space, and 61.7 acres of school land in Crossroads.

Current issues focus on maintaining residential stability, improving mobility for both pedestrians and cars, enhancing the economic vitality of Crossroads Shopping Center, and developing a strategy for community involvement to give residents and merchants a stronger voice in shaping Crossroads' future.

Area residents also support cooperation among the city, the school district, and community members to confront issues of mutual concern.

This revised subarea plan is a guide for the continued development of Crossroads. It no longer contains policies on human services: these issues will be addressed through the city's general Human Service Element.

This in no way diminishes the community's concern for those in need. It transfers responsibility to the Human Service Commission, the Planning Commission, and the Department of Parks and Community Services to address such concerns as the concentration of human service agencies in the area and the need to balance their distribution, youth programs, childcare policies, and care of the disabled and the elderly.

This plan focuses on policy direction for land use, circulation, and community design.

General Land Use

POLICIES

POLICY S-CR-1. Maintain land uses as depicted on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-2. Protect existing single family neighborhoods from encroachment by more intense uses.

Discussion (Policies S-CR-1, 2): The Crossroads area contains 20 percent of Bellevue's multifamily housing. To ensure its diversity and character, future development should be in accordance with the Land Use Plan. The protection of the remaining parcels designated single family is vital for the stability of the residential community.

POLICY S-CR-3. Encourage land use density that will not intensify vehicular congestion.

POLICY S-CR-4. Ensure that any development of remaining vacant land in Crossroads is compatible with surrounding uses.

Natural Determinants

POLICIES

POLICY S-CR-5. Retain the wetlands within the 100-year floodplain and the wildlife habitat along Kelsey Creek in the general area east of 148th Avenue NE between Main Street and NE 11th Street.

Discussion: This policy recognizes the role of wetlands in flood prevention, fisheries support, and wildlife protection. It is important to preserve the natural environment and to retain our native habitat for the aesthetic value and character of the community.

POLICY S-CR-6. Recognize the extent of impervious surfaces and the lack of environmentally sensitive storm drainage systems in the Crossroads commercial areas. Encourage new development to reduce environmental impacts, such as by using Green and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building techniques and improved storm water management.

Economics

POLICIES

POLICY S-CR-7. Strengthen and encourage the economic vitality within all retail districts on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-8. Reinforce the economic vitality of the Crossroads commercial areas and enhance Crossroads as the community gathering area of east Bellevue.

POLICY S-CR-9. Reinforce the vitality of Crossroads Shopping Center by limiting further expansion of community level retail districts.

Discussion: Crossroads Shopping Center is the commercial hub of the Subarea. Its successful redevelopment is in the best interest of the community. Innovative design features in the redevelopment of the shopping center will create an attractive center for the community. To achieve this, cooperation among the shopping center, the city, and the community is imperative.

Housing

POLICIES

POLICY S-CR-10. Retain the single family land as illustrated on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-11. Limit multifamily development to those locations designated on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-12. Continue to designate churches or schools surrounded by, or adjacent to single family uses as single family so that this use will remain predominant if the church or school ceases to exist.

POLICY S-CR-13. Buffer and separate new residential development from traffic along the Bellevue-Redmond Road.

POLICY S-CR-14. Encourage the preservation of open space and existing vegetation within new residential development.

Parks and Open Space

POLICIES

POLICY S-CR-15. Continue to provide passive and active recreational facilities and activities for all ages within the Crossroads Community Center and Park.

POLICY S-CR-16. Encourage the city to purchase land for parks and open space if appropriate land becomes available.

POLICY S-CR-17. Establish the underlying zoning of the Crossroads Community Park as a park zone.

POLICY S-CR-18. Develop a prominent new open space area and entrance to Crossroads Park that increases visibility and access to the park and is integrated with adjacent commercial uses generally consistent with Figure S-CR. 2.

Discussion: A prominent new entrance to the park will enhance non-motorized park access and act as an outdoor gathering place for the community. New open space areas integrated in commercial and mixed use development adjacent to the park will stimulate adjacent commercial activity with improved pedestrian connections and outdoor activities, such as farmers markets and seasonal celebrations.

POLICY S-CR-19. Provide physical and visual connectivity to Crossroads Park, where appropriate.

POLICY S-CR-20. Encourage development adjacent to Crossroads Park to complement the park edge through building and site design.

Discussion: Buildings and landscaping adjacent to Crossroads Park should be designed to provide a graceful transition to the park. The intent is to foster building and site design that provides an attractive face to and visible from the park.

Circulation

GOAL:

Preserve and maintain public safety.

POLICIES

POLICY S-CR-21. Construct and operate city-owned streets, sidewalks, paths, trails, and other transportation facilities to preserve and maintain public safety.

POLICY S-CR-22. Implement the recommended improvements for facilities as identified in the Transportation Facility Plans.

Discussion (Policies S-CR-16, 17): Crossroads has a unique mix of single family and multifamily housing in proximity to shopping and activity centers. This encourages pedestrian and other nonmotorized traffic in the Subarea.

These features, plus the addition of newly developed facilities for senior citizens and the disabled, suggest that a greater emphasis should be placed on pedestrian amenities and convenient access to public transit service.

POLICY S-CR-23. Consider operational solutions to safety and speed problems before developing major capital projects.

Discussion: Operational solutions are defined as rechannelization, stop signs, speed control, and neighborhood traffic control measures. Capital projects include improvements such as new construction, signalization, and road widening.

POLICY S-CR-24. Encourage neighborhood stability by providing transportation mitigating measures when improving the regional system.

POLICY S-CR-25. Discourage through traffic along residential streets.

POLICY S-CR-26. Encourage the city to make nonmotorized interim improvements where major capital projects are not imminent.

Discussion: This policy supports interim improvements, but they are not to replace eventual plans for capital improvements.

POLICY S-CR-27. Ensure that public nonmotorized easements remain open for public access.

POLICY S-CR-28. Develop a safe, balanced circulation system that accommodates both motorized and nonmotorized users in the planning, design, and implementation of transportation projects.

Discussion: Wide streets create a barrier to pedestrian movement. The needs of pedestrians should be balanced with the needs of the automobile.

POLICY S-CR-29. Develop meandering sidewalks where needed to preserve existing significant trees.

POLICY S-CR-30. Develop and implement a systems plan to provide safe nonmotorized circulation within superblocks.

POLICY S-CR-31. Develop and implement safe mid-block crossings where appropriate on superblocks.

POLICY S-CR-32. Give appropriate consideration to the special needs of handicapped, disabled, and elderly persons in planning systems and designing facilities for transportation and nonmotorized circulation.

POLICY S-CR-33. Encourage the use of transit, ridesharing, and other means of sharing trips that have beneficial effects on reducing the demand for improvements to existing roadway facilities.

POLICY S-CR-34. Encourage Metro to provide attractive transit shelters with barrier-free access.

POLICY S-CR-35. Consider restrictions on land development and density as a viable means of controlling unacceptable levels of traffic congestion.

POLICY S-CR-36. Discourage new vehicular access routes from Bellevue-Redmond Road into the existing developed Sherwood Forest neighborhood.

POLICY S-CR-37. Discourage the extension and connection of NE 28th Street to the Bellevue-Redmond Road.

POLICY S-CR-38. Complete roadway reconstruction along 156th Avenue NE from the Bellevue-Redmond Road to the north of the city limits with curb, gutter, and sidewalks.

POLICY S-CR-39. Upgrade the NE 30th Street intersection at the Bellevue-Redmond Road. (No cross traffic shall be allowed at NE 30th.)

POLICY S-CR-40. Preserve sufficient existing natural vegetation along Bellevue-Redmond Road to maintain the existing wooded character of the Sherwood Forest neighborhood.

POLICY S-CR-41. Limit access to Bellevue-Redmond Road to those points which enhance traffic safety and minimize disruptions to circulation.

POLICY S-CR-42. Transportation improvements to Bellevue-Redmond Road should include measures to prevent direct vehicular access to NE 30th Street from Redmond's Advanced Technology Center in Overlake.

POLICY S-CR-43. The design of any connection onto Bellevue-Redmond Road shall be prepared in collaboration with the Sherwood Forest neighborhood. To minimize pass-through trips, any connection onto Bellevue-Redmond Road not otherwise affected by these policies shall be designed and constructed to prevent traffic from entering NE 30th Street and flowing to 164thAve NE

POLICY S-CR-44. Improve 160thAvenue NE and NE 15th Street with additional landscaping, street trees and street edge enhancements that extend the character of the Crossroads Park. Their connections at 156th Avenue NE and NE 8th Street should include landscaping and design features to act as park "gateways."

POLICY S-CR-45. Maintain and enhance the pedestrian safety and comfort on NE 8th Street and 156thAvenue NE in District E.

Discussion: While these streets have a strong need to move vehicles, they have the highest pedestrian volumes outside of Downtown. They should include generous sidewalks and landscaping, be safe and comfortable for pedestrians, and provide convenient connections between transit and destinations. Vehicle turn-a-rounds that compromise the pedestrian environment should be avoided. They should also include safe crosswalks with signs, markings, signals or flashing lights where appropriate.

Community Design

POLICIES

POLICY S-CR-46. Assure the use of existing vegetation as a screen between differing uses and which provide landscaping on new development.

POLICY S-CR-47. Encourage coordinated lighting and landscaping for all arterials.

POLICY S-CR-48. Encourage landscaping to define entrances to the Crossroads Community Center.

POLICY S-CR-49. Retain and enhance existing vegetation along major arterials to screen residential uses from vehicular traffic and to preserve the wooded character of this area.

POLICY S-CR-50. Encourage street tree plantings that are compatible with pedestrian movement to establish separation from moving vehicles.

POLICY S-CR-51. Establish an attractive gateway to identify Crossroads.

POLICY S-CR-52. Encourage the formation of a community organization to work on image as it relates to commerce and the residential community.

POLICY S-CR-53. Encourage the city to provide visual color and an attractive landscape on city-owned property.

POLICY S-CR-54. Encourage undergrounding of utility distribution lines on existing development and require undergrounding of all new utility distribution lines in new development when feasible.

POLICY S-CR-55. Encourage the maintenance of private and public properties through self-help programs, city and community cooperation.

Discussion: High quality maintenance of public and private residential facilities prevents deterioration and enhances safety. It is an important community goal. Neighborhood identity can also be promoted by private organizations which sponsor contests for yard-of-the-month, community fairs, and ethnic celebrations.

POLICY S-CR-56. Achieve a coordinated visual image on all four comers of the intersection of 156th Avenue and NE 8th Street through special site design and landscape features.

Discussion: The purpose of this policy is to highlight the center of the Crossroads area.

POLICY S-CR-57. Keep a permanent greenbelt along Bellevue-Redmond Road in Redmond's Advanced Technology Center.

Planning District Guidelines

The Crossroads Subarea has been divided into five ~~six~~ Planning Districts in addition to existing single family land. The boundaries are mapped on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICIES

POLICIES S-CR-58 to S-CR-61. have been deleted.

District A

POLICY S-CR-58. Single family ~~medium density residential development is appropriate in the northeastern portion of District A as a compatible land use with the existing Sherwood Forest residential neighborhood to the southeast.~~

POLICY S-CR-59. Allow office uses in the southwest portion of District A as shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-60. Multifamily development is not allowed within District A. Existing multifamily uses within District A can be converted to senior citizen housing, senior congregate care housing, assisted living and nursing homes.

POLICY S-CR-61. Retail uses are not allowed in District A.

District B

POLICY S-CR-62. Allow office uses with design review within this district as illustrated on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-63. Multifamily use is not allowed within District B. Existing multifamily uses within District B can be converted to senior citizen housing, senior congregate care housing, assisted living and nursing homes.

*Discussion: Senior citizen housing, senior congregate care housing, assisted living and nursing homes are appropriate on the site located at 15241 NE 20th Street. (See * on the Land Use Plan, Figure S-CR.1.)*

POLICY S-CR-64. Single family residential use up to high density is appropriate north of the Chevy Chase neighborhood as shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

Discussion: Single family at a higher density than five units per acre may be appropriate on the land north of Chevy Chase on the east side of 148th Avenue NE (1700 and 1620 - 148th Avenue NE).

POLICY S-CR-65. Allow community level retail uses within District B.

POLICY S-CR-66. has been deleted.

POLICY S-CR-66. Office use as a conditional use is appropriate for the property east of 156th Avenue NE between Northup Way and NE 24th Street (commonly known as Unigard).

Discussion: This area should be developed under a conditional use permit with attention given to retaining large stands of trees, views through the site from adjacent streets, and the open character of the site.

POLICY S-CR-67. Office uses are appropriate across from Highland Middle School on the north side of Bellevue-Redmond Road east of 148th as shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

District C

POLICY S-CR-68. Single family use, up to medium density, is appropriate for the land south of Northup Way as shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-69. Residential use up to Multifamily Low-density is appropriate for the land east of the Overlake Presbyterian Church as shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

District D

POLICY S-CR-70. Single family uses, up to medium density, are appropriate as illustrated on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-71. Allow all land uses permitted under a Multifamily-Low (MF-L) density designation on the property located east of 148th Avenue NE between approximately NE 2nd and NE 6th Streets. Utilize the Sensitive Areas Overlay District regulations (Land Use Code Part 20.25H) in effect at the time of adoption of the land use designation to determine the maximum number of dwelling units to be developed on the sites.

POLICY S-CR-72. A public facility designation for park uses with an underlying designation of Single family - Low density is appropriate along Kelsey Creek, south of NE 6th Street, as shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-73. Allow Single family - High density residential uses east of the multifamily area, north of Main Street as illustrated on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-74. Allow office uses east of 148th Avenue NE and south of NE 8th Street as illustrated on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-75. Allow office development and neighborhood retail uses on the northeast corner of Main Street and 148th Avenue NE as illustrated on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-76. Allow neighborhood-level retail uses on the southeast corner of 148th Avenue and NE 8th Street.

District E

POLICY S-CR-77. Allow community-level retail uses in District E as shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-78. Office uses with design review are appropriate for the area east of the Crossroads Shopping Center as shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-CR.1).

POLICY S-CR-79. Multifamily uses are not appropriate north of NE 8th Street within District E, except that mixed use multifamily developments may be appropriate when they: 1) are high quality; 2) are designed to avoid conflicts with commercial uses; 3) include measures that ensure residential and commercial uses complement each other, including outdoor gathering areas, public open space, park connectivity where appropriate, and pedestrian connections and activity areas; and 4) are generally consistent with Figure S-CR. 2.

Discussion: Multifamily residential uses have traditionally been prohibited in District E north of NE 8th Street to avoid impacts on the surrounding neighborhood and to maintain the commercial focus of the Crossroads commercial area. At the time of the prohibition, multifamily uses tended to be stand-alone residential buildings. Today, multifamily uses are commonly integrated into commercial areas in attractive mixed use developments. Such development at Crossroads could encourage reinvestment in the commercial area that enhances the commercial activity and community gathering opportunities at Crossroads.

POLICY S-CR-80. Assess new mixed use multifamily development in Crossroads District E north of NE 8th Street when 300 or more dwelling units are constructed and occupied. The assessment should occur through the Comprehensive Plan amendment process. The assessment must be completed prior to accepting and vesting permit applications exceeding 400 dwelling units in District E north of NE 8th Street. At the time of the assessment the city may evaluate whether to allow or restrict additional multifamily housing within the district.

Discussion: Since multifamily housing has been prohibited from this area in the past, the assessment will allow an opportunity to evaluate new forms of mixed use development that occur and how they integrate with the existing commercial uses. The Comprehensive Plan amendment process assures that public involvement, including a public hearing, will occur as part of the assessment, which should address:

- a. Changes to the Crossroads area, including school enrollment, park usage, traffic and transit use;*
- b. The character of the multifamily mixed use developments, and to what degree they enhance the commercial environment;*
- c. The implementation of the long range organizing principles on Figure S-CR. 2;*
- d. The support for pedestrian activity, safety and comfort; and*
- e. The interface between commercial and mixed used buildings with Crossroads Park.*

POLICY S-CR-81. Require development to include pedestrian connections, open space, and activity areas to support site residents and users.

Discussion: Locations appropriate for pedestrian connections and activity areas are shown on Figure S-CR. 2 and include:

- a. Major activity nodes that allow for community gatherings and activities.*
- b. Activated retail streets that provide pedestrian amenities such as wider sidewalks, street trees, and increased pedestrian safety and comfort. Generally, buildings should front these streets and provide entrances, retail uses, canopies, windows, and wall treatments that provide visual interest.*
- c. A network of pedestrian connections.*
- d. An urban trail linking adjacent areas, the shopping center and the park while providing opportunity for healthful activity.*

New development should incorporate these pedestrian features into their site designs, where appropriate.

District F

POLICY S-CR-82. Multifamily development is the predominant allowed use for District F and in the northwesterly corner of District F, retirement apartments and homes are the appropriate multifamily residential land use.